

# MORMONISM—

SHADOW or REALITY?



**By Jerald and Sandra Tanner**

Fifth Edition  
*Reformatted*

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**By Jerald and Sandra Tanner**

**Fifth Edition  
1987**

**Reformatted  
2008**

(Digital version 2013)





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## Preface

This book was first published in mimeographed form in 1963. Although a large publishing company predicted that there would only be “250 to 300 people in the U.S. who would be sufficiently interested in a work of this kind to buy it,” it was an immediate success and thousands of copies were sold. Finally, in 1980 Moody Press brought out a condensed version of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* under the title of *The Changing World of Mormonism*. As we prepare this Preface for the fifth edition, we are pleased to announce that about 65,000 copies of these publications have been distributed throughout the world. In the Introduction to *The Changing World of Mormonism*, Wesley P. Walters, Contributing Editor for the *Journal of Pastoral Practice*, wrote the following:

“Oh, this stuff is dynamite!” exclaimed a prestigious director of a Mormon Institute of Religion. “I tell you, though you may not believe it, I have seen people get utterly crushed, almost devastated with some of the material that the Tanners have reproduced.”

“I will tell you,” he continues, “there was an Institute teacher here, not long ago . . . who lost his testimony and went out of the church on the basis of this stuff.”

That description of the effects of Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s publishing efforts to unmask Mormonism is hardly an overstatement.

... Their major work, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*, has sold more than thirty thousand copies without any advertising campaign, simply because it is the most definitive work in print on the fallacies of Mormonism. This condensed version of that earlier work, though still of necessity lengthy, sets forth the heart of their extensive research.

Since *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* is critical of the Mormon Church, one would expect that it would have a very limited circulation among the Mormon people. We are happy to report, however, that a rather large percentage of the copies have been sold directly to Mormons. Many of the books, in fact, have been sold in Salt Lake City, Utah, which is the center of Mormonism. The response by the Mormon people has been very encouraging. Leroy Searle made this comment:

This reviewer was reared a devout Mormon, for many years was a firm believer, and was the president of an LDS Seminary at Granger High School. . . .

The appearance of the Tanner’s book is certain to arouse considerable renewed controversy, . . . I am certain that this book will become a standard in scholarly work dealing with the history of Utah and Mormonism. . . . The overall result is a publication of tremendous interest for both Mormon and non-Mormon, and a valuable collection of selected quotations from rare early literature of Mormonism. . . .

As a discussion of doctrinal history, the work is a real achievement in scholarship . . . a search for truth, no matter of what world, will continue. The Tanners are to be commended whether freely or reluctantly, for having had the courage to assist in that search. (*Nova, A Newspaper of Opinion*, Logan, Utah, January 11, 1965, p. 5)

Another member of the Mormon Church made this comment in a letter:

Perhaps by way of interest, I might mention that I had studied deeply into our history and doctrine before coming upon your materials, . . . It’s my opinion that your book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality*, if widely read by Mormon and Non-Mormon alike, would do more harm to the church than any other volume published in the last 50 to 75 years. It could almost tear the Church apart. Your approach is novel; you’ve used our own history and doctrine, and your quotations are accurate (Letter from Arizona, dated July 28, 1965).

In 1965 we received a visit from Wallace Turner, a correspondent for the *New York Times*. He made these comments concerning our work in his book, *The Mormon Establishment*:

Dr. Thomas F. O’Dea, . . . insists that the church is in the midst of a crisis. . . . But in keeping with Dr. O’Dea’s theory of the sleeping crisis, one of the most influential apostates of the 1960s has been a young machinist, who with his wife, left the church and now makes a living printing books and documents which contradict official Mormon pronouncements.

His name is Jerald Tanner. His wife, Sandra, is a great-great-granddaughter of Brigham Young . . . They lived in the summer of 1965 in an old house at 1350 S. West Temple Street . . . He and Nathan Eldon Tanner, the high LDS official, are both descended, he thought, from John Tanner, the man who helped Joseph Smith in the 1830s. Both the young man and his wife grew up in the LDS church. He drifted away first and she followed . . . the three of us sat in the high-ceilinged living room of the old house and discussed the general question of how one feels on leaving the company of the Saints.

“It was a long time before I could admit I didn’t believe the Book of Mormon,” said Sandra Tanner, dandling Brigham Young’s great-great-great-grandchild on her knee. “It was weeks after that before I could say it out loud.” . . .

The Tanners operate as the Modern Microfilm Company. They specialize in copying books and documents that are out of print, or have been suppressed in one way or another, but that bear on the history and doctrine of the LDS church. When I talked with them, they had thirty-one titles for sale. The best seller was *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* prepared by them jointly . . . Near the end of their book attacking the LDS church and denouncing its doctrines the Tanners have signed individual statements setting out their religious experience. Jerald Tanner wrote that he was born and reared in the Mormon church, but that he was nineteen years old before he heard the Word of Christ preached . . . He considers himself a Protestant, a believer in Christ and in the doctrines of eternal salvation preached by Protestants. However, he now refuses to accept any of the doctrine that belongs exclusively to the LDS church. . . .

Sandra Tanner’s statement shows that she had doubts about her religion, but was generally able to contain them—until “I met Jerald and we began studying the Bible and Mormonism together. As we studied I began to see the contradictions between the Bible and the teachings of the Mormon church.”

As a child she had been taught to admire her ancestor, Brigham Young. This was the point at which Jerald Tanner



made his attack on her faith. He did it in Brigham Young's own words.

"Then Jerald had me read some of Brigham Young's sermons in the *Journal of Discourses* on Blood Atonement," Mrs. Tanner wrote. "I was shocked! I knew what Brigham Young was saying was wrong but I couldn't reconcile these sermons with the things I had always been taught concerning him. I knew these were not the words of a Prophet of God.

"As I studied I not only found errors in Mormonism, I also began to comprehend there was something wrong in my own life. As I studied God's word I realized I was a sinful hypocrite."

That day as she talked in the living room of the old house across from the ballpark in Salt Lake City, she remembered her first meeting with Jerald Tanner. She was visiting her grandmother.

"I fell in love with him," she said quite simply and without embarrassment. Then she used a typical Mormon analogy to explain what she thinks their present life purpose to be. "What we do is more of a mission, you might say." . . .

There also is the demonstration by the Tanners that an apostate from the Mormon church generally takes with him their techniques of indefatigable research and argument that he was taught while in the church's embrace. The Tanners' masterwork, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* is an intricate weaving of arguments from many sources against the fundamental precept of the Saints' doctrine—that Joseph Smith, Jr., was a prophet of God . . .

With the Tanners the church today finds itself faced by its own techniques of argument and its own words turned back against it to create doubts and uneasiness among some members. The campaign is effective, too, and of this there is no doubt. (*The Mormon Establishment*, by Wallace Turner, Boston, 1966, pp. 153-162)

In between the time *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* was first published and the revised edition appeared in 1972 many important things happened. By far the most significant was the rediscovery of the papyri from which Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham, for this papyri proves that the Book of Abraham is the work of Joseph Smith's own imagination. Another important discovery was that the Mormon Church had been suppressing important accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision which differ from the account printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*.

Wesley P. Walters made a number of significant contributions to Mormon history. His most important being the discovery of an original document which proves beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith was a "glass looker" and that he was arrested, tried and found guilty by a justice of the peace in Bainbridge, New York, in 1826. Mr. Walters also discovered that there was no revival in Palmyra, New York, in 1820 as the Mormon Church has always maintained. This discovery certainly casts a shadow of doubt upon Joseph Smith's story of the First Vision.

Many other important discoveries were also made since we first printed *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* In 1967 we began publishing our work *The Case Against Mormonism*. This was a three-volume study which dealt with many of the latest discoveries. Dr. Kenneth Kantzer, who was Dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and now serves as Editor of *Christianity Today*, made these statements in a review of the first two volumes of this work:

These books represent no ordinary polemic against Mormonism. This is the definitive, fully-documented, utterly devastating case against the divine authority and truthfulness of the foundational documents upon which the Mormon religion is based. Every evangelical pastor should have these books in his library and every intelligent lay Christian should know about them and refer to them. . . . It is difficult to see how the Mormon church can survive the devastating destruction of its foundations as presented in these volumes. Certainly for any Christian, disturbed by Mormon claims, these works are utterly convincing. (*Evangelical Beacon*, Minneapolis, Minn., vol. 42, no. 1, October 8, 1968, p. 7)

At the time we were writing *The Case Against Mormonism*, we also completed a two-volume work entitled, *The Mormon*

*Kingdom*. Besides these volumes we printed a number of other books on Mormonism. The 1972 edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* was actually a condensation of the best material from all of our books.

Since 1972 there have been a number of significant developments. For instance, before June, 1978, the Mormon Church firmly maintained that blacks were to be "denied the priesthood" and that they were "not equal with other races where the receipt of certain spiritual blessings are concerned . . ." (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 527). On June 9, 1978, however, the Mormon newspaper, *Deseret News*, announced that the President of the Church had a revelation that the curse had been removed and that blacks could hold the priesthood. We deal with this matter in the updated material for Chapter 21 of this book.

On May 3, 1980, the church's *Deseret News* revealed that a paper had been discovered which contained the characters Joseph Smith copied directly from the gold plates of the Book of Mormon. This find was reported to have been made by Mark Hofmann. Less than a year after this startling announcement was made, the church's newspaper reported that the same man had discovered a blessing in which Joseph Smith designated his son, Joseph Smith III, as his successor. In 1983 we learned that Mark Hofmann had a letter by Martin Harris which became known as the White Salamander letter. We soon became suspicious of the authenticity of the letter. After bombs killed two people in Salt Lake City in 1985, an investigation disclosed that Hofmann's documents were forgeries. Since the Mormon leaders bought many of the forgeries, the claim of inspired leadership appears to be seriously shaken. The reader will find information on this in the updated material for Chapters 6 and 13.

In 1974 we were finally able to obtain a copy of Joseph Smith's suppressed 1831 polygamy revelation. This revelation commanded the Mormons to marry the Indians so that "their posterity may become white, delightful and just, . . ." (see the updated material for Chapter 16). In 1976 we were allowed to examine a microfilm copy of Joseph Smith's diaries. These diaries, which had been suppressed for about 130 years, have provided some very important evidence concerning the falsification of the published *History of the Church* (see updated material for Chapter 7).

Since the question of women in the Mormon Church has received so much attention since 1980, we included some helpful information concerning their place in Mormon theology in the 1982 edition of this book (see updated material for Chapter 9, p. 172-A). Another interesting question that we explore is the possibility of a Mormon-CIA connection. We became interested in this matter when we learned that the Mullen Company, which handled public relations for the Mormon Church, was used as a cover for the CIA and that a CIA agent helped with the publication of a book which was favorable to the church. The cover arrangement for the Mullen Company was revealed after it was discovered that some of the planning for the Watergate break-in took place in its offices (see updated material for Chapter 27).

The case against Mormonism grows stronger every year, but the size of this book precludes adding much new material. Our newsletter, *The Salt Lake City Messenger*, is sent free to all those who wish to keep up to date. Our address is found on the title page of this book. On October 7, 1972, Dr. Jennings G. Olson, of the Department of Philosophy at Weber College, made these comments about *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*:

. . . there is now in existence a book which every Mormon and interested non-Mormon should study and ponder. The book is by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, and it is called *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* . . . it is tightly packed with

serious, responsible research which no one can deny is the most comprehensive and thorough analysis and evaluation of Mormonism ever produced in the history of the Church.

Any Mormon of Elemental identification who wants to “answer” the Tanners will have his hands full for a long time to come because the Tanners have the microfilm sources from the early Mormon Church which no one before has had in such abundance. . . . I seriously doubt Dr. Nibley will take this new revised book on, because he is quoted often enough in it to be identifiable as one of the major contributors to Mormonism’s obfuscation of issues; and he has actually contributed (unknowingly perhaps) to the growing painful dilemmas now facing the Elemental Mormonism I have previously identified . . . if Dr. Nibley or anyone else decides to “answer” the Tanner’s book point for point I certainly promise to study that book carefully and review it in public. In the mean time I will state publically [sic] this book of the Tanner’s is a major contribution in the search for integrity and truth about Mormonism, and I shall quote it a number of times. (“The Uniqueness of Mormonism: An Evaluation,” by Jennings G. Olson, October 7, 1972, pp. 22-23)

It has now been fourteen years since Dr. Jennings Olson issued his challenge, yet the Mormon Church has remained officially silent concerning *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* Robert L. Brown and his wife Rosemary privately published a book entitled *They Lie in Wait to Deceive*. This book claims to answer some of the charges we made against the Book of Abraham, but Mr. Brown acknowledged he was “not a spokesman for the LDS church, nor was I ‘commissioned’ by them to do this work.” In any case, we answered the Browns’ misrepresentations in our book *Can The Browns Save Joseph Smith?* Some information concerning their book is also found in Chapter 22 of this book.

Ian Barber is another individual who attempted a rebuttal. In the Preface to his booklet, *What Mormonism Isn’t: A Response to the Research of Jerald and Sandra Tanner*, Mr. Barber emphasized that he was “not in any way attempting to speak officially for the Mormon Church, and neither have I been commissioned or involved with any group or organization in the research, planning and writing of this material.” In the Introduction to the same booklet, Mr. Barber acknowledges that “The Church has not officially responded to the claims of the Tanners.” Mr. Barber apparently felt that something had to be done because of the impact of our material in New Zealand:

In recent months in Auckland some attention has been focused on the publications and writings of former Mormons, Gerald and Sandra Tanner, . . . The recent attentions, however, have been precipitated by the actions of two former L.D.S. Church members in Auckland.

While involved with the L.D.S. Church, Ron and Roberta Rees had built a very successful book-distribution business stocking titles of special interest to other members throughout. During 1980 the Rees’ acquired material originating from the Tanners’ research, and apparently became convinced as to the validity of the fundamental thesis underlying such efforts. They voluntarily withdrew themselves from formal affiliation with the L.D.S. Church as a result, and have now converted their business, “Beehive Books,” into a distribution point for material from the Modern Microfilm Company. (*What Mormonism Isn’t*, Introduction)

On June 12, 1981, Mr. and Mrs. Rees reported to us in a letter that “nearly 70 Mormons” had come out of the church:

On May 17th we sent to every Mormon Church leader and every Mormon on our mailing list in New Zealand a copy of our mailer . . .

The response has been amazing . . . The most wonderful thing is that we have been able to assist nearly 70 Mormons out of Mormonism and many of them to the real Lord Jesus Christ. We have a Mormon Bishop, 5 returned missionaries and two stake high councilmen now

on our mailing list. Every day some one approaches us and we are able to show them that Mormon claims are false . . . It really touches us when a returned missionary who has just been shown all the evidence in your books that we have in our shop says with tears in his eyes “The Church is not true and I have wasted two years of my life and all that money for nothing.” Two days later he accepted the Lord and is being baptised at the end of this month. He is helping his mother and aunt out of the church. The aunt rang us earlier this week and we sent her a library copy of “Mormonism Shadow or Reality?” She phoned us back yesterday to say she had read it (must be a speed reader) and she now knows that the church is not true. She is a third generation Mormon!

Some people declare to us after seeing the truth and coming to know that Mormonism is not true . . . “it’s like getting out of a prison.” One young man who said those exact words has now accepted Christ and was baptised earlier this week.

A later report from another couple involved in the work in New Zealand said that “117 persons have left the church” (Letter dated July 23, 1981).

In any case, Ian Barber has to concede so much in his rebuttal that it can hardly be considered a threat to our work. For more comments on Mr. Barber’s booklet see Chapter 22 of this book.

Although the church may eventually be forced into bringing out a rebuttal to *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* and *The Changing World of Mormonism*, the fact that it would allow 65,000 copies to be published without an official response seems to show that there are no real answers to the questions we have raised. While some would argue that the church does not like to engage in controversy, its attack on the advocates of the Spalding theory demonstrates that this is simply not true (see *Deseret News*, Church Section, August 20, 1977). The truth of the matter is that the church leaders do not mind controversy if they feel they can come out ahead. We believe, however, that the church has too many secrets to hide to come out in open opposition to *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* A man who talked to one of the church’s apostles claimed that he “told me to quit studying materials put out by the Tanner’s . . . I told him ‘surely some day there will be an answer to these questions.’ He told me there never would be an answer and I should stop my inquiries. This was too much for me to handle” (Letter dated August 13, 1978). The continual silence of church leaders to the charges contained in our book has tended to arouse suspicion in the minds of many people that there are no answers. An article written by David Merrill indicated that church leaders have tried to restrain their scholars from dealing with our publications: “The official attitude of the Mormon hierarchy towards the Tanners has been one of silence and apparent unconcern. They have, however, actively discouraged LDS scholars and intellectuals from jousting with the Tanners or any of the other professional critics of the church” (*Utah Holiday*, February 1978, p. 7).

While the church has refused to openly come to grips with *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* an anonymous rebuttal was printed in 1977 which we have traced to the Church Office Building in Salt Lake City. This booklet was entitled, *Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* In the book *Answering Dr. Clandestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian* we gave the following information concerning this sneaky attack:

If the reader will look carefully at the front of *Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism*, he will find that more than the name of the author is missing. A careful examination shows that no publisher is given . . . when we try to trace the source of the pamphlet we find a cover-up that



reminds us of the Watergate episode. (The reader will remember that a great deal of literature was printed anonymously by some of Nixon's supporters. . . . In the Senate investigation of Watergate and the subsequent investigation of the CIA, the public became aware of the methods used by undercover agents. We learned of clandestine meetings where material or money changed hands, of agents working under assumed names and of post office boxes being rented to carry on ultra-secret operations. Some of those involved in this work talked of "deniability"—i.e., the idea that the "enemy" must not be able to trace back the true source of an operation directed against him.)

When we tried to trace the source of *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, we found that the whole matter had all the earmarks of an intelligence operation mounted by the CIA or the KGB. "Deniability" seemed to be the name of the game.

It was obvious that Zion Bookstore was the distributor of the booklet. The name of the store might suggest that it is owned by the Church, but it is actually owned by Sam Weller . . . when we asked Mr. Weller where he was getting copies of *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, he replied that he did not know! He said that it was all a very secret operation. He claimed that he had received a letter giving details of how he could handle the pamphlet, but that the writer was not identified. . . . Mr. Weller indicated that he had received **1,800 free copies of the pamphlet**. We reasoned that this must represent a large amount of money, . . .

So far we have been unable to trace exactly how Zion Bookstore received the pamphlets. According to one report, the books were first mailed anonymously to a post office box. From there they were transported to a publishing company near Redwood Road and were subsequently picked up by an employee from Zion Bookstore. We talked with Wilfrid Clark, who works for Sam Weller. Mr. Clark maintained that he did not know anything about a publishing company picking up the books from a post office box. He said that all he knew about the matter was that Zion Bookstore received an anonymous letter containing a key to a room in a self storage company on Redwood Road. He claimed that he personally went to the company and picked up the booklets. . . .

As we followed the tracks of this conspiracy to destroy our work, we found that they led right into the Mormon Church Office Building in Salt Lake City. Actually, it was more than a year ago when we first heard that something was afoot. We had a visit with a young Mormon singer who had some questions regarding church history. He told us he had an appointment with a woman at the Church Office Building who claimed she had been part of a committee which was organized to evaluate our research. The committee worked on our material until they received an order from the Prophet—i.e., the President of the Church—that they were to desist from the project. We were unable to learn anything more about this purported committee, but one of the top Mormon historians did tell us in a telephone conversation in Dec. 1976 that a manuscript had been prepared to refute the allegations contained in our work. He was not sure if the church would actually publish it, but the writing had been done.

One of the major clues which led to the discovery of the source of the pamphlet *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism* was an unpublished thesis by Richard Stephen Marshall. . . . We cite the following from Mr. Marshall's paper:

Recent years have seen the emergence of a new kind of anti-Mormon literature which uses Mormon historical records (history has long been used to attack the Church) to try to show that the Church was more human than divine. This new kind of literature is best typified by Jerald and Sandra Tanner and their Modern Microfilm Publishing Company located in Salt Lake City. They have been prolific since 1961 and have at present, a world-wide reputation. The writer encountered materials published by them while living in Australia several years ago. . . .

A recent leaflet printed by the Tanners entitled *20,000 Books Met With Silence* notes the lack of official response from the Church to *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

Many prominent Mormons have expressed a high regard for the work the Tanners have done. . . . T. Edgar Lyon, a Mormon historian and long-time teacher at the Institute of Religion at the University of Utah told this writer he thought the Church should subsidize the Tanners, although he said it tongue-in-cheek.

Reed Durham using virtually the same words as Lyon said that he thought the Church should subsidize the Tanners because of all the historical research they do for it. He teaches a class at the Institute of Religion at the University of Utah on the problems of Mormon history called "Special Studies in Mormon History." He uses the Tanner's book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* as the text for the class. . . .

Durham said he would like to write a book answering the accusations of the Tanners point by point. To do so, however, would require certain admissions that Mormon history is not exactly as the Church has taught it was, that there were things taught and practiced in the nin[e]teenth century of which the general Church membership is unaware. He said that the Church is not ready to admit that yet. He also said that due to the large number of letters the Church Historian's Office is receiving asking for answers to the things the Tanners have published, a certain scholar (name deliberately withheld) was appointed to write a general answer to the Tanners including advice on how to read anti-Mormon literature. This unnamed person solicited the help of Reed Durham on the project. The work is finished but its publication is delayed, according to what Leonard Arrington told Durham, because they can not decide how or where to publish it. Because the article is an open and honest approach to the problem, although it by no means answers all of the questions raised by the Tanners, it will probably be published anonymously, to avoid difficulties which could result were such an article connected with an official Church agency." ("The New Mormon History," by Richard Stephen Marshall, A Senior Honors Project Summary, University of Utah, May 1, 1977, pp. 57, 61, 62) (*Answering Dr. Cladestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*, 1978, pp. 1-3)

The pamphlet *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism* appeared just seven months after Mr. Marshall revealed that the Church Historical Department was preparing a response which "will probably be published anonymously." The reader will notice that Church Historian Leonard Arrington was identified with this project. Dr. Arrington denied any knowledge of this matter on three different occasions, but his entire defense was shattered when a man who had lost faith in the church turned over to us a letter written by Arrington which made it plain that he had distributed photocopies of the typed manuscript three months before it was published. We have printed a photograph of Dr. Arrington's letter in our book *Answering Dr. Cladestine*, page 24. This book also contains a refutation of the claims put forth in *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*.

Two years after we uncovered this secret plan to discredit our work, we discovered that an employee at the Church Office Building had been spying on us under an assumed name. This spying operation began almost four years earlier. On October 11, 1976, this man, who was at the time "employed by the FBI in a clerical capacity," assumed the alias "Stan Fields" in a letter he wrote to us from California:

Dear Friends in Christ: I am a feollow [sic] Ex-Mormon for Jesus, and would like to be added to your mailing

list, . . . What is it like being “Apostates” in the capitol of the “Saints”? It really fas[c]inates me how anyone could survive as long as you have.

Thank you in advance for answering my questions . . . God’s blessings on you as you do His work, Sincerely in Christ

This man not only assumed an alias, but he opened up a post office box in Pleasant Hill, California (P.O. Box 23114) for the purpose of deception. (It is common practice, of course, for those who are engaged in spying operations to cover their tracks by assuming an alias and renting a post office box.) In any case, Mr. “Fields,” who professed to be our Christian brother, spied on our operation for about four years and also penetrated a number of groups of Ex-Mormons for Jesus. By dishonest means he obtained the names of many Mormons who have questions about their religion. He diligently worked to obtain photographs of critics of the Mormon Church and gathered large files of information.

In his zeal to provide a good cover for himself, Mr. “Fields” went so far as to claim that his own church was “Satan inspired” (Letter dated July 22, 1978), and even pretended to pass out material critical of the church around Temple Square. His nefarious career, however, came to a sudden end in July, 1980, when we discovered his true identity. We also found that he was employed at the Mormon Church Office Building in the Genealogical Department. When we directly confronted him in the Church Office Building with the evidence of his spying activities, he made no attempt to deny the basic charges. Although he claimed that he “was not spying for the church,” he acknowledged he had used church equipment to carry out his duplicity. (For a complete account of this matter see our publication *Unmasking a Mormon Spy: The Story of Stan Fields*.)

A few things concerning the new and enlarged edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* that we first published in 1982 should be explained to the reader. To begin with, although we made some changes throughout the book, the largest portion remained the same as in the 1972 edition. Only two of the thirty-eight chapters were retypeset. At the end of a number of the chapters we added updated material. Since we wanted to keep the page numbers as close to the 1972 edition as possible, we assigned a letter to each additional page. For instance, Chapter 1 ends on page 4. We added updated material to this chapter, but instead of assigning the number 5 to the next page, we called it 4-A. By this method we were able to start Chapter 2 on page 5 as it appears in the 1972 edition. With the exception of changes made in the updated material in Chapters 6 and 13, the 1986 edition is exactly the same as that published in 1982.

When we originally published *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* in 1972, we did not have a typesetting machine. An IBM typewriter with “proportional spacing” was used and the copy reduced in size for printing by the photo-offset method. Since we did not have italicized type for book titles and emphasis, we had to use underlining in its place. In the Preface to the 1972 edition we wrote: “Capitalization and underlining are used for emphasis throughout this book.” Since 1972 we were able to obtain typesetting equipment. Now we are able to use three different styles of type for the updated material—i.e., regular type, **bold type** and *italics* for book titles.

In the 1972 edition of this book we had a chapter entitled “Appendix B,” which contained “New Information.” This was material which we became aware of after we had written the largest portion of the book. In this edition we have eliminated Appendix B

and incorporated the most important part of this material into the chapters where it properly belongs. Although we mention some of our own religious beliefs in this volume, those who are interested in knowing more should see our book, *A Look at Christianity*.

The Mormon people have greatly assisted in the writing of this book. Some of them have allowed us access to their own research, others have helped in various ways. Others who are not members of the church have provided help. Both members and non-members of the Mormon Church have given books, pamphlets and photographs to us.

The University of Utah Library and the Utah State Historical Society have greatly assisted by allowing photographs to be made of many of their rare books. The Yale University Library, the Mormon Church Genealogical Library, the Brigham Young University Library and the Salt Lake Public Library have also provided help. James Wardle, who owns one of the largest private libraries on the subject of Mormonism, has given us a great deal of help and material. He has given us books, pamphlets, photocopies of rare documents, microfilms and typed material. Mr. Wardle is to be commended for his helpfulness to those who wish to do research. LaMar Petersen, who is considered to be one of the best informed scholars on Mormon history, has given us a great deal of help and encouragement. He has constantly provided us with new material and has permitted us to go through his note cards, which contain many important references. Much of the material used in this book was actually found by Mr. Petersen. Wesley P. Walters has also given us a great deal of help and material. He has also made some of the most important discoveries concerning Mormonism and has been very free with his material. He has sent us a continual stream of photocopies and microfilms of rare documents. We will have more to say about his work in the chapters which follow. We would also like to thank H. Michael Marquardt, one of the most knowledgeable scholars on Mormon history, for freely sharing the fruits of his research with us. Grant Heward has furnished a great deal of valuable material and help on the Egyptian language and Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Papyri, and Jerry Urban has provided encouragement and support when we really needed it.

The Apostle Paul admonishes us as follows:

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

Keeping the Apostle Paul’s statement in mind we wish to present this study of Mormon history and doctrine.

*Jerald and Sandra Tanner*  
Utah Lighthouse Ministry  
March 4, 1987

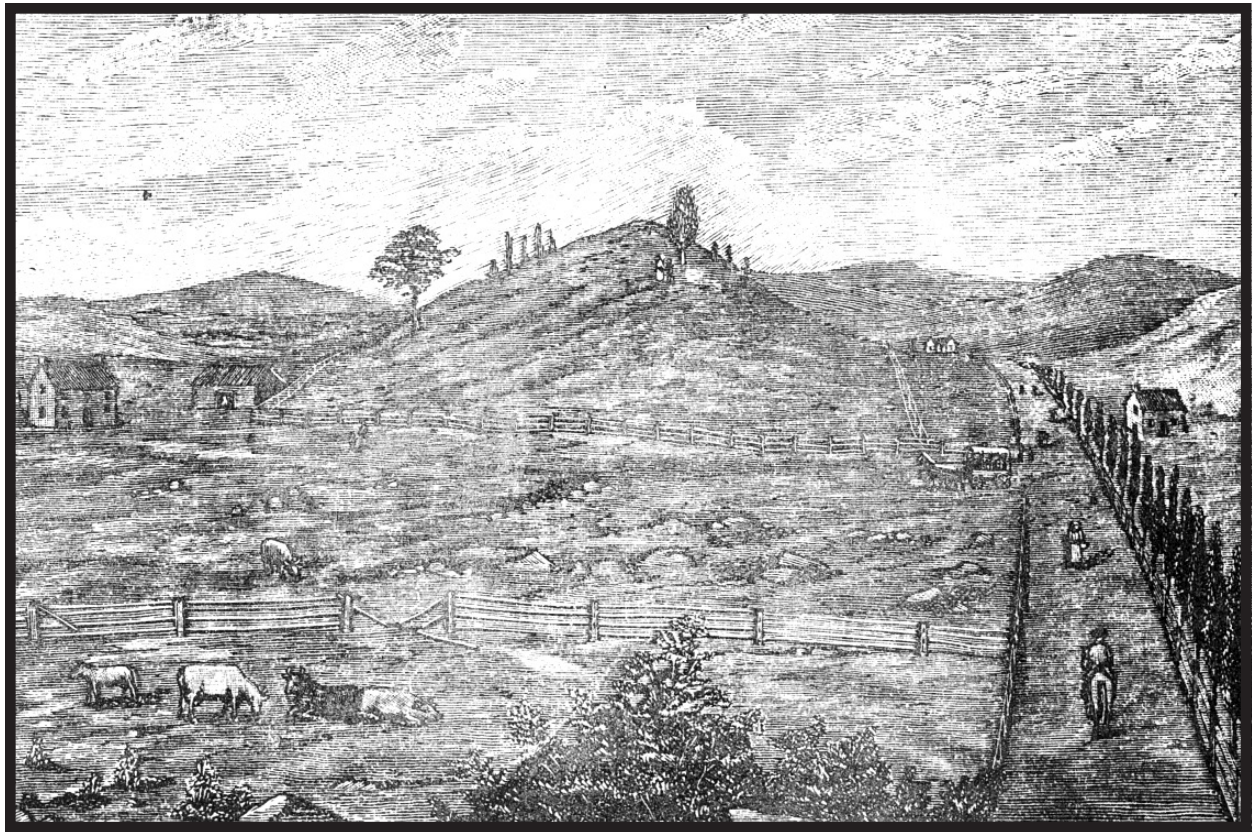




Joseph Smith



Brigham Young



The Hill Cumorah

# 1. A Marvelous Work?

In 1830 the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith published the Book of Mormon—a book which purports to be a history of the “former inhabitants of this continent.” The same year he organized a church in the state of New York.

Today, there are two main groups which claim to base their teachings upon Joseph Smith’s works. They are the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is by far the largest of these two groups. It claims to have about 3,000,000 members, and church leaders predict that if the church continues to grow at the same rate, they will have 10,000,000 members by 2000 A.D. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, October 21, 1967, p. 1).

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are commonly referred to as “Mormons.” The Mormons have their headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah. In this book we will deal primarily with this church.

## Miraculous Claims

The claims of Mormonism are such that they cannot be ignored. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards claims that “There is not an honest man or woman in this world who loves the Lord who wouldn’t join this Church if they knew what it was” (*Deseret News*, Church Section, January 22, 1966, p. 16).

The story of Joseph Smith is really very interesting. When he was a young man, his family moved to the state of New York. Within a few miles of his home there was a hill, which Joseph Smith later called the Hill Cumorah. According to Joseph Smith, this was no ordinary hill, for on this hill two of the greatest battles in history were fought. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, states: “Both the Nephite and Jaredite civilizations fought their **final great wars** of extinction at and near the **Hill Cumorah** (or Ramah as the Jaredites termed it), which hill is located between Palmyra and Manchester in the western part of the state of New York. It was here that Moroni hid up the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 175).

On page 454 of the same book, Bruce R. McConkie stated: “It is reported by President Brigham Young that there was in the Hill Cumorah a room containing many wagon loads of plates.”

An ordinary person would probably see nothing of importance about this hill, but to the Mormons this is one of the most important places on earth.

While Joseph Smith was digging a well for Clark Chase, he found “a chocolate-colored, somewhat egg-shaped stone” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 1, p. 129). This might have been just an ordinary stone (maybe a little unusual in appearance), but to Joseph Smith it was a “Seer Stone.” This stone had been prepared by God, and through it Joseph Smith received revelations. Joseph Smith claimed that on the night of September 21, 1823, he had a visitor. But this was no ordinary visitor, it was an **Angel** sent from God. The Angel told Smith that gold plates were buried in the Hill Cumorah. The next day Joseph

Smith found these plates, and, if his story is true, he made the greatest discovery in the history of archaeology. Archaeologists have searched for years trying to piece together the history of the ancient inhabitants of this land, but Joseph Smith turned over one stone and found all the answers. Underneath this stone he found a box which contained the **gold plates**. These plates contained “an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang.” More important than this, however, they contained “the fulness of the everlasting Gospel.” According to the Mormon leaders, the Book of Mormon is far superior to the Bible because it contains the “pure” words of Christ. The Bible, they claim, has been altered by wicked Priests. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

... the “everlasting gospel” could **not** be discovered through reading the Bible alone . . . this is the only Christian church in the world that did **not** have to rely upon the Bible for its organization and government; . . . if we had no Bible we would still have all the needed direction and information through the revelations of the Lord “to his servants the prophets” in these latter-days. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 1966, p. 41)

After the Mormon Church was organized, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which stated that the Saints were to gather to Jackson County, Missouri. To the Mormon leaders, this was no ordinary land; they taught that this was the place where the “Garden of Eden” was located. Bruce R. McConkie stated: “The early brethren of this dispensation taught that the **Garden of Eden** was located in what is known to us as the land of Zion, an area for which **Jackson County, Missouri**, is the center place” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 20). In Daviess County, Missouri, Joseph Smith found the remains of an altar which he claimed was built by Adam. Bruce R. McConkie stated: “At that great gathering **Adam** offered sacrifices on an altar built for the purpose. **A remnant of that very altar** remained on the spot down through the ages. On May 19, 1838, Joseph Smith and a number of his associates stood on the remainder of the pile of stones at a place called Spring Hill, Daviess County, Missouri” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 21). O. B. Huntington made these statements in an article published in the Mormon publication *The Juvenile Instructor*:

**Adam’s Altar**, which was mentioned, I have visited many times. I sat upon the wall of stone and reflected upon the scenes that had taken place thousands of years ago right where I was. There were the rocks that Father Adam used . . . Joseph said, “That altar was built by our Father Adam and there he offered sacrifice.” . . . according to the words of the Prophet Joseph, mankind in that age continued to emigrate eastwardly until they reached the country on or near the Atlantic coast; and that in or **near Carolina Noah built his remarkable ship**, in which he, his family, and all kinds of animals lived a few days over one year without coming out of it. (*The Juvenile Instructor*, November 15, 1895, pp. 700-701)

(For additional information on this subject see our publication *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 74-78.)

In June, 1834, while traveling toward Independence, Missouri, Joseph Smith discovered a “skeleton of a man.” This was no ordinary skeleton, however. It was revealed



to Joseph Smith by “the Spirit of the Almighty” that “the person whose skeleton” was before him was “Zelph” a “white Lamanite” and a “man of God,” who was killed during the “last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80).

In the year 1835 a man came to Kirtland, Ohio, with some mummies and rolls of papyrus. Joseph Smith examined the rolls and stated that “one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236). When Josiah Quincy visited Nauvoo in 1844, Joseph Smith showed him the papyrus rolls. Quincy later wrote:

“And now come with me,” said the prophet “and I will show you the curiosities.” . . . There were some pine presses fixed against the wall of the room. These receptacles Smith opened, and disclosed four human bodies, shrunken and black with age. “These are mummies,” said the exhibitor. “I want you to look at that little runt of a fellow over there. He was a great man in his day. Why, that was Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt!” Some parchments inscribed with hieroglyphics were then offered us. They were preserved under glass and handled with great respect. “That is the **handwriting of Abraham**, the Father of the Faithful,” said the prophet. “This is the **autograph of Moses**, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron. Here we have the earliest account of the Creation, from which Moses composed the First Book of Genesis.” . . . We were further assured that the prophet was the only mortal who could translate these mysterious writings, and that his power was given by direct inspiration. (*Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, Edited by William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, 1958, pp. 136-137)

In 1843 “six brass plates” were found near Kinderhook, Illinois. At least one of these plates is still in existence, but it is considered to be of little importance. Joseph Smith, however, claimed that these plates were ancient records: “I have translated a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham, through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of heaven and earth” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 372).

Joseph Smith claimed that his powers as a “Seer” extended even beyond the earth. In the journal of Oliver B. Huntington we find the following:

#### **Inhabitants of the Moon**

“The **inhabitants of the moon** are more of a uniform size than the inhabitants of the earth, being about 6 feet in height.

“They dress very much like the quaker style and are quite general in style, or fashion of dress.

“They live to be very old; coming generally, near a thousand years.”

This is the description of them as **given by Joseph Smith the Seer**, and he could “See” whatever he asked the father in the name of Jesus to see. (“Journal of Oliver B. Huntington,” vol. 3, p. 166 of typed copy at Utah State Historical Society)

Although many people could not accept Joseph Smith’s claims, there were a number of people who gave support to his ideas. Martin Harris, for instance, provided Joseph Smith with financial support and became one of the “Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon.” Like Joseph Smith, Martin Harris was a visionary man. William A. Linn gives this information:

Daniel Hendrix relates that as he and Harris, were riding to the village one evening, and he remarked on the beauty of the moon, Harris replied that if his companion could only see it as he had, he might well call it beautiful, explaining that he had actually **visited** the moon, and added that it “was only the faithful who were permitted to visit the celestial regions.” (*The Story of the Mormons*, New York, 1902, p. 35)

For many years after Joseph Smith’s death the Mormons continued to teach that the moon was inhabited. On July 24, 1870,

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

Who can tell us of the **inhabitants** of this little planet that shines of an evening, called the **moon**? . . . when you inquire about the **inhabitants** of that sphere you find that the most learned are as ignorant in regard to them as the ignorant of their fellows. So it is in regard to the **inhabitants of the sun**. Do you think it is inhabited? I rather think it is. Do you think there is any life there? **No question of it; it was not made in vain.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 271)

As late as 1892 the teaching that the moon was inhabited appeared in a church publication. In an article published in the *Young Woman’s Journal*, O. B. Huntington stated:

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

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

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

He described the men as averaging near six feet in height, and dressing quite uniformly in something near the Quaker style.

In my Patriarchal blessing, given by the father of Joseph the Prophet, in Kirtland, 1837, I was told that I should preach the gospel before I was 21 years of age; that I should preach the gospel to the inhabitants upon the islands of the sea, and—to the **inhabitants of the moon**, even the planet you can now behold with your eyes. (*The Young Woman’s Journal*, published by the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Associations of Zion, 1892, vol. 3, pp. 263-264)

While very few Mormons today would try to defend Joseph Smith’s ideas about the “inhabitants of the moon,” the church still teaches that the Book of Mormon is scripture, that Adam’s altar is in Missouri, and that the Book of Abraham was translated from the Egyptian papyrus.

Although Joseph Smith lived to be only 38 years old, the Mormon leaders claim that he had numerous visits from “glorious personages” from heaven. Not only was he visited by God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, but by John the Baptist, Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, Elias, Michael, Raphael, Nephi, Moroni, Mormon, and possibly others.

Obviously, Joseph Smith was either one of the greatest prophets who ever walked the face of the earth, or the whole thing is a fraud from beginning to end. John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

. . . if God has not spoken, if the angel of God has not appeared to Joseph Smith, and if these things are not true of which we speak, then the whole thing is an **imposture from beginning to end**. There is no half-way house, no middle path about the matter; it is **either** one thing or the other. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 21, p. 165)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, stated:

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

If Joseph Smith was a deceiver, who wilfully attempted to mislead the people, then **he should be exposed**; his claims should be refuted, and his doctrines shown to be false. . . . I maintain that Joseph Smith was all that he claimed to be. . . . Attacks have been made from the beginning to the present, and yet every one has failed. The world has been unable to place a finger upon anything

that is inconsistent, or out of harmony in the revelations to Joseph Smith, with that which has been revealed before, or predicted by the prophets and the Lord himself. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1959, vol. 1, pp. 188-189)

### The Only True Church?

The Mormon Church sends missionaries throughout the world with the message that God has spoken from heaven and restored the true Church of Christ to the earth. These missionaries are instructed to teach that the Mormon Church is the only true church and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. They are supposed to teach the contact that his church is false and that the Mormon Church is the only true church. Conclusion number nine, which the contact is supposed to reach, is: “There was a complete apostasy and **my church is false**” (*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, p. 9).

The Mormon Church teaches that all other churches are in a state of apostasy. More than fifty pages of the introduction to the *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* are devoted to proving that all churches except the Mormon Church are in apostasy. The following is found on page XL: “Nothing less than a complete apostasy from the Christian religion would warrant the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

The Mormon leaders claim that in 1820 God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ visited Joseph Smith and told him that he “must join **none**” of the churches, “for they were **all wrong**; and the Personage who addressed me said that **all** their creeds were an **abomination** in his sight; that those professors were **all corrupt**; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof’” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, 2:18-19).

In the *Elders’ Journal*, which was edited by Joseph Smith, the following appeared: “Is it any wonder then, that we say of the priests of modern days, that they are of their father **the devil** . . . we shall see **all the priests** who adhere to the sectarian religions of the day, with **all their followers, without one exception**, receive their portion with the **devil and his angels**” (*Elders’ Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 59-60).

The following questions and answers appear in *The Seer*, which was edited by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt:

Q. Who founded the Roman Catholic Church?

A. The **devil**, through the medium of Apostates, who subverted the whole order of God . . .

Q. Did the great Protestant Reformers restore the Church of Christ to the earth?

A. **No** . . .

Q. But did not any of the Protestant Reformers have authority to Baptize and Confirm?

A. **Not any of them** . . .

Q. But did not the first Protestant Reformers receive their ordination and authority from the Catholics?

A. Yes: and in this manner they received all the authority that their mother church was in possession of; and the mother having derived her authority from the **devil**, could only impart that which his Satanic majesty was pleased to bestow upon her. . . . (*The Seer*, p. 205)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt also wrote: “The gates of hell have prevailed and will continue to prevail over the Catholic Mother of Harlots, and over all her Protestant Daughters; . . . the apostate Catholic church, with all her popes and bishops, together with all her **harlot daughters shall be hurled down to hell** . . .” (*Pamphlets by Orson Pratt*, p. 112).

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements concerning Christianity:

The Christian world, I discovered, was like the captain and crew of a vessel on the ocean without a compass, and tossed to and fro withersoever the wind listed to blow them. When the light came to me, I saw that all the **so-called Christian world was grovelling in darkness**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 73)

We may very properly say that the sectarian world do not know anything correctly, so far as pertains to salvation . . . They are more ignorant than children. (*Ibid.*, p. 229)

Brother Taylor has just said that the religions of the day were hatched in **hell**. The eggs were laid in hell, hatched on its borders, and then kicked on to the earth. (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 176)

The Christian world, so called, are heathens as to their knowledge of the salvation of God. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 171)

Our Elders may tell the priests that there are fifty-one chapters in Genesis, and but few of them, if any, will know that there are only fifty. With regard to true theology, a more **ignorant** people never lived than the present so-called Christian world. (*Ibid.*, p. 199)

Every intelligent person under the heavens that does not, when informed, acknowledge that Joseph Smith, jun., is a Prophet of God, is in darkness, and is opposed to us and to Jesus and his kingdom on the earth. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 223)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

What! are Christians ignorant? **Yes, as ignorant of the things of God as the brute beast**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 25)

We talk about Christianity, but it is a **perfect pack of nonsense** . . . the Devil could not invent a better engine to spread his work than the Christianity of the nineteenth century. (*Ibid.*, p. 167)

What does the Christian world know about God? Nothing; . . . Why, so far as the things of God are concerned, they are the **veriest fools**; they know neither God nor the things of God. (*Ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 225)

Although the present-day leaders of the Mormon Church are becoming more subtle in their attacks on other churches, they still teach that the Mormon Church is the only true church and that all others are in a state of apostasy.

### The Best People?

The Mormon Church not only teaches that all other churches are in a state of apostasy, but it also makes claims that most other churches would not dare to make. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, stated: “. . . we are the only people that know how to save our progenitors, how to save ourselves, and how to save our posterity in the celestial kingdom of God; . . . we in fact are the **saviours** of the world, . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 163).

Brigham Young once boasted: “We are the **smartest** people in the world” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 176). On another occasion he said: “I remarked to brother Kimball last Sabbath, that this people are the best people that ever lived upon the earth; . . .” (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 269).

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, still maintains that the Mormons are the best people on earth:

**Saints are the best people**. We are, notwithstanding our weaknesses, **the best people in the world**. I do not say this boastfully, for I believe that this truth is evident to all who are willing to observe for themselves. We are morally clean, in every way equal, and in many ways **superior** to any other people. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 236)

Joseph Young made this statement on July 26, 1857:

I want you to tell them, and tell all the great men of the earth, that the Latter-day Saints are to be their **redeemers**— . . . Believe in God, Believe in Jesus, and believe in Joseph his Prophet, and in Brigham his successor. And I



add, "If you will believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was a Prophet, and that Brigham was his successor, you shall be saved in the kingdom of God," . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 229)

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 7, page 287, Brigham Young made this statement: "Every spirit that confesses that Joseph Smith is a Prophet, that he lived and died a Prophet and that the Book of Mormon is true, is of God, and every spirit that does not is of anti-Christ."

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, says that there is "**no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith**. If Joseph Smith was verily a prophet, and if he told the truth . . . then this knowledge is of the most vital importance to the entire world. No man can reject that testimony without incurring the most dreadful consequences, for he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 189-190).

Thus we see that the claims of the Mormon Church are of such a nature that it cannot be considered as just another church. It is either the only true church, or it is nothing but a shadow. Brigham

Young himself stated: "By your own experience you know that 'Mormonism,' if not true, is worse than nothing; and if true, its value is beyond our computation" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 54).

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated that if the Mormon religion had errors in it the Mormon people would be grateful if someone would point them out:

. . . convince us of our errors of doctrine, if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God, and we will be ever grateful for the information, and you will ever have the pleasing reflection that you have been instruments in the hands of God of redeeming your fellow beings from the darkness which you may see enveloping their minds. (*The Seer*, pp. 15-16)

After making a long and careful study of the Book of Mormon and the history of the Mormon Church, we have come to the conclusion that the claims made by the Mormon Church leaders are false. In this book we will try to present some of the evidence which has led to this conclusion.



A photograph of two pages from *The Young Woman's Journal*, vol. 3. This was published by the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations in 1892. Notice that Joseph Smith taught that the moon was inhabited.

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bad for your growing, impressionable girls. Comedies, farces, operas of the lighter sorts, dramas, concerts and negro shows are good to cheer and amuse all, even the dear innocent girls, so once a week, say, we will allow Our Girl to visit a theatre. Out of door sports in winter or summer are excellent if conducted by the proper people and in proper places. It is self-evident that reading and quiet games are beneficial to all. Yet, see to it that the book is elevating in tone and treatment, and full of such thoughts as you want impressed on the plastic young mind. The games will be interesting, if you will help to make them so. The point is, that you yourselves must enter into every one of these amusements and attend every one that you allow your daughter to attend if that is at all possible. If you are kept at home, you will find your girls will be willing to get most of their innocent "fun" at home, if you will allow them to invite their young friends to share

their pleasure. Don't scowl and be cross when the young visitors come in, but welcome them with a smile, and do you take the lead of their fun and frolic; at least take the leading-strings in your own firm yet gentle hands, turning the current whenever it seeks to approach danger-spots, and with all the enthusiasm you can muster enter into the youthful sports and plays. I know one mother who goes down upon her knees in company with her young daughters just before the young visitors arrive and asks the blessings of God to rest within the portals of that house and upon the heart of every inmate and visitor while enjoying themselves together. I may add, the young people love to visit at that house and consider it an honor to be invited there. In one last word let me call your attention to the fact that you must insist upon one especial point in every sort and kind of amusement and that last word, that especial point, is *moderation*.

OUR SUNDAY CHAPTER.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE MOON.  
O. B. HUNTINGTON.

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

Nearly all the great discoveries of men in the last half century have, in

one way or another, either directly or indirectly, contributed to prove Joseph Smith to be a Prophet.

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

He described the men as averaging near six feet in height, and dressing quite uniformly in something near the Quaker style.

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In my Patriarchal blessing, given by the father of Joseph the Prophet, in Kirtland, 1837, I was told that I should preach the gospel before I was 21 years of age; that I should preach the gospel to the inhabitants upon the islands of the sea, and—to the inhabitants of the moon, even the planet you can now behold with your eyes.

The first two promises have been fulfilled, and the latter may be verified.

From the verification of two promises we may reasonably expect the third to be fulfilled also.

ONE truth after another men are finding out by the wisdom and inspiration given of God to them.

The inspiration of God caused men to hunt for a new continent until Columbus discovered it. Men have lost millions of dollars, and hundreds of lives to find a country beyond the north pole; and they will yet find that country—a warm, fruitful country, in-

habited by the ten tribes of Israel, a country divided by a river, on one side of which lives the half tribe of Manasseh, which is more numerous than all the others. So said the Prophet. At the same time he described the shape of the earth at the poles as being a rounded elongation, and drew a diagram of it in this form:



which any one can readily see will allow the sun's rays to fall so near perpendicular to the center that that part of the earth may be warmed and made fruitful. He quoted scripture in proof of his theory which says that "the earth flieth upon its wings in the midst of the creations of God," and said that there was a semblance in the form of the earth that gave rise to the saying.

CEDAR FORT, Utah,

Feb. 6, 1892.

HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT.

DAINTY HOUSEKEEPING.

LUCY PAGE STELLE.

**I**HAVE in mind, as I write, one of those mirth-provoking cartoons that give one some suggestion of truth as well. It was two pictures of a kitchen that was prepared for the new servant. The first showed how tastily it was fixed with a flowering plant in the window, a pretty chintz ruffle on the mantle shelf with a few tasteful ornaments, with a comfortable rocking chair with a neat tidy upon it, and

so on. The next picture showed the kitchen after Bridget had *unfixed* the place to suit herself. The flowering plant was reduced to a few dry stems. Some utensils were on the shelf, the tidy from the rocking chair was gone, and perfect havoc was wrought generally by the iconoclastic Bridget. To be sure, Bridget's early education was not conducive to elegance and refinement of surroundings, her only thought being the accomplishment of what she is paid to do.

It seems to me that a lady's sur-

## 10,000,000 Mormons Before 2000 A.D.

On page one we stated that the Mormon Church has “about 3,000,000 members, and Church leaders predict that if the Church continues to grow at the same rate, they will have 10,000,000 members by 2,000 A.D.” According to the May 1981 issue of the *Ensign*, page 19, the church had 4,638,000 members at the close of 1980. It is expected that there will be over 5,000,000 members before 1982 has passed. An article in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* recently predicted that the goal of 10,000,000 will be reached before the turn of the century. On April 6, 1980, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that “the church has 30,004 full-time missionaries—the most in its history.” The *Ensign*, May 1981, page 19, informs that about 211,000 people were converted to the Mormon Church during 1980.

## Change in Missionary Discussions

On page 3 we mentioned a six-lesson plan which Mormon missionaries memorized to teach investigators. It was known as *A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*. In 1973 a new eight-lesson plan, *The Uniform System For Teaching Families*, was published by the church. When the old missionary lessons were printed they contained no copyright notice. Because of this both John L. Smith and Hal Hougey reprinted the plan and widely distributed it to non-Mormons. Since potential converts became aware of the memorized lessons before they were presented, it undoubtedly cost the Mormon Church many members. In printing the new lesson plan the church leaders made sure that this would not happen again. There were no less than 129 warnings that *The Uniform System For Teaching Families* was copyrighted by the “Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All rights reserved.”

This manual was not as blunt with regard to other churches as the previous lesson plan but still maintained they were in a state of apostasy.

In 1979 the Mormon Church reprinted a missionary manual entitled, *Missionary Discussions For The Jewish People*. On pages JC-15 and JC-17 we find the following:

Missionary: After the days of the Apostles, revelation from heaven to the Church of Jesus Christ ceased, and divine authority was taken from the earth. This was the beginning of the false Christianity that has now multiplied into hundreds of rival churches. . . . Eventually, many pagan rituals, ceremonies, and teachings were added to the Christian church, and the church became known as the universal or “catholic” church . . . many individuals protested, often at the cost of their own lives. These protestors or reformers grew in number, which eventually resulted in the Protestant Reformation. In spite of the attempts of the reformers to reestablish the Messiah’s original church, they had no authority or revelation from God; and the final result of their efforts was to replace one apostate church with hundreds of apostate churches.

The Mormon Church was criticized for having a memorized discussion plan, and in 1981 it brought out a new plan which only has the missionary “Memorize and present the boldface portions essentially word-for-word.” The lightface portions are supposed to be presented in the missionary’s “own words.” This discussion plan should seem more natural to the contact than the older method of presentation.

## More on Moon Men

On page 2 we furnished some information which indicates that Joseph Smith thought the moon was inhabited. An anonymous typewritten article (not to be confused with the response prepared by the Historical Department) suggests that we have been dishonest with regard to this matter:

Since nothing new can be learned, the ill-wishers invent ways to shackle Joseph with “lunar lunacy.” Unfortunately, since the Tanner’s work is revered as a “masterpiece” of the “most authentic, best documented” materials on Mormonism (See II), Joseph, in his innocence, is stealthily “framed” with moon-mania.

The anonymous writer says that Oliver B. Huntington’s account about Joseph Smith describing the inhabitants of the moon “is only the senile but loving memories of an aged Mormon whose Church honored him by publishing his recollections rather than covertly hiding them in embarrassment: the offense with which Mormons are so notoriously charged.” While it is true that Mr. Huntington’s statement was written toward the end of his life, we can hardly believe that the church leaders would publish Huntington’s statement under the title, “The Inhabitants of the Moon,” just to humor him. They must have believed what Huntington said about the moon. Apostle Abraham H. Cannon took enough interest in Huntington’s statement to record the information in his diary (see the “Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” vol. 18, p. 57).

The anonymous writer tries to discredit Huntington’s statement because it mentions a blessing given by Joseph Smith’s father:

The blessing given by Joseph Smith Sn. has been discussed. Such blessings, if they exist, are on record with the Church. Therefore, one wonders why no one has found Mr. Huntington’s 1837 Patriarchal blessing. The credibility of the claims of the Mormon foe rest in its existence. The fact of the matter is, he did not receive a Patriarchal blessing from anyone in 1837. No such Patriarchal blessing exists. (See 6.) Mr. Huntington received his Patriarchal blessing at the hands of Hyrum Smith on Nov. 14, 1843 . . . Oliver did receive a father’s blessing on Dec. 7th, 1836 . . . Included in this blessing was the following: “. . . before thou art twenty-one thou wilt be called to preach the fullness of the gospel, thou shalt have power with God even to translate thyself to Heaven, and preach to the inhabitants of the moon or planets, if it shall be expedient, . . .” It is likely that Mr. Huntington’s dim recollection of the early days mixed his father’s pronouncement with his 1843 Patriarchal blessing, which he thought was given in 1837.

We feel that the anonymous writer is making a very serious error when he states that “Such blessings, if they exist, are on record with the Church.” Actually, Joseph Smith, Senior’s own book containing Patriarchal Blessings has a short sketch added by authority of the Mormon historians George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff which makes it clear that “A considerable number of blessings which were given by that Patriarch, were not recorded, through the negligence of the Scribes” (typed copy).

The fact that Huntington received a Patriarchal Blessing from Hyrum Smith in 1843 certainly does not rule out an earlier blessing by Joseph Smith’s father. Even though the Patriarchal Blessing books are still suppressed, we have learned that Huntington also received a blessing from Patriarch John Smith.

While it is true that Oliver B. Huntington received a blessing from his father William Huntington which sounds like the blessing mentioned in the article published in *The Young Woman’s Journal*, we feel that it is likely that he also received a blessing from Joseph Smith, Senior, which mentioned visiting the moon. Michael Marquardt has given us a typed extract from a blessing given by Joseph Smith’s father to Lorenzo Snow on Dec. 15, 1836. Lorenzo Snow, who later became President of the Church, received this promise: “Thou shalt have power to translate thyself from one planet to another; and power to go to the moon . . .”

The wording of the blessing given to Lorenzo Snow by Joseph Smith, Senior is so similar to the wording we find in the blessing given by Oliver B. Huntington’s father that we feel there must be a connection between the two. Below is a comparison:

**BLESSING GIVEN BY JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.** December 15, 1836: **Thou shalt have power to translate thyself** from one planet to another; and power to go to **the moon** . . .

**BLESSING GIVEN BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.** December 7, 1836: . . . thou **shalt have power** with God even **to translate thyself** to Heaven, & preach to the inhabitants of **the moon** or planets, . . .

We believe that William Huntington may have obtained his wording from Joseph Smith's father. Since Oliver claimed he did receive a Patriarchal Blessing from Joseph Smith, Sen., it seems very likely that his father's blessing was dependent upon it. It is also interesting to note that the blessing to Lorenzo Snow was given only a week after William Huntington's blessing. If the church leaders would allow us to examine the Patriarchal Blessings of Joseph Smith, Sen. and his son Hyrum we might find even more information about visiting the moon. Access to these blessings has even been denied to some of the top Mormon scholars.

At any rate, Eugene England has recently published *George Laub's Journal*, "Commenced, January 1, 1845." It contains an account of the teaching of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith (Joseph Smith's own brother and a member of the First Presidency) on "the plurality of gods & worlds," in which we find the following:

. . . every Star that we see is a world and is inhabited the same as this world is peopled. The Sun & Moon is inhabited & the Stars

& (Jesus Christ is the light of the Sun, etc.). The Stars are inhabited the same as this Earth. (*George Laub's Journal*, as cited in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1978, p. 177)

Another statement indicating that Joseph Smith himself believed the moon was inhabited has come to light. It appears in a typewritten paper entitled, "sayings of the Prophet Joseph." We have not been able to determine the author of this paper, but it comes from the file of a Mormon scholar. On page 3 of this paper we find this intriguing statement:

Father Rogers said in the St. George Temple that he heard the Prophet say in the Kirtland Temple, that the moon was inhabited by a race of people about middle stature and very mild and they would never have put the Saviour to death if he had come among them.

Unfortunately, this brief statement does not give "Father Rogers" first name. Samuel Hollister Rogers, however, was in Kirtland and lived long enough to have mentioned this matter at the St. George Temple. There may have been other men by the name of Rogers who could meet these qualifications, but more research needs to be done with regard to this matter. In any case, evidence that the Smith family believed the moon was inhabited appears to be mounting.





## 2. Change, Censorship and Suppression

The fact that Mormonism is changing is very obvious to anyone who studies the history of the church. Things that were approved of when Mormonism first began are now condemned, and things that are now approved were once condemned. An example of such a change might be the Mormon Church's attitude toward dancing. Today most wards in the Mormon Church have a recreation hall where dances are held.

Dancing seems to be a vital part of the church's recreation program, but this has not always been the case. A member of the church today might be surprised to find out that if he lived in Kirtland in 1837, he could have been cut off from the church for participating in a dance. Joseph Smith made the following comment under the date of October 22, 1837: "Sunday 22.—The church in Kirtland disfellowshipped twenty-two brethren and sisters until they make satisfaction for uniting with the world in a dance the Thursday previous" (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 2, p. 519). On page 520 of the same volume, Joseph Smith stated: "Most of those who were complained of for participating in the recreation on the 19th and had not confessed, acknowledged their fault to the High Council on the first of November, and the remainder were required so to do **or be cut off from the church.**"

Dancing was apparently introduced into the church during the Nauvoo period. Joseph Smith became very interested in dancing, for under the date of January 1, 1844, he recorded the following in the *History of the Church*:

A large party took a new year's supper **at my house**, and had music and **dancing till morning**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 155)

Dancing became so popular in Nauvoo that the Mormons were even dancing in the Nauvoo Temple prior to the dedication. The Mormon writer Truman G. Madsen stated:

... a group of the Saints met in the **Nauvoo Temple**. Part of the morning was spent in sweaty, gritty cleaning and painting. . . . Later, bathed and dressed in their temple robes, they participated in temple worship . . .

The group next adjourned to the upstairs rooms and relished a feast of raisins and cakes. And then, until **late in the evening**, they enjoyed music and **dancing**. What? The whole of life—even **dancing**—surrounded by a **temple** of God? **Yes**. And why not? (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, pp. 130-131)

Thus we see that the Mormon Church's stand on dancing has changed over the years. At first a member might have been excommunicated for dancing, but today it is one of the most popular entertainments in the church.

### Changing Doctrines

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, claims that the Mormon Church has not changed its doctrines in the last hundred years:

Yet of **all** churches in the world only this **one** has not found it necessary to readjust **any part** of its **doctrine** in the last hundred years. (*No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, a Brief Review of Mrs. Brodie's Reluctant Vindication of a Prophet She Seeks to Expose, by Hugh Nibley, p. 46)

It does not take much research to reveal the fact that Dr. Nibley is mistaken when he says that the Mormon Church has not changed its doctrine. Take for example the doctrine of plural marriage. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, once declared:

"... we are not ashamed here in this great metropolis of America \*\*\* to declare that we are **polygamists**. We are not ashamed to proclaim to this great nation, to rulers and people, to the president, senators, legislators, judges; to high and low, rich and poor, priests and people, that **we are firm, conscientious believers in polygamy**, and that it is part and parcel of our religious creed." (*Life of John Taylor*, p. 255)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, once stated: "The only men who become **Gods**, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into **polygamy**" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 269).

Today the Mormon leaders teach that "plural marriage is **not essential** to salvation or exaltation" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 523). Bruce R. McConkie also stated that "**any** who pretend or assume to engage in **plural marriage** in this day, . . . are living in **adultery**, have already sold their souls to Satan and . . . will be **damned in eternity**" (*Ibid.*, pp. 522-523).

Obviously, there has been a major doctrinal change regarding polygamy.

### Rebaptism

Today the Mormon Church does not believe in rebaptism. President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

It is unnecessary, however, to rebaptize persons merely as a renewal of their covenants every time they transgress in order that they may obtain forgiveness, for this would greatly **cheapen** this sacred ordinance and weaken its effectiveness. One baptism by water for the remission of sins should be enough, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 335)

As we examine the early history of the Mormon Church, however, we find that rebaptism was a very popular practice among the Mormons during the days of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. In the *Church Chronology*, under the year 1856, the following is found: "A general reformation took place throughout the Church, most of the Saints **renewing their covenants by baptism**" (*Church Chronology*, by Andrew Jensen, p. 55).

The following testimony is found in the *Temple Lot Case*:

All the members of the church that came into Utah were instructed to be baptised under Brigham Young, . . .

After this, the church had another reformation, and under that **we were baptized the second time and were baptized for the same thing** . . . I do not know whether we had got **out** of Christ then or not." (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 341)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this statement in 1875:

That seems to be a kind of standing ordinance for all Latter-day Saints who emigrate here, from the **First Presidency down, all are rebaptized** and set out anew by renewing their covenants. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, p. 160)



Brigham Young claimed that the practice of rebaptism was established by revelation: “At this time came a **revelation**, that the Saints could be baptized and **rebaptized** when they chose, and then that we could be baptized for our dear friends, . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, p. 241).

August W. Lundstrom testified in the *Reed Smoot Case* that the Mormon Church discontinued the practice of rebaptism in 1898; he also gave this testimony:

Mr. VAN COTT. Just what was your point with Apostle Cowley about that ordinance of rebaptism? “Mr. Lundstrom. It was in regard to the discontinuance of **rebaptizing**, which previously had been customary, when cases came up and rebaptizing was requested by parties; and at that time we received instructions not to rebaptize any more. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, p. 159)

Mr. LUNDSTROM. I found inconsistencies in the doctrine—changes being made. I had become a Mormon because I thought it was the only true religion. I was sincere as long as I believed it to be the true church and being revealed from God; but when I found changes creeping in—later revelations, as they were called, being open contradictions to former revelations—I began to study a little closer, and in fact I found a weak point in the wall, and when I touched it it became a large enough hole so that I could crawl through. The foundation was not solid, so I left it. My conviction that I had before fell through. Believing sincerely that it was the truth previously, I became just as well convinced after that it was not the truth. (*Ibid.*, p. 154)

There are a number of different doctrines—for example, plural marriage, rebaptism and the law of adoption—which were so important in the early Mormon Church that God had to give revelations concerning them that were repudiated by later Mormon leaders. Contrary to Dr. Nibley’s statement, there are probably few churches that have made as many doctrinal changes as the Mormon Church.

## Censorship

The Mormon leaders have made many important changes in the policies and doctrines of the church. Because they do not want their people to know that such changes take place, they sometimes alter the church records. An example of a change in policy that caused a number of changes in Mormon records is the attitude of the Mormon leaders toward the “Word of Wisdom.” The “Word of Wisdom” is a revelation given by Joseph Smith on February 27, 1833. It forbids the use of hot drinks, alcoholic beverages and tobacco. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart made this statement concerning the “Word of Wisdom”:

. . . no one can hold high office in the Church, on even the stake or ward level, nor participate in temple work, who is a known user of tea, coffee, liquor or tobacco. . . .

**The Prophet himself carefully observed the Word of Wisdom**, and insisted upon its observance by other men in high Church positions, although he seems to have been quite tolerant of others’ weakness in this regard. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 90)

In spite of this statement by John J. Stewart, Joseph Smith did **not** keep the “Word of Wisdom,” and at times he would even advise others to disobey it. In a thesis written at Brigham Young University, Gary Dean Guthrie gives the following information:

Joseph tested the Saints to make sure their testimonies were of his religion and not of him as a personable leader. Amasa Lyman, of the First Presidency, related: Joseph Smith tried the faith of the Saints many times by his peculiarities. At one time, he had preached a powerful sermon on the Word of Wisdom, and immediately thereafter, he rode through the streets of Nauvoo **smoking a cigar**. Some of the brethren were tried as was Abraham of old. (“Joseph Smith As An Administrator,” Master’s Thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1969, p. 161)

Mr. Guthrie’s source for this reference is the diary of the Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon, vol. XIX, October 1, 1895. The original journal is now located in the Special Collections Dept. of the Brigham Young University Library, and photographs are on file at the Utah State Historical Society and the University of Utah Library.

Because of the importance that is now placed upon the “Word of Wisdom,” most members of the Mormon Church are shocked when they find out that Joseph Smith did **not** keep it. It is very surprising to learn that Joseph Smith, the man who introduced the temple ceremony into the Mormon Church, would not be able to go through the Temple if he were living today because of his frequent use of alcoholic beverages. In his history, Joseph Smith admitted several times that he drank wine, and under the date of June 1, 1844, he stated that he had “a glass of beer at Moessers.” The statement concerning the glass of beer was apparently very embarrassing to later Mormon leaders, for in recent editions of the *History of the Church* it has been deleted. When Joseph Smith’s statement was first published in the *Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star*, it read as follows:

Then went to John P. Greene’s, and paid him and another brother \$200. **Drank a glass of beer at Moessers**. Called at William Clayton’s, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 23, p. 720)

When this statement was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, seven words were deleted without any indication:

Then went to John P. Greene’s, and paid him and another brother \$200. Called at William Clayton’s, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 424)

Other important changes concerning the “Word of Wisdom” were made in Joseph Smith’s *History*. At one time Joseph Smith encouraged some “brethren” to break the “Word of Wisdom”:

It was reported to me that some of the brethren had been drinking whisky that day in violation of the Word of Wisdom.

I called the brethren in and investigated the case, and was satisfied that no evil had been done, **and gave them a couple of dollars, with directions to replenish the bottle to stimulate them in the fatigues of their sleepless journey**. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 21, p. 283)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, twenty-three words were deleted without any indication:

It was reported to me that some of the brethren had been drinking whisky that day in violation of the Word of Wisdom.

I called the brethren in and investigated the case, and was satisfied that no evil had been done. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 450)

Another important change was made in the *History of the Church* under the date of June 27, 1844—the day of Joseph Smith’s death. In the version that was first published, Joseph Smith recommended that the Apostle Willard Richards use a pipe and tobacco to settle his stomach:

Dr. Richards was taken sick, when Joseph said, “Brother Markham, as you have a pass from the Governor to go in and out of the jail, go and get the Doctor **a pipe and some tobacco** to settle his stomach,” and Markham went out for **them**. When he had got the **pipe and tobacco** and was returning to jail, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 24, p. 471)

This has been changed to read:

Dr. Richards was taken sick, when Joseph said, “Brother Markham, as you have a pass from the Governor to go in and out of the jail, go and get the doctor **something he needs** to settle his stomach,” and Markham went out for **medicine**. When he had got the **remedies desired**, and was returning to jail, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 614)

ment is based. That assumption may be true, but it is often false; and when neither logic nor the logician can determine which, then syllogising is mere building on the sand. Therefore it is well for us that the Lord does not arm the messenger of salvation with sophistry, but with truth, because those who have the truth and the ability to apply it can at once discern the specious falsehoods of dishonest claptrap, and send conviction and remorse into the hearts of those who thought to confound them. Witness the answers of Christ to the Scribes and Pharisees, and see also the admirable handling of Zeezrom, the lawyer, by Amulek (Book of Mormon, pars. 239-40).

Let no one suppose, however, that the mere profession of truth enables men to use this power. They must, as before stated, have the ability to apply it. Now, the Lord's mode of imparting this ability is through the gift of the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost leads men into truth without the noise and clamour of debate, wherein men generally lose the very truths they are debating about, and get the spirit of the Devil, which causes them to hate and often to destroy each other. If the Saints would testify with power, or the Priesthood preach with effect, they must be earnest in their work, and so live that the good Spirit will dictate them continually.

## HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(Continued from page 706.)

A Presidential election was recently held on board the *Osprey*, and the result was as follows:—

Joseph Smith,	65 gentlemen,	and 6 ladies.
Henry Clay,	27	„ „ 3
Van Buren,	12	„ „ 0

Friday, 31.—“State of Illinois, } ss.  
City of Nauvoo, }

May 31, 1844.

Then and there personally appeared before me, Joseph Smith, Mayor of the City of Nauvoo, the undersigned H. T. Hugins, of Burlington, Iowa Territory, and made solemn oath that Thomas B. Johnson did, on the 30th day of May, 1844, declare in his presence that he intended to bring dragoons and troops of the United States from Iowa Territory into this city, for the purpose of resisting the authority and power of the Municipal Court of said city, and that he should disregard entirely the authority of said court, and that he deemed the authority of said court of no effect. Deponent further states that said Johnson, in his said conversation, had reference to the case of Jeremiah Smith, which had been decided by said court.

H. T. HUGINS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 31st day of May, 1844,

WM. W. PHELPS, Clerk M. C.”

Upon the foregoing affidavit, I issued a *capias* to arrest T. B. Johnson for threatening the peace of the city with

United States dragoons. At 10 a.m., called at my office. At 1 p.m., called to see sister Richards, who was sick. I administered to her the laying on of hands, when she felt better. Afternoon, I attended General Council, when brother Emmett made his report. Rode out in the evening to Van Orden's, and paid him \$100. Two or three Indians staid in the hall all night.

Saturday, June 1. At home. Some gentle showers.

At one, p.m., I rode out with Dr. Richards and O. P. Rockwell. Called on Davis at the Boat. Paid Manhard \$90. Met George J. Adams, and paid him \$50. Then went to John P. Greene's, and paid him and another brother \$200. Drank a glass of beer at Moessers. Called at William Clayton's, while Dr. Richards and O. P. Rockwell called at the Doctor's new house. Returned home at 4½ p.m.

At 8 p.m., Peter Maughan, John Saunders, and Jacob Peart called at Dr. Richards' to consult about a coal-bed on Rock River. I suggested that it would be profitable to employ the *Maid of Iowa* in the business of carrying the coal, &c.; and all approved of this plan.

President B. Young and Elder John E. Page held a Conference in Pittsburgh.

The photograph on above from the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 720. The photo on the next page is from the *History of the Church*, 1950 edition, vol. 6, page 424. Notice that the words “drank a glass of beer at Moessers” have been deleted.

office. At 1 p. m., called to see Sister Richards, who was sick. I administered to her the laying on of hands, when she felt better. Afternoon I attended general council, when Brother Emmett made his report. Rode out in the evening to Van Orden's, and paid him \$100. Two or three Indians staid in the hall at night.

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President Brigham Young and Elder John E. Page held a conference in Pittsburg.

I received the following letter:—

*Joel H. Walker to Joseph Smith—Proposes to Join Prophet in Western Volunteer Movement.*

BOSTON, May 9th, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR.—Being so closely confined in the postoffice in this city, where I have been but a short time, I have not, before this morning been aware that you had petitioned Congress in relation to raising a military force to protect our Southern Frontier.

My purpose in addressing you is to offer my services, either in military or civil duty, as I am so much confined that my health must suffer if I remain a great length of time.

If I can make myself known to you by reputation which I think possible, I have every confidence, if in your power, you will favor my wishes.

At any rate, I hope you will write me at your earliest convenience upon receipt of this.



The reader will notice that the Mormon historians tried to make it appear that Joseph Smith was recommending “medicine” rather than “a pipe and some tobacco.”

It would appear from the reference as it was first published that the Apostle Richards was accustomed to the use of tobacco, for tobacco would certainly not settle the stomach unless a person was accustomed to its use. The Apostle Richards apparently never overcame his desire for tobacco, for Claire Noall related the following: “While his father lay ill during the last weeks of his life, Heber John used to light **his pipe** at the hearth and take it to him. He told this story to his daughter, Rhoda Richards Stevenson. She repeated the story to me” (*Intimate Disciple, A Portrait of Willard Richards*, Salt Lake City, 1957, p. 620).

At any rate, recent Mormon leaders have been very embarrassed about the early leaders’ disregard for the “Word of Wisdom,” and they have made several important changes in the *History of the Church* and other publications to cover up this change in policy. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe, however, claimed that they did not try to cover up anything in Joseph Smith’s *History*:

The Prophet and the Church stand in this history free of historical interpretations and other external trappings. There are no arguments for its case. **There are no attempts to “cover over” any event.** (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 volumes in 1, Salt Lake City, 1961, p. 332)

It does not take much research to show that this statement is completely false. At one time we made a study of the changes in the *History of the Church* and estimated that more than 17,000 words had been added and over 45,000 deleted from the time the history was first printed. We now have evidence to show that many important changes were made even before the history was first printed. These changes were made after Joseph Smith’s death. In other words, the Mormon historians altered Joseph Smith’s words before the first publication of his history appeared. If any legal document had been changed in the same way that the *History of the Church* has, someone would be in serious trouble. We will deal with the changes in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* at greater length in Chapter 7.

## Changing an Article of Faith

It is very interesting to note that even Joseph Smith’s fourth “Article of Faith” had to be changed. In this article Joseph Smith taught that there were only four things required for salvation—i.e., Faith in the Lord, Repentance, Baptism and Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. This article was not changed until many years after Joseph Smith’s death. Later Mormon historians could see that Joseph Smith had failed to mention Temple Work (Temple Work is taught to be essential for the highest exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom), so they altered Joseph Smith’s words to read that Faith, Repentance, Baptism and Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost are only the “**first principles and ordinances** of the gospel.”

The fourth Article of Faith originally read as follows:

We believe that these ordinances are: 1st, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; 2d, Repentance; 3d, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; 4th, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. (*Pearl of Great Price*, 1851 edition, p. 55)

In modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price* this Article of Faith has been changed to read as follows:

4. We believe that **the first principles and ordinances of the gospel** are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. (*Pearl of Great Price*, 1955 edition, p. 60)

## Key to Theology

In the year 1855 the Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt published a book entitled *Key to the Science of Theology*. Two years later Parley P. Pratt was “assassinated” at Van Buren, Arkansas. The church, however, has continued to reprint his book. In 1965, the Deseret Book Co., which is owned by the Mormon Church, printed the “Ninth Edition.” We have compared the 1965 reprint with the original 1855 edition and have found that many important changes have been made. Some of the most important changes are concerning the doctrine of polygamy. In the original 1855 edition we find the following:

This is heaven’s eternal law, as revealed to the ancients of all ages, who held the keys of eternal priesthood, after the order of the Son of God; and, as restored with the priesthood of the Saints of this age.

Again, it was a law of the ancient Priesthood, and is again restored, that a man who is faithful in all things, may, by the word of the Lord, through the administration of one holding the keys to bind on earth and heaven, receive and secure to himself, for time and all eternity, more than one wife.

Thus did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Patriarchs and Prophets of old.

The principal object contemplated by this law, is the multiplication of the children of good and worthy fathers, who will teach them the truth, and train them in the holy principles of salvation. This is far preferable to sending them into the world in the lineage of an unworthy or ignorant parentage, to be educated in error, folly, ignorance and crime.

The peculiar characteristics of the blessings included in the Everlasting Covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their lineage, was the multiplicity of their seed; and the perpetuity of the royal, priestly and kingly power in their lineage.

To assist in carrying out and fulfilling this covenant, good and virtuous women were given to their faithful Prophets, rulers, and wise and virtuous men; and, as it was said of the four wives of Jacob, “These did build the house of Israel.”

While peculiar blessings and encouragements were given to a good and faithful man, and to his wives and children; while they were honoured of God, and respected by all who knew them; while the father of a hundred children was had in greater honour than the hero of a hundred battles, adultery, fornication, and all unlawful intercourse was strictly prohibited, and even punished by the strictest laws—the penalty of which was death.

A daughter of Israel, who, by prostitution, was rendered unworthy, or unqualified for the duties of a virtuous wife and mother, was considered unfit to live. While the male who would thus trifle with the fountain of life, and contribute to render a female unworthy to answer the end of her creation, was also condemned to death.

Strict laws were also given and diligently taught to both sexes, regulating the intercourse between husband and wife. (*Key to the Science of Theology*, 1855, pp. 163-164)

In the 1965 edition, page 164, three hundred and forty-one words have been deleted without any indication:

This is heaven’s eternal law, as revealed to the ancients of all ages, who held the keys of eternal priesthood, after the order of the Son of God; and, as restored with the priesthood of the Saints of this age.

Strict laws were also given and diligently taught to both sexes, regulating the intercourse between husband and wife.

Hundreds of other words concerning the doctrine of polygamy have also been deleted without any indication. Many of Parley P. Pratt’s statements concerning the Godhead were changed or deleted without any indication. (For more information concerning this matter see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pp. 39-43)

It is very obvious that the changes in Parley P. Pratt’s book were deliberate falsifications, yet the Mormon leaders are not willing to admit that changes have been made. In a letter dated May 11, 1966, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards stated: “. . . I know that the Church is true, **and that the original doctrines as they were**

revealed from heaven have not been changed . . .” On pages 61 and 62 of his booklet, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*, Dr. Nibley stated: “The gospel as the Mormons know it sprang full-grown from the words of Joseph Smith. It has **never been worked over or touched up in any way**, and is **free of revisions and alterations**.”

These statements by Dr. Nibley and LeGrand Richards are, of course, completely untrue. The Mormon leaders not only change the doctrines of the church, but they also change their books to make it appear that no doctrinal changes have been made. The changes in the *Key to Theology* were made many years after the Apostle Parley P. Pratt's death. An edition was published in 1883 (26 years after his death). We compared the 1883 edition with the original 1855 edition at the places where major changes were later made. In every instance the 1883 edition agreed with the first edition. This proves that the changes **were made at least 26 years after Parley P. Pratt's death!**

These changes cannot be explained away as “typographical errors” or accidental omissions. It is very evident that they were deliberate and premeditated. It is absolutely impossible to believe that every word concerning polygamy would accidentally be omitted from the reprint of this book. Thus we see that censorship is a very important thing in the Mormon Church. It is apparently felt that more converts can be won to the church with a bogus history than with a true, factual one.

### Journal of Discourses

Heber C. Kimball apparently objected to the censorship of his sermons, but Brigham Young was converted to the idea of censorship. He once stated:

Brother Heber says that the music is taken out of his sermons when brother Carrington clips **out a word** here and there: and I have taken out the music from mine, . . .

I know that I have seen the day when, let men use language like brother Heber has to day, and many would apostatize from the true faith. In printing my remarks, I often **omit the sharp words**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 99)

After being censored, the sermons of the Mormon leaders were printed in the *Deseret News*. Later they were changed again and printed in the *Journal of Discourses*. But even after all of this censorship, many of these sermons are almost unbelievably crude and filled with doctrines which the Mormon leaders no longer teach.

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning the *Journal of Discourses*:

. . . Brigham Young secured stenographic reports of his addresses. As he traveled among the people, reporters accompanied him. All that he said was recorded. Practically all of these discourses (from December 16, 1851, to August 19, 1877) were published in the *Journal of Discourses*, which was widely distributed. The public utterances of few great historical figures have been so **faithfully** and fully preserved. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, by John A. Widtsoe, Preface vi)

Although the Apostle John A. Widtsoe claimed that the sermons of Brigham Young were “faithfully” preserved in the *Journal of Discourses*, when he reprinted them in his book *Discourses of Brigham Young* he made some important changes. For instance, in one sermon Brigham Young made some very unpatriotic remarks:

. . . I ask, had we not reason to feel that our enemies were in the ascendant? That even the government, by their silent acquiescence, were also in favor of our destruction? (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 173)

When the Apostle Widtsoe reprinted this reference twelve words were deleted without any indication:

. . . I ask, had we not reason to feel that our enemies were also in

favor of our destruction? (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, Salt Lake City, 1954, p. 478)

In a sermon delivered April 6, 1853, Brigham Young admitted that he was not a visionary man or given to prophecy:

Wait patiently, brethren, until it is done, and put forth your hands willingly to finish it. I know what it will be. I am not a visionary man, neither am I given to prophesying. When I want any of that done I call on Brother Heber—He is my prophet, he loves to prophesy, and I love to hear him. I scarcely ever say much about revelations, or visions, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 132-133)

In reprinting this quotation the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe deleted thirty-nine words without any indication:

Wait patiently, brethren, until it is done, and put forth yours hands willingly to finish it. I know what it will be. I scarcely ever say much about revelations, or visions, . . . (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 410)

As we have already shown, in one sermon Brigham Young taught that the principle of rebaptism was established by revelation:

At this time came a revelation, that the Saints could be baptized and re-baptized when they chose, and then that we could be baptized for our dear friends, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, p. 241)

The doctrine of rebaptism was entirely deleted when John A. Widtsoe republished this statement:

At this time [1840] came a revelation that we could be baptized for our dear friends, . . . (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 462)

Other changes have been made which we will not mention here (for a more thorough treatment of this matter see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pp. 43-48). All of these changes have been made in spite of the fact that in the preface to the *Discourses of Brigham Young* it is claimed that no liberties have been taken with the words of Brigham Young:

**No liberties have been taken**, in this book, **with the words of Brigham Young**. In a few instances, errors in language or spelling, which should have been caught by the printer, have been corrected. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, Preface, p. vii)

### Lucy Smith's Book

In the October, 1845, conference of the church, Joseph Smith's mother, Lucy Smith, “gave notice that she had written her history, and wished it printed before we leave this place” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 1014). The book was finally printed in 1853 by the Apostle Orson Pratt under the title *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations*. At first the Mormon newspaper *Deseret News* recommended that this book “**should be possessed by all Saints** who feel in the least degree interested with the history of the latter day work” (*The Deseret News*, November 16, 1854). By the year 1865, however, Brigham Young told members of the Mormon Church that he wanted Lucy Smith's history to be suppressed. In the *Latter-Day Saints' Millennium Star* for October 21, 1865, Lucy Smith's history was severely condemned by the First Presidency of the Church:

Happening lately, while on a preaching trip . . . to pick up a book which was lying on a table . . . we were surprised to find that it was the book . . . by Lucy Smith, . . . Our surprise at finding a copy of this work may be accounted for, by the fact of our having advertized some time ago that the book was incorrect, and that it should be **gathered up and destroyed**, so that **no copies** should be left; . . . In Great Britain diligence has been used in collecting and in **disposing of this work**, and we wish that same diligence continued there and also exercised here at home **until not a copy is left**. . . . We could go through the book and point out many false statements . . . but we do not feel to do so. It is sufficient to say that it is utterly unreliable as a history, as it contains **many falsehoods**



and mistakes . . . we, therefore, expect every one in the Church, male and female, if they have such a book, to **dispose of it** so that it will never be read by any person again. . . . those who have been instructed respecting its character, and will still keep it on their tables, and have it in their houses as a valid and authentic history for their children to read, **need rebuke**. It is transmitting lies to posterity to take such a course, and we know that **the curse of God** will rest upon every one, after he comes to the knowledge of what is here said who keeps these books for his children to learn and believe in **lies** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 27, pp. 657-658).

The Mormon leaders talked as if Orson Pratt had made a very serious mistake in publishing the book as Mrs. Smith had written it. About 10 or 11 years after Lucy Smith's death the Mormon leaders decided to revise her book. Joseph F. Smith stated:

. . . it was disapproved by President Young on August 23, 1865, and the edition was suppressed or **destroyed**. While some statements contained in the work were considered somewhat overdrawn . . . its many merits were fully recognized by the authorities, many of whom were greatly disappointed at the necessity of issuing the order to temporarily suppress its further circulation.

Subsequently, a committee of **revision** was appointed by President Young consisting of President George A. Smith and Judge Elias Smith, cousins of the Prophet, men personally familiar with the family and thoroughly conversant with Church history. They were instructed carefully to revise and correct the original work throughout, which they did, reporting their labors to President Young to his entire satisfaction. (*History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 1954 edition, Introduction)

When Brigham Young told the "committee of revision" to "revise and correct" this book, he did not mean to put in footnotes where there were errors—as any honest historian would do—but rather to make actual changes in the text.

In comparing the first edition of Lucy Smith's history— i.e., the edition Brigham Young tried to destroy—with the edition printed in 1954, we have found that 436 words have been added, 1,379 words deleted and 220 words have been changed. This is a total of 2,035 words added, deleted or changed **without any indication**. In addition, 736 words have been deleted with the omissions properly indicated.

On page 225 of the first edition of Lucy Smith's book we find the following:

HERE I shall introduce a brief history of our troubles in Missouri, given by my son Hyrum, before the Municipal Court, at Nauvoo, June 30, 1843, **when Joseph was tried for treason against the state of Missouri:-**

In the 1954 reprint (p. 259) this has been changed to read:

HERE I shall introduce a brief history of our troubles in Missouri, given by my son Hyrum, **when Joseph was** before the Municipal Court, at Nauvoo, June 30, 1843, **on a writ of Habeas Corpus:**

Photographic proof of a number of important changes in Lucy Smith's book can be found in our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 60-63.

## Book-Burning

For many years the Mormon Church has encouraged the destruction of publications that are critical of Joseph Smith or the church. The *Deseret News* (the Mormon paper published in Salt Lake City) carried a disgraceful article in 1953, in which the following statement appeared:

Good-natured Sven A. Wiman can manage a cautious grin when his married daughter relates in English, and which he can understand pretty well, how when he returned home each evening from his part-time employment in various used book stores throughout Sweden he would produce an anti-Mormon book and then proceed **to burn it**. Sweden, you learn, has literally no end of anti-Church books, and

Elder Wiman set himself up as a **one-man cleanup committee to destroy as many of these diatribes against the Church as possible**. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, May 16, 1953, p. 10)

This article gives the impression that book-burning is a good activity to be engaged in if it is directed against books critical of the church.

In 1965 we were visited by a student from Brigham Young University who had recently completed a mission for the Mormon Church in Texas. He related that while on his mission he was instructed to see that books critical of the Mormon Church were removed from libraries. He said that he was instructed to take a set of new Mormon books—furnished by the church—to each library and offer them in exchange for their old books dealing with the church. In this way he was able to trick the librarian into giving him the older books which were critical of the church. He said that the method was **very** effective in Texas, and that many of the books critical of the church were removed from the libraries by this method. That such a project was actually carried out by some Mormon missionaries has now been verified by the Mormon writer Samuel W. Taylor. He stated:

. . . I wonder how many good-will tours by the Tabernacle Choir would be required to repair the damage done to the Mormon image when *Playboy*, with its enormous circulation and impact on young people, published the fact that **Mormon missionaries were engaged in a campaign of book-burning**? The item was a letter from a librarian of Northampton, Mass., Lawrence Wikander, published first in the American Library Association's Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, May, 1963, and subsequently reprinted in *Playboy*. Wikander told of two Elders arriving at his library to inspect the index of Mormon material. They offered a list of "more up-to-date material" and after delivering it made the following proposition:

Now that we had these books which told the truth about their religion, undoubtedly we would like to discard other books in the library which told lies about the Mormon Church. Other libraries, they said, had been glad to have this pointed out to them.

Following the expose in *Playboy* a friend of mine tried to find out how extensive the missionary book-burning campaign had been. A **number of returned missionaries** from both domestic and foreign missions **admitted that they had participated in it**; but data as to when and how and by whom the project had been originated was, understandably, unavailable.

Self-appointed Comstocks among us have for years been dedicated to the unholy quest of seeking out and **destroying books considered unfavorable** . . . My brother Raymond was approached by a zealot offering a number of rare Mormon books bearing library stamps; the devout saint blandly admitted **stealing them to protect the public**, but said he was sure that Raymond, with his background of research and firm testimony, would not be harmed. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1967, p. 26)

## Suppressing the Records

Because of the fact that many church policies and doctrines have changed, and because many changes were made in the vital records of the church before they were published, it has become necessary for the Mormon leaders to hide these records from members of the church.

In the preface to the book *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, the Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: "The best place to obtain information for and against the Church is the Library of the Church Historian." In April of 1961 we decided to put this statement to the test. We wrote to approximately twenty of the authorities in the Mormon Church, asking for permission to have some of this information. The following is a copy of the letter which we sent to each of them:

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_,

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe once stated, "The best place to obtain information for and against the Church

is the Library of the Church Historian.” (*A New Witness For Christ in America*, Preface, p. vii.)

We are writing a book and we need some of this information. As we know that the Church makes microfilms, we would like the following things microfilmed.

1. Joseph Smith’s history of the church in the original handwritten form.

2. All of Joseph Smith’s journals.

3. The Far West Record.

4. The original handwritten manuscript of the Book of Mormon.

Enclosed is ten dollars for this work. We are sending this same letter to several other authorities in the church. Therefore, there should be enough money to cover the cost of this work.

If there is any possible reason why we cannot obtain microfilm copies, can we come to the Historians Office and examine these manuscripts?

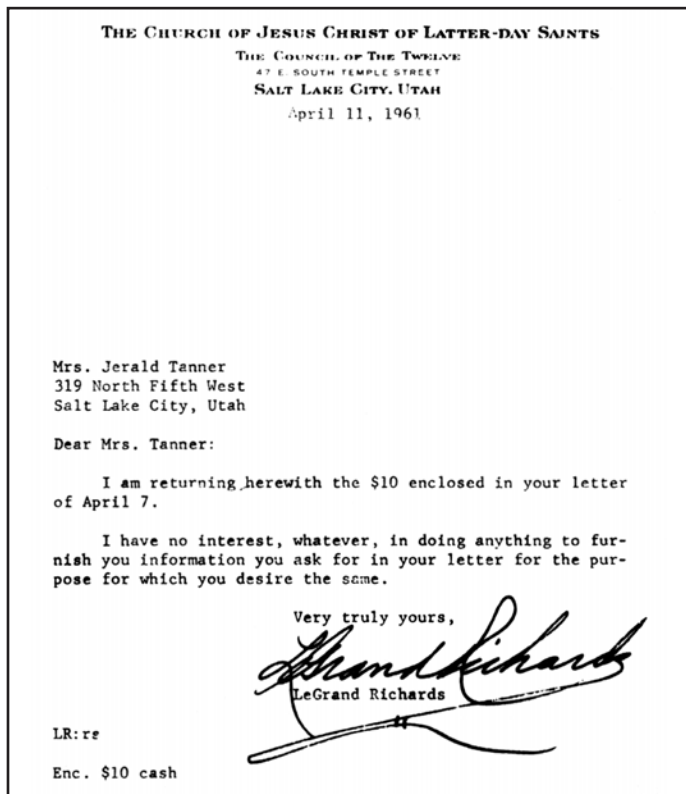
Sincerely,

Mrs. Jerald Tanner

The answers received concerning this request were very evasive. The first request, as to whether we could obtain microfilms of these documents, was **denied**. The second request, as to whether we could go to the Historian’s Office and examine the manuscripts, was simply ignored.

The letter addressed to Apostle Howard W. Hunter was answered by Claude B. Petersen, Secretary to the Council of the Twelve. In the letter he stated: “We are returning the ten dollars which was enclosed with your letter. The microfilms which you request **are not available**.”

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards very bluntly stated that he had no desire to help us.



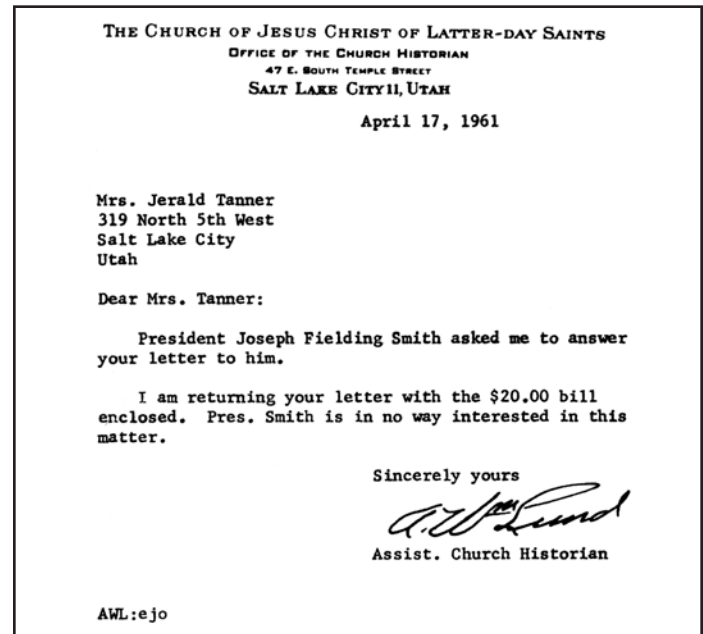
The letter addressed to David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Mormon Church, was answered by A. Hamer Reiser, Assistant Secretary to the First Presidency. In this letter he stated:

I have been directed to say that since the Church Historian has already **refused** the use of the private journals listed in your letter, this being his prerogative, his action is **approved** and the request is **denied**.

J. Reuben Clark’s letter was answered by his secretary. In the answer she stated:

President Clark has directed me to return to you herewith the ten dollars you sent him, and to suggest that if you so desire, you might wish to write directly to the Church Historian’s Office for the information you request.

After reading J. Reuben Clark’s suggestion, we decided to present the request directly to the Historian’s Office. We wrote to Joseph Fielding Smith, who was the Church Historian at the time and who recently became the tenth President of the Church.



In our *Case*, vol. 1, pages 68-76 we have published photographs of 17 letters from the authorities of the Mormon Church. From these letters it is obvious that Apostle John A. Widtsoe’s statement, “The best place to obtain information for and against the Church is the Library of the Church Historian,” was completely false.

### Dr. Nibley Refused

One good example of the suppression of early Mormon documents is the story of the Alexander Neibaur journal. Hugh Nibley, professor in the departments of history and religion at the Brigham Young University, mentioned this journal in his book, *The World and the Prophets*, and in a letter dated March 8, 1961, he gave us the following information concerning it:

The day my great-grandfather heard that remarkable account of the First Vision from Joseph Smith he wrote it down in his journal; and for 40 years after he never mentioned it to a soul. Therefore, when I came across the story unexpectedly I handed the book over to Joseph Fielding Smith and it is now where it belongs—in a safe.

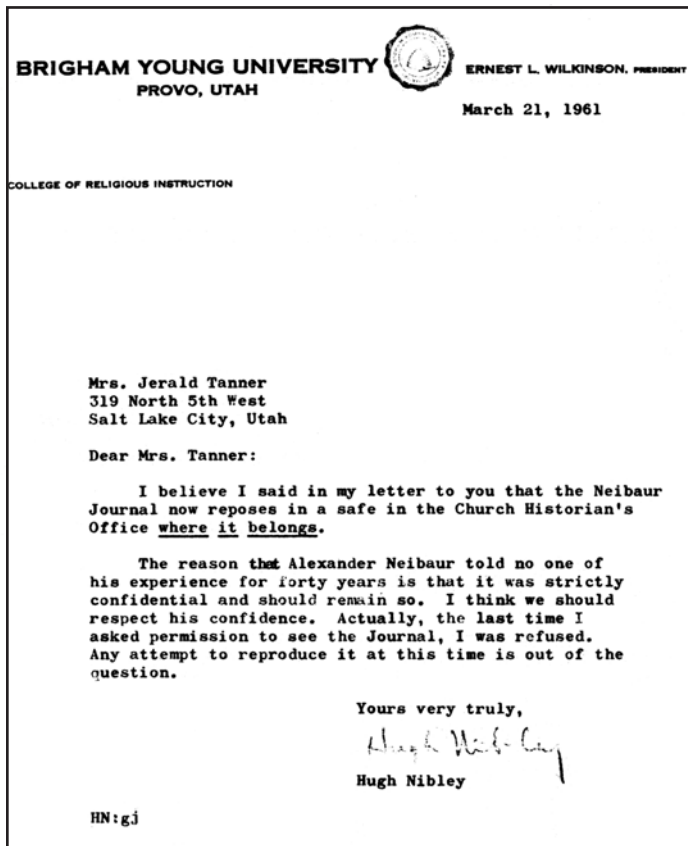
Upon learning that this journal was in the possession of the LDS Church Historian, we wrote and requested a copy of it. Joseph Fielding Smith replied as follows:

Private journals are filed in this office with the understanding that they will be available to members of the family, but not to the general public. The furnishing of copies of journals also follows this ruling.

I am sorry but this office is not in a position to furnish you with the microfilm or photograph of the Alexander Neibaur journal which you requested in your letter. The ten dollars you enclosed is herewith returned.

Two things should be noted about Joseph Fielding Smith’s reply: First, he refused to make a copy of the journal. Second, he stated that journals were placed in the Historian’s Office with the understanding that relatives

could not only see, but also obtain copies of the journals. Strange as it may seem, however, on March 21, 1961, we received a letter from Hugh Nibley in which he stated that even he was refused permission to see this journal.



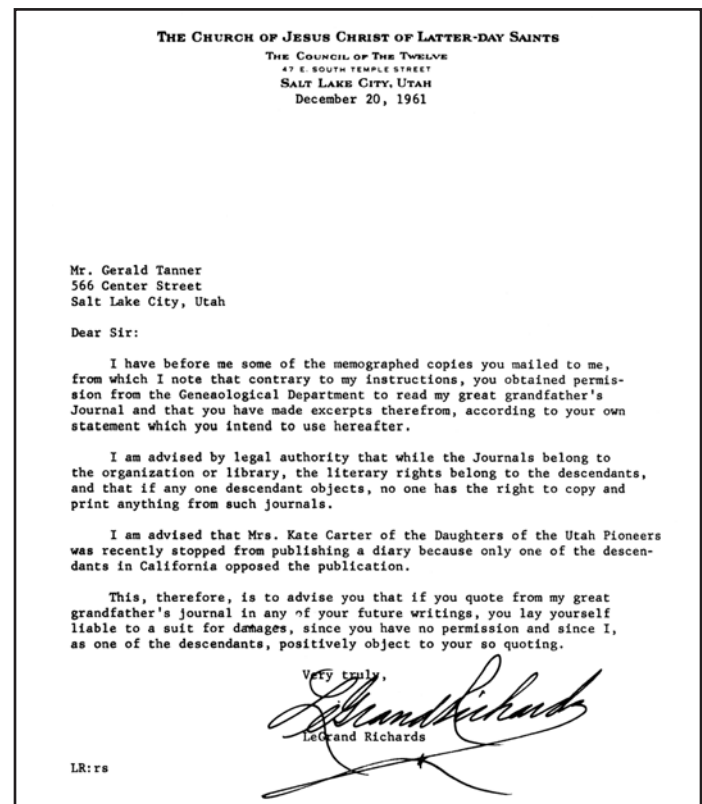
It is strange indeed that Dr. Nibley would be denied permission to see his own great-grandfather's journal, especially since he was the one that donated it to the Historian's Office. If Dr. Nibley were an enemy to the church, this would be easier to understand. Many within the church, however, feel that he is the church's greatest scholar. Louis Midgley says that "Nibley more than anyone else has assumed the role of defender of the Faith and the Saints" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1967, p. 119). It is certainly strange that a man who has a reputation as the "defender of the Faith and the Saints" should be denied access to his own great-grandfather's journal. Perhaps Dr. Nibley was disturbed over this matter, for in a letter to us, dated June 20, 1961, he stated: "Nothing would delight me more than to see all the Church records made available to those who would know how to use them" (Letter from Hugh Nibley, dated June 20, 1961).

### Apostles' Threats

Another instance of suppression occurred when we desired access to the Joseph Lee Robinson autobiography and journal. The Apostle LeGrand Richards, a descendent of Joseph Lee Robinson, was the first to draw our attention to this journal. When we went to his office he showed us some typed excerpts from the journal. We asked to see the original journal. LeGrand Richards took us to the LDS Genealogical Library, where he checked out the microfilm of the original journal. We were allowed to read a few pages and then Mr. Richards rose to leave. We asked the woman who had brought the microfilm if we could return another time and read the journal; when she said yes, Mr. Richards promptly and emphatically instructed her not to let us see the journal again. When we asked LeGrand Richards what he was trying to hide,

he immediately walked out. On several occasions we tried to see this microfilm, but we were informed that it was "out." The Church Historian's Office also refused to let us see the original journal. In a letter to a member of the church, dated September 26, 1960, Apostle Richards admitted that he had denied us access to this journal. He stated: "I took Sandra and her husband to the Genealogical society where they got out the microfilmed copy of my great grandfather's journal and permitted them both to read his statement in his own handwriting and after they had done that, Sandra's husband wanted to have the privilege of reading all of the journal. I told them not to permit him to do so; . . ."

Some time later, contrary to the instructions of LeGrand Richards, the Genealogical Library permitted us to read the journal, and we copied some important extracts, which we intend to present in this work. After LeGrand Richards found out that we intended to use these references, he became fearful that the truth would become known. In a letter dated December 20, 1961, the Apostle Richards threatened us with a law suit, in a desperate attempt to keep the truth hid.



Since the Apostle Richards did not really have a case against us, we have continued to use extracts from this journal for the last ten years. Needless to say, no suit has been filed against us.

LeGrand Richards is not the only Apostle who has threatened to sue us. Wallace Turner, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, relates the following:

One of the remarkable statements demonstrating this prejudice is in a long speech by Mark E. Petersen, one of the apostles, in a conference at Brigham Young University in August, 1954. . . . A convention of LDS teachers of religion at the college level was called together and Apostle Petersen spoke to them on "Race Relations—as They Affect the Church." . . .

Petersen is the fifth-ranking member of the Council of Twelve Apostles . . .

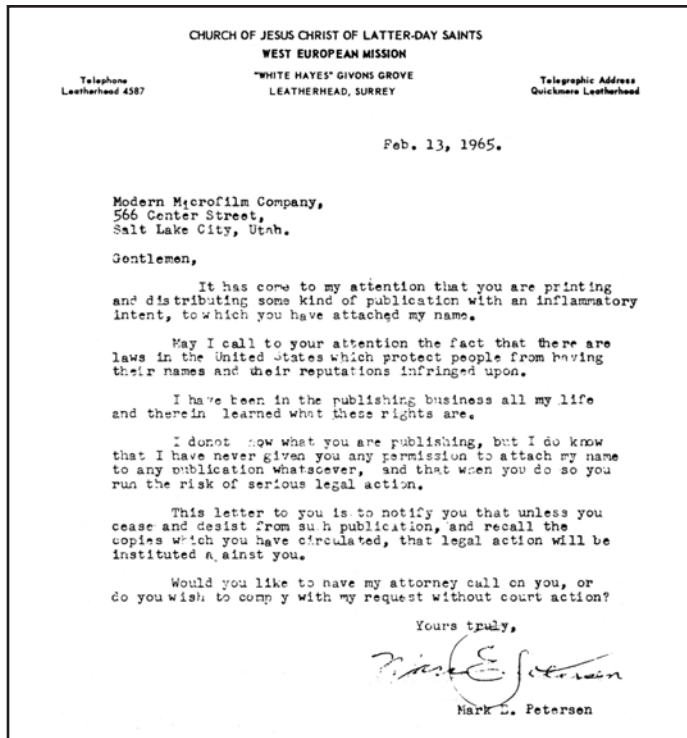
This speech was delivered in a closed meeting. A copy of it came into the hands of James D. Wardle, the Salt Lake City barber who is a member of the Reorganized LDS Church. Wardle has enjoyed many years of baiting



his Utah Mormon townsmen, and made his copy available to Jerald Tanner the LDS apostate who specializes in circulating anti-LDS materials. Tanner went to the LDS library, found a copy of the speech and assured himself that it was the same speech he had received from Wardle. But the church would not give him a copy he could take away with him.

Using the Wardle copy as his source, Tanner began to circulate the address. At that time Apostle Petersen was in England leading the mission there. In early 1965 he wrote to Tanner threatening to sue him if he did not stop publication and recall the previously issued copies of the speech. Tanner gleefully reproduced and circulated the letter. Since then Petersen has returned to Salt Lake City and no suit has been filed. (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 249, 250, 253, 254)

Below is a photograph of the letter which we received from the Apostle Mark E. Petersen.



As Wallace Turner stated, we reproduced the Apostle Petersen's letter (together with the letter written by the Apostle Richards) and distributed thousands of copies. Many of them were distributed at the conference of the Mormon Church. Mark E. Petersen had returned from Europe to attend this conference. Although conference is held only fourteen blocks from Modern Microfilm Co., neither Mr. Petersen nor his attorney called upon us. Since we had printed nothing but the truth, the Apostle Petersen did not have any case against us. It is interesting to note that even though the Mormon leaders tried to suppress this speech, a portion of it ended up in the *New York Times* on December 28, 1965. We will quote from this speech in Chapter 21.

### Mormons Protest Suppression

Juanita Brooks, a noted historian who is a member of the Mormon Church, claims that the church leaders refused to let her see some affidavits that they had in their possession. In a footnote on page 217 of her book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, she stated:

Some time before his death, the late Judge David H. Morris, of St. George, Utah, told the writer of affidavits which he had taken at

the order of the First Presidency of the Church from the participants in the massacre who still lived in southern Utah. . . .

After his death, the writer asked his daughter, Mrs. Paul Hafen, about them and learned that . . . she had taken the affidavits to Salt Lake City and given them to David O. McKay of the first presidency of the Latter-day Saints church.

After two unsuccessful attempts to get an interview with President McKay, the writer made an appointment by long distance telephone. After traveling more than three hundred miles to keep that appointment, **she was refused audience** as soon as the office girl learned "specifically what is it you wish to speak to him about?"

The writer then asked for another appointment, offering to stay in the city indefinitely, if necessary. This was refused. She was, however, permitted to talk to Mr. Joseph Anderson, private secretary to the first presidency, who listened to her request and promised to do what he could for her. He asked her to return the next morning.

At that time, Mr. Anderson said that he and President J. Rueben Clark had read the affidavits and President Clark had decided that **they should not be made available**. The large, worn envelope which contained them and the telegram authorizing them lay on the table during this conversation. The most difficult thing to understand about all this is not so much the refusal to show the affidavits as the consistent and repeated refusal to discuss the question. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 1962, pp. 217-218, footnote)

Some people claim that the reason we have been denied access to the records is that we have been critical of the doctrines and teachings of the LDS Church. While this may have something to do with it, it is obviously not the entire reason. A Mormon Seminary teacher told us not to feel bad because Mormon writers were having the same problems. During the last few years even Mormon writers have begun to raise their voices against the suppression of the documents. For instance, in 1966 Leonard J. Arrington, President of the Mormon History Association, stated:

It is unfortunate for the cause of Mormon history that the Church Historian's Library, which is in the possession of virtually all of the diaries of leading Mormons, has not seen fit to publish these diaries or to permit qualified historians to use them without restriction. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 26)

Ralph W. Hansen, formerly Manuscript Librarian for the Brigham Young University, also complained of "the relative inaccessibility to scholars of the files of the Church Historian's Office, . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 157).

During the past ten years we have exerted a great deal of pressure on the church to discontinue the practice of suppressing the records. This has placed the Mormon leaders in a very embarrassing position. Many people would be inclined to agree with Philip A. M. Taylor's observation that "secrecy does more harm to the Church's reputation than could result from any disclosures from the archives, . . ." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 110).

The fact that many Mormons are joining with us in criticizing the Church Historian's Office could force the Mormon leaders to adopt a more honest and open policy with regard to the church records. For more information concerning this matter see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pp. 67-86.



## Mormonism Continues to Change

On page 5 of this book we demonstrate that the Mormon Church completely changed its teaching concerning polygamy. We quoted President Brigham Young as saying: “The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 269). President John Taylor said: “. . . we are not ashamed . . . to declare . . . that we are firm, conscientious believers in polygamy, and that it is part and parcel of our religious creed” (*Life of John Taylor*, p. 255). The fact that the Mormons have completely disregarded this “doctrine” is evident from a statement made by Assistant Church Historian Davis Bitton: “Today probably no modern people is more antipolygamist than the orthodox Mormons, . . .” (*Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 4, 1977, p. 101).

As we mentioned in the Preface, after we published the 1972 edition of this book, the Mormon leaders changed another important doctrine. This is the notorious anti-black doctrine which denied the priesthood to all who had “one drop of Negro blood.” (For more information concerning this matter see the updated material in Chapter 21.)

## Removing Critical Material From Libraries

On page 10 of this book we printed information showing that Mormon missionaries were engaged in a plan to remove material critical of the church from various libraries. In 1978 Ed Sanders, of Harding College, reported that this activity was still going on:

Recently, two young Mormon “elders” visited the Beaumont Memorial Library at Harding College . . . After something like a half hour, they approached the check-out desk with a number of books in their hands. They told the librarian they would like to take these volumes, which were “quite old and not in the best of condition,” and replace them with newer editions. Fortunately, the college librarians are professionals, and consequently, were more than a little suspicious. A call was placed to the Bible Department to confirm that it would be best to keep the books already in the library collection. The Bible Department spokesman was emphatic that these books were not to be allowed to be “replaced.” In fact, it was decided that they were to be added to the collection of rare and valuable books which are kept in a secure area of the library.

You have probably guessed already that what the young men were doing is part of a nationwide pattern. Mormon missionaries are visiting libraries all over the country, taking old books and offering to replace them with new volumes. Of course, what they are actually doing is removing from public access many counter-Mormon books, and earlier Mormon writings which now prove embarrassing to the Latter Day Saint movement.

Some librarians will undoubtedly be gullible enough to trade old volumes for newer editions, or even different publications, unless they are made aware of what is occurring. Tell your local librarian so that she may be properly alert to the public interest. (*Alternative*, vol. IV, no. 3, 1978, p. 15)

## Battle Over Suppression of Records Continues

On page 13 of this book we indicated that the pressures we exerted against the suppression of Mormon records were beginning to have a real effect and that “even Mormon writers have begun to raise their voices against the suppression of the documents.” For many years Joseph Fielding Smith had been Church Historian. Smith, of course, ruled the Church Historian’s Office with an iron hand and would not let scholars have unrestricted access to the documents. In 1970 he became the 10th President of the Mormon Church, and turned the Church Historian’s Office over to the Apostle Howard W. Hunter. This did not satisfy some of

the more liberal Mormons, who by this time had become very aroused over the policy of suppression. Sometime after Hunter’s appointment, a group of Mormon scholars presented the Mormon leaders with a list of suggestions on how they should run the Historian’s Office. They wanted a trained historian to be appointed as Church Historian. They also wanted the records to be made available to scholars and for the church itself to start printing the rare documents. When we heard of these requests we could not see how the church leaders could possibly comply with them without undermining the entire foundation of the church. Take, for instance, the idea of appointing a qualified historian. A true historian, if he were honest with himself, could never approve of the methods used by Joseph Fielding Smith and other Church Historians in the past. Besides, it had become traditional for a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to fill this position. In the “Guide To The Historian’s Office Library-Archives” we read: “Since the days of Nauvoo this important responsibility has been assigned to a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.” It seemed very unlikely, then, that the church would appoint a trained historian, but on January 15, 1972, we received a surprise when we read the following in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

Dr. Leonard J. Arrington, noted Utah educator and author, has been named historian of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, . . . Howard W. Hunter of the Council of Twelve Apostles will be released . . .

In the *Deseret News* for January 15, 1972, we find the following statements in an editorial:

The appointment of Dr. Leonard J. Arrington as church historian . . . is itself an historic step.

It marks the first time that this important post has been filled by going outside the membership of the church’s general authorities.

While Dr. Arrington is an active Mormon, many people consider him to be very liberal. It was Arrington, in fact, who openly criticised the church for not publishing the diaries of the early Mormon leaders and for not permitting “qualified historians to use them without restriction” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, p. 26). In the same article Dr. Arrington remarked:

Just as Mrs. Brodie’s biography, and certain others, are usually regarded (by the Mormons, at least) as “anti,” most of the “pro” biographies are undeviating pictures of sweetness and light. These err even more on the side of incredibility than the blacker portraits of the anti’s.

While the appointment of Leonard Arrington as Church Historian was certainly a surprise, the choice of James B. Allen and Davis Bitton as assistant historians made some wonder what direction the church was headed in. Allen had previously published an article which undermined Joseph Smith’s story of the First Vision, and Bitton had written an article in which he made an attack on the accuracy of Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*. Now, what could the church leaders have had in mind when they appointed such liberals to the Church Historian’s Office? The only reasonable explanation is that the policy of suppressing the records had failed and that the Mormon leaders were trying to present a new image to the world. They were apparently going to try to make it appear that they were proud of the records they had suppressed for so many years.

In any case, after his appointment, Dr. Arrington announced great plans for the Historical Department. Many of them, however, have been thwarted by men who follow the philosophy of Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles. Benson is a man who believes that it is wrong to tell the whole truth about Mormon history. He believes, in other words, that there should be a cover-up with

regard to certain things that have occurred in the past. Arrington, on the other hand, is more open and scholarly in his approach.

Dr. Arrington's problems began just after his appointment to the office of Church Historian when he announced the formation of a group known as "Friends of Church History." When about 500 people showed up for the first meeting, the General Authorities apparently became fearful that such a large group studying history might uncover things which would prove embarrassing to the church. Orders were given to hold up the project, and no meetings have been held since November 30, 1972 (see *Answering Dr. Clandestine*, p. 41). Although no official announcement has ever been made, it is reasonable to assume that "Friends of Church History" is now defunct.

Some of Dr. Arrington's other projects seem to be endangered by the attitude of the General Authorities. One of his dreams was to have the church publish a one-volume history. This dream seemed to become a reality in 1976 when James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard produced the book *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*. In the Foreword to this book, Dr. Arrington said that "two of our finest historians" had been assigned to the project—as we have already pointed out, James B. Allen is Assistant Church Historian. Dr. Arrington went on to state that he had personally approved the manuscript for publication. Although most Mormons would consider this a harmless publication, President Benson felt that it was too humanistic and it is rumored that he wanted it shredded. In a letter dated June 23, 1978, President Benson stated: "The book, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, will not be republished." It appears, therefore, that as far as Mormon history is concerned, the views of Leonard Arrington and Ezra Taft Benson are diametrically opposed.

Leonard Arrington's most important project was to oversee the production of a sixteen-volume sesquicentennial history of the Mormon Church. These volumes were to be authored by prominent Mormon scholars. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for April 26, 1975, quoted Dr. Arrington as saying:

"We have signed contracts with 16 persons, each of whom is writing one volume of the set," said the church historian. "Each requires several years of intensive research and none will be available before 1978. We hope all 16 volumes will be ready by 1980."

The original idea behind the project was to have the volumes ready for the 150th anniversary of the church—the sesquicentennial celebration of 1980. While Dr. Arrington said he hoped "all 16 volumes will be ready by 1980," 1980 passed without a single volume being published!

From what we have been able to determine, some of the scholars who were working on the volumes were too frank in their presentation and this caused great consternation among some of the Apostles. Since that time church leaders have been dragging their feet in an effort to delay or even cancel publication of the volumes. The church leaders find themselves in a difficult situation, however, since Deseret Book Company had signed an agreement with the sixteen authors which would be binding in court. In order to suppress the history without the possibility of lawsuits, the General Authorities decided to pay each author who had finished his work \$20,000 (those who have not completed their volumes were to receive a smaller amount). Since there were sixteen authors to be paid off and other costs involved, the church may have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars. That the General Authorities would approve this massive project and then abort it after some of the church's top scholars spent years working on it shows a total lack of inspiration.

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, Jan. 1979, we observed:

There is reason to believe that Benson wants to remove Arrington from his position as church Historian. Some feel that he will gradually be "phased out." It is also reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult for Mormon scholars to get access to documents in the Historical Dept. If Dr. Arrington should survive under the leadership of President Spencer W. Kimball, it is very unlikely that he will remain Church Historian if Ezra Taft Benson becomes President.

It now appears that the church has begun the process of "phasing out" Dr. Arrington. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for July 3, 1980, announced:

PROVO (AP) — The history research division of the Mormon church's historical department will move to Brigham Young University, officials announced Wednesday.

The departments's library and archives division and arts and sites division will remain at the church's Salt Lake City headquarters, said church President Spencer W. Kimball. . . .

Director of the new institute will be Dr. Leonard J. Arrington, church historian.

Most of the division's personnel will be transferred to BYU, where they will become part of the faculty and staff.

Although President Kimball tries to persuade members of the church that "This transfer of the work of professional historians from a Church department to an institute in the university is a forward step," (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 5, 1980), it is obvious to anyone who really examines the situation that this is a real demotion for Church Historian Leonard Arrington. While he may remain Church Historian in name, it is clear now that church leaders have removed the powers which used to go with this title. Before Arrington's appointment, the Church Historian had charge of the records and would make decisions as to who could see the various documents. Now it appears that there will be about a forty-five mile gap between the Church Historian and the church records—i.e., the distance between Provo and Salt Lake City:

Dr. Arrington and some History Division staff members eventually will move to the BYU campus but, the institute has not yet been assigned a particular building or office area in Provo. The Church's library and archives will remain in Salt Lake City. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 5, 1980)

It is obvious, then, that Church leaders want to get Dr. Arrington as far away from the Church Office Building as possible and to reduce his influence with the Mormon people. It has been claimed that it will not be too long before Arrington retires, and planning the move and setting up operations in Provo will no doubt take up much of his remaining time.

While we do not know exactly what direction Mormon leaders will take with regard to historical research, it is evident that the treatment of Dr. Arrington shows there is still a great deal of opposition to the idea of "telling it like it is." Klaus J. Hansen, who wrote his thesis at the church's Brigham Young University, made some interesting observations about the idea of having "an unvarnished version" of church history:

I am of course, one of those who have contended that the Church Historian's Office as well as other Church depositories may well contain important secret documents whose release might have a profound effect on Mormon historiography if not Mormon history. The possible, even probable, existence of further records of the Council of Fifty . . . is perhaps the most obvious example. . . .

Every so often I am asked if my research into Mormon history hasn't strengthened my testimony—a rhetorical question which I am generally expected to answer with a resounding yes. My questioners, of course, assume either that the Church has no skeletons to hide or that, in the unlikely



## THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Council of the Twelve  
47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

June 23, 1978

████████████████████  
Dear Brother ██████████

In answer to your letter of June 19, regarding the book, The Story of the Latter-day Saints, a few of my concerns are directed in a talk which I gave to the Religious Educators in September 1976. A copy of that address is enclosed.

The book, The Story of the Latter-day Saints, will not be republished.

With regard to your second question, on the article from Dialogue, "Seers, Savants, and Evolution: An Uncomfortable Interface," the article is historically inaccurate and doctrinely unsound. The author interpreted his "facts" in a way to support his pro-evolutionary stands and to discredit President Joseph Fielding Smith.

I trust that this will answer your questions.

Faithfully,



Ezra Taft Benson  
President

Encl.

A photograph of a letter written by Apostle Ezra Taft Benson. Notice that Benson says *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* will not be reprinted.

event that they do, it would be much better to exhibit them in public. I suppose not a few Mormons would be taken aback by Joseph Smith's remark to Brigham Young that "If I were to reveal to this people what the Lord has revealed to me, there is not a man or a woman that would stay with me." A historian who would make it his business to juxtapose myth and reality in Mormon history might not expect results quite that dramatic, yet the fact is that an unvarnished version of the history of the Church that lets the chips fall where they may is potential dynamite. If historians, therefore, do not necessarily agree with the still relatively conservative and restrictive policies of the Church Historian's Office they should at least understand that these proceed from an internal logic. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1970, pp. 107, 110)

### Historians Face Crisis

Since writing the above, the situation facing Mormon historians has turned from bad to worse. Professor Louis C. Midgley, openly attacked the "New Mormon History" in a paper presented at the Western History Association. In the *Sunstone Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 16, we find the following:

Of special interest to students of Mormonism was the session . . . in which Louis C. Midgley presented a paper, "A Critique of Mormon Historians: The Question of Faith and History." Midgley, a professor in the Department of Government at Brigham Young University, has been working on a book-length manuscript attacking the methodology of the "New Mormon History." . . .

Calling much of the recent professional historical writing on and by the Mormons the "New Mormon Apology," Midgley argued that "what is behind the writing of at least some recent Mormon history is a rash and unnecessary caving in on crucial issues." . . . He specifically accused some Mormon historians of undermining traditional Mormon beliefs . . . he argued that some Mormon historians are seeking a "middle ground"—a position somehow suspended between the tradi[t]ional positions that Joseph Smith was either a prophet or a fraud. For Midgley, if historians do not choose the prophet-side, only the other position is possible. Not only is there no middle ground, but for an historian to suspend belief or remain "objective" is to side with non-believers.

Davis Bitton, who has served as Assistant Church Historian under Leonard Arrington, responded to Professor Midgley's arguments.

The big blow for Mormon historians, however, came on August 22, 1981, when Boyd K. Packer, one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, "criticized Church historians for 'forsaking things of the Spirit' in their histories" (*Seventh East Press*, An Independent Student Weekly, Provo, Utah, October 6, 1981). That Apostle Packer really meant business in this speech became evident when it appeared as the lead article in the Summer 1981 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*. In this speech, Packer gave the following warning to Mormon historians:

I have come to believe that it is the tendency for many members of the Church who spend a great deal of time in academic research to begin to judge the Church, its doctrine, organization, and leadership, present and past, by the principles of their own profession. . . . In my mind it ought to be the other way around. . . .

You seminary teachers and some of you institute and BYU men will be teaching the history of the Church this school year. This is an unparalleled opportunity in the lives of your students to increase

their faith and testimony of the divinity of this work. Your objective should be that they will see the hand of the Lord in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now. . . . there is no such thing as an accurate or objective history of the Church which ignores the Spirit. . . . Church history can be so interesting and so inspiring as to be a very powerful tool indeed for building faith. If not properly written or properly taught, it may be a faith destroyer.

President Brigham Young admonished Karl G. Maeser not to teach even the times table without the Spirit of the Lord. How much more essential is that Spirit in the research, the writing, and the teaching of Church history . . .

There is a temptation for the writer or the teacher of Church history to want to tell everything, whether it is worthy or faith promoting or not.

Some things that are true are not very useful.

Historians seem to take great pride in publishing something new, particularly if it illustrates a weakness or mistake of a prominent historical figure . . .

The writer or the teacher who has an exaggerated loyalty to the theory that everything must be told is laying a foundation for his own judgment. . . .

Some time ago a historian gave a lecture to an audience of college students on one of the past Presidents of the Church. It seemed to be his purpose to show that that President was a man subject to the foibles of men. He introduced many so-called facts that put that President in a very unfavorable light, particularly when they were taken out of the context of the historical period in which he lived. . . .

Teaching some things that are true, prematurely or at the wrong time, can invite sorrow and heartbreak instead of the joy intended to accompany learning. . . . The scriptures teach emphatically that we must give milk before meat. The Lord made it very clear that some things are to be taught selectively and some things are to be given only to those who are worthy.

It matters very much not only what we are told but when we are told it. Be careful that you build faith rather than destroy it.

President William E. Berrett has told us how grateful he is that a testimony that the past leaders of the Church were prophets of God was firmly fixed in his mind before he was exposed to some of the so-called facts that historians have put in their published writings. . . . What that historian did with the reputation of the President of the Church was not worth doing. He seemed determined to convince everyone that the prophet was a man. We knew that already. All of the prophets and all of the Apostles have been men. It would have been much more worthwhile for him to have convinced us that the man was a prophet, a fact quite as true as the fact that he was a man.

He has taken something away from the memory of a prophet. He has destroyed faith . . .

That historian or scholar who delights in pointing out the weaknesses and frailties of present or past leaders destroys faith. A destroyer of faith—particularly one within the Church, and more particularly one who is employed specifically to build faith—places himself in great spiritual jeopardy. He is serving the wrong master, and unless he repents, he will not be among the faithful in the eternities . . .

In an effort to be objective, impartial, and scholarly, a writer or a teacher may unwittingly be giving equal time to the adversary . . .

In the Church we are not neutral. We are one-sided. There is a war going on, and we are engaged in it. It is a war between good and evil, and we are belligerents defending the good. We are therefore obliged to give preference to and protect all that is represented in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and we have made covenants to do it . . .

And I want to say in all seriousness that there is a limit to the patience of the Lord with respect to those who are under covenant to bless and protect His Church and kingdom upon the

earth but do not do it . . .

There is much in the scriptures and in our Church literature to convince us that we are at war with the adversary. We are not obliged as a church, nor are we as members obliged, to accommodate the enemy in this battle.

President Joseph Fielding Smith pointed out that it would be a foolish general who would give access to all of his intelligence to his enemy. It is neither expected nor necessary for us to accommodate those who seek to retrieve references from our sources, distort them, and use them against us.

Suppose that a well-managed business corporation is threatened by takeover from another corporation. Suppose that the corporation bent on the takeover is determined to drain off all its assets and then dissolve the company. You can rest assured that the threatened company would hire legal counsel to protect itself.

Can you imagine that attorney, under contract to protect the company having fixed in his mind that he must not really take sides, that he must be impartial?

Suppose that when the records of the company he has been employed to protect are opened for him to prepare his brief he collects evidence and passes some of it to the attorneys of the enemy company. His own firm may then be in great jeopardy because of his disloyal conduct.

Do you not recognize a breach of ethics, or integrity, or morality?

I think you can see the point I am making. Those of you who are employed by the Church have a special responsibility to build faith, not destroy it. If you do not do that, but in fact accommodate the enemy, who is the destroyer of faith, you become in that sense a traitor to the cause you have made covenants to protect. . . .

Rest assured, also, that you will get little truth, and less benefit, from those who steal documents or those who deal in stolen goods. There have always been, and we have among us today, those who seek entrance to restricted libraries and files to secretly copy material and steal it away in hopes of finding some detail that has not as yet been published—this in order that they may sell it for money or profit in some way from its publication or inflate an ego by being first to publish it. . . .

I would not contribute to publications, nor would I belong to organizations, that by spirit or inclination are faith destroying. There are plenty of scholars in the world determined to find all secular truth. There are so few of us, relatively speaking, striving to convey the spiritual truths, who are protecting the Church. We cannot safely be neutral.

Many years ago Elder Widtsoe made reference to a foolish teacher in the Mutual Improvement Association who sponsored some debate with the intent of improving the abilities of the young members of the Church. He chose as a subject “Resolved: Joseph Smith was a prophet of God.” Unfortunately, the con side won.

The youngsters speaking in favor of the proposition were not as clever and their arguments were not as carefully prepared as those of the opposing side. The fact that Joseph Smith remained a prophet after the debate was over did not protect some of the participants from suffering the destruction of their faith and thereafter conducting their lives as though Joseph Smith were not a prophet and as though the church he founded and the gospel he restored were not true. . . .

The final caution concerns the idea that so long as something is already in print, so long as it is available from another source, there is nothing out of order in using it in writing or speaking or teaching.

Surely you can see the fallacy in that . . .

You do not well to see that it is disseminated. It may be read by those not mature enough for “advanced history,” and a testimony in seedling stage may be crushed.

Several years ago President Ezra Taft Benson spoke to you and said:

It has come to our attention that some of our teachers, particularly in our university programs, are purchasing writings from known apostates . . . in an effort to become informed about certain points of view or to glean from their research. You must realize that when you purchase their writings or subscribe to their periodicals, you help sustain their cause. We would hope that their writings not be on your seminary or institute or personal bookshelves. We are entrusting you to represent the Lord and the First Presidency to your students, not the views of the detractors of the Church.

I endorse that sound counsel to you.

Remember: when you see the bitter apostate, you do not see only an absence of light, you see also the presence of darkness.

Do not spread disease germs! (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1981, pp. 259, 262-271)

To the Mormon scholar D. Michael Quinn, Apostle Packer’s words were a call to battle. In an emotionally charged speech, Dr. Quinn rebutted the charges made by Boyd K. Packer, Louis Midgley and Ezra Taft Benson, who is next in line to be President of the Church. The *Seventh East Press* reported:

Mormon apostles Ezra Taft Benson and Boyd K. Packer are advocating a kind of religious history which borders on idolatry, asserted D. Michael Quinn, associate professor of history at BYU in a recent lecture to the university’s student history association.

In an address entitled “On Being a Mormon Historian,” Quinn, who holds a Ph.D. in history from Yale University, addressed recent criticisms made against Mormon historians by Elders Benson and Packer and BYU Professor of Political Science Louis Midgley.

Stating that he was speaking only for himself, Quinn . . . explained that by the time he was age fifteen he had read all the standard works except for part of the Old Testament . . . Quinn also briefly recounted his entrance into the field of LDS history and his prayerful approach to researching and writing that history.

Turning to Elder Packer’s caution that previously-published material is not always suitable for re-publishing, Quinn described the “odd situation” created by General Authorities criticizing individuals for reprinting material that was viewed by General Authorities of an earlier era as faith-promoting and “appropriate for children and recent converts.”

Quinn expressed the opinion that for LDS historians to avoid what Elder Packer called “the unworthy, the unsavory, or the sensational” would be of questionable honesty and professional integrity and would do a “disservice to the cause of the Church,” and open the Church and its historians to justified criticisms.

Quinn also discussed Elder Benson’s counsel against “environmental explanations” of the background of revelations and Church history. Quinn stated that to ignore such backgrounds in a non-religious history is “inept at best and dishonest at worst.” Quinn agreed with the sentiment expressed by Elder Benson that to use environmental observations as a basis for rejecting Joseph Smith’s inspiration would be inappropriate. Nevertheless, he continued, a discussion of such influences is important since “revelations come from specific questions that prophets ask God, and those questions arise because of conditions prophets experience.”

Noting Elder Packer’s concern that an accurate history of the Church must consider the spiritual powers operating therein, Quinn asserted that Packer has created “an enemy that

doesn't exist," for it is impossible for any good historian, Mormon or otherwise, to write about Mormonism without discussing the prophetic claims of its leaders. . . .

Commenting on Elder Packer's statement that historians should "demonstrate the hand of the Lord in every hour and every moment of the Church," Quinn expressed the belief that such an approach demonstrates the "view that the official acts and pronouncements of the prophets are always the express will of God," a position which Quinn sees as "the Mormon equivalent of the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility." Such a doctrine of infallibility, Quinn explained, denies the principle of free agency and goes against Joseph Smith's assertion that a prophet is only a prophet when he is acting as such. To ignore the limitations and errors of significant statements of the prophets, Quinn feels, would be as false as to ignore their visions, revelations and testimonies.

Quinn went on to state that to play down the human side of prophets would not be sacred history, for the sacred history of the scriptures portrays not only the "spiritual dimensions and achievements of God's leaders" but also matter of factly demonstrates their weaknesses.

As examples, Quinn cited the scriptures' "treatment of Noah's drunkenness, Lot's incest, Moses' arrogance, Jonah's vacillation," Peter and Paul's disagreements, Alma's youthful iniquity, and "the Lord's condemnations of Joseph Smith in the *Doctrine and Covenants*." While sacred history shows God's leaders as "understandable human beings with whom people can identify and still revere the prophetic mantle," Elders Benson and Packer, Quinn asserted, expect a history which makes LDS leaders "flawless and benignly angelic." Such a history of "demigod-like Church leaders," Quinn stated, "borders on idolatry."

While Quinn noted that Elder Packer accused Mormon historians of ignoring "fundamentals before presenting advanced information," Quinn expressed the opinion that in reality Elder Packer "is not advocating a gradual exposure to historical truth, but excludes that possibility." He further asserted that Elder Packer's approach is not the same as Paul's recommendation of milk before meat, but rather a steady diet of milk. "A diet of milk alone," Quinn observed, "will stunt the growth, if not kill, a child."

Quinn also accused Packer of advocating a history of the Church that denies any information which might be used against the Church by anti-Mormons. "Using this standard," Quinn stated, "much of the

Old Testament, the Gospel of John, and many of Paul's epistles would not have been included in the Bible."

Quinn tearfully expressed discouragement at being labeled subversive and advocated following the example of sacred history in approach and philosophy. (*The Seventh East Press*, November 18, 1981)

Since Ezra Taft Benson will probably become the next President of the Church, there has been some concern that D. Michael Quinn may have sacrificed his career as a Mormon historian when he made this rebuttal. Many Mormons would count this as a great loss because Dr. Quinn is probably one of the best historians the church has ever produced. However this may be, Quinn certainly demonstrated a great deal of courage when he publicly challenged the suppressive policies advocated by Benson, Packer and Midgley.

As we indicated earlier, Leonard Arrington seems to have been stripped of his powers as Church Historian. There now seems to be a question as to whether he even retains the title. Although he was referred to as "the Church Historian" in the March 1979 issue of *The Ensign* (p. 51), a recent advertisement for a book by Arrington and Bitton seems to indicate that he no longer claims the title:

For many years Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton served as Church Historian and Assistant Church Historian for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Arrington is currently Director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University and Bitton is Professor of History at the University of Utah. (*Sunstone Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 23)

The reader will remember that Apostle Boyd K. Packer criticized a historian for trying to "convince everyone that the prophet was a man." Interestingly enough, the new book by Arrington and Bitton, which deals with "two apostles" and other Mormons, is entitled *Saints Without Halos: The Human Side of Mormon History*. It is also interesting to note that this new book is **not** being published by the church but rather by Signature Books in Salt Lake City.

As to Arrington's most important project, the sixteen-volume sesquicentennial history of the Mormon Church, another year (1981) has passed without the church publishing a single volume! The reader will remember that Arrington hoped that "all 16 volumes will be ready by 1980."





### 3. Changes in the Revelations

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

The *Doctrine and Covenants* is a compilation of the revelations received by Joseph Smith . . .

The book itself is a witness for the truth of the Prophet's claims. The explanations of old doctrines and presentation of new ones are convincing evidences of their divine origin. Enemies of the Church have rather carefully avoided the discussion of this book. **They have been afraid of it.** (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, 1951, pp. 251, 254)

Contrary to the Apostle Widtsoe's statement, anti-Mormon writers have not been afraid to discuss the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In fact, they have made some rather serious charges concerning it. The most serious charge, we feel, is that the revelations found in the *Doctrine and Covenants* have been changed. Melvin J. Petersen quotes the anti-Mormon writer Henry Caswall as making this statement concerning the *Doctrine and Covenants*: "Two editions of this work were published, the first in 1833, and the second in 1835. Great inconsistencies [sic] exist between the several parts of the book and the editions of 1833 and 1835 are in several respects repugnant to each other." Some of the Mormon writers have admitted that changes were made. For instance, the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that paragraphs were added to the revelations:

. . . some of the early revelations first published in the "Book of Commandments," in 1833, were **revised** by the Prophet himself in the way of correcting errors made by the scribes and publishers; and some additional clauses were inserted . . . and paragraphs added, to make the principles or instructions apply to officers not in the Church at the time some of the earlier revelations were given. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 173)

In a thesis written at Brigham Young University, the Mormon writer John William Fitzgerald stated:

1. Differences in wording and differences in wording that change the meaning have occurred in certain sections that appeared first in *A Book of Commandments* published in 1833 and that appeared later in *The Doctrine and Covenants* published in 1835. ("A Study of the Doctrine and Covenants," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940, p. 329)

On page 333 of the same thesis we find this statement:

2. Changes in wording and in meaning occur not only in the verses of corresponding chapters and sections but also in the introductions to the chapters and sections themselves.

In another thesis written at the Brigham Young University, Melvin J. Petersen stated: "**Many words were added to the revelations** in order to more clearly state what Joseph Smith intended to write . . . Many times phrases were added to increase the ability of the reader to get the meaning of the verse" ("A Study of the Nature of and Significance of the Changes in the Revelations as Found in a Comparison of the Book of Commandments and Subsequent Editions of the Doctrine and Covenants," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955, typed copy, p. 147).

On pages 162-163 of the same thesis, Melvin J. Petersen wrote:

. . . Joseph Smith's language, as found in the revelations credited to him, needed correcting. There were many grammatical errors in the revelations he first published . . . Joseph Smith in revising the first published commandments, found many of them needing clarification; therefore he **enlarged upon them** in order that the meaning might be more easily discerned. . . . **Certain omissions** were made when unnecessary material was **deleted** from the revelations; also incidents that were past and of no significance except to a few.

On page 140 of the same thesis, Melvin J. Petersen said:

Having discussed the problem of additions to the commandments as being necessary and practical with a growing organization, we find another problem arising concerning words that were omitted. . . . In the 1835 edition, Section thirty-two, verse three was added in the place of verses five and six. Why such a change? Joseph Smith, while reviewing the revelations, was **dissatisfied** with the wording of verses five and six in portraying the concept he had received, and therefore he **omitted** verses five and six of Chapter four and rewrote in their place verse three of the 1835 edition which is identical with Section five, verse nineteen of the present 1921 edition.

In chapter forty-four of the *Book of Commandments* (Section forty-two, 1921 edition) the last three verses **were left off**.

Strange as it may seem, Dr. Hugh Nibley, who at one time wrote that Mormon teachings are "**free of revisions**," has now written a letter in which he admits that Joseph Smith's revelations have been changed. In this letter he stated: "1. **Revelations have been revised whenever necessary**. That is the nice thing about revelation—it is strictly open-ended" (Letter from Dr. Hugh Nibley to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 12, 1966).

While there have been a few Mormon writers who have been willing to admit that Joseph Smith's revelations have been changed, many have not been that honest. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated that the revelations "have **remained unchanged**. **There has been no tampering with God's word**" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 119).

Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Mormon Church in 1970, made this comment concerning Joseph Smith's revelations:

Inspiration is discovered in the fact that each part, as it was revealed, dovetailed perfectly with what had come before. There was **no need for eliminating, changing**, or adjusting any part to make it fit; but each new revelation on doctrine and priesthood fitted in its place perfectly to complete the whole structure, as it had been prepared by the Master Builder. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 170)

Hugh B. Brown, who served in the First Presidency under David O. McKay, stated that "**None** of the early revelations of the Church have been revised, and the *Doctrine and Covenants* stands as printed including sections 5 and 7" (Letter to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 13, 1966). A photograph of Brown's letter and more information concerning this matter is found in our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pages 132-133.

#### Book of Commandments

To properly understand the changes that have been



made in the revelations we must understand the history of the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

In 1833 the Mormon Church published the revelations that had been given to the church by Joseph Smith in a book entitled “A Book of Commandments.” The Mormon writer William E. Berrett stated:

In the latter part of 1831, it was decided by a council of Church leaders to compile the revelations concerning the origin of the Church and its organization. The collection was to be called the “Book of Commandments.” . . . Joseph Smith received a revelation which was made the preface for the new volume and is now Section 1 of the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. In this preface we read: “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful.” . . .

After accepting the collection as scripture it was voted to print 10,000 copies. (*The Restored Church*, 1956, pp. 138-139)

The church was unable to print as many copies of the *Book of Commandments* as they had planned because the printing press was destroyed by a mob. In 1835 the revelations were printed again, and the name of the book was changed to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. New revelations were added to this book, and many of the previous revelations were revised. In modern editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* we find the following on the page just following the title page:

Certain parts were issued at Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, in 1833, under the title, *Book of Commandments for the Government of the Church of Christ*.

An enlarged compilation was issued at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835, under the title, *Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter-day Saints*.

The exact number of *Book of Commandments* printed before the mob destroyed the printing press is not known; however, David Whitmer—one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon—stated:

Early in the spring of 1833, at Independence, Mo., the revelations were printed in the *Book of Commandments*. Many of the books were finished and distributed among the members of the church . . . (*An Address to all Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Mo., 1887, p. 55)

In February, 1834, Wilford Woodruff—who became the fourth president of the church—wrote:

. . . I saw the *Book of Commandments* or revelations given through Joseph Smith, and I believed them with all my heart and rejoiced therein; and after spending several days, and holding several meetings, we returned home rejoicing. (“Journal History,” February 1834, as quoted in “A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the Revelations as Found in a Comparison of the Book of Commandments and Subsequent Editions of the Doctrine and Covenants,” p. 142)

David Whitmer said that the

revelations were printed in the *Book of Commandments* correctly . . .

These revelations were arranged for publication by Brothers Joseph Smith, Sydney Rigdon, Orson Hyde and others, in Hiram, Ohio, while I was there, were sent to Independence to be published, and were printed just exactly as they were arranged by Brother Joseph and the others. And when the *Book of Commandments* was printed, Joseph and the church received it as being printed correctly. (*An Address to all Believers in Christ*, p. 56)

That the church approved of the *Book of Commandments* and used it from the year 1833 until 1835, can be seen from a letter written by the leaders of the church in Missouri in July, 1834. In this letter it was stated:

It will be seen by reference to the *Book of Commandments*, page 135, that the Lord has said to the Church—and we mean to live by His words: “Let no man break the laws of the land, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 129)

In the same letter it was stated: “. . . we entreat the philanthropist, the moralist, and the honorable men of all creeds and sects, to read our publications, to examine the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and The Commandments . . .” (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 2, p. 133).

David Whitmer said the following concerning the *Book of Commandments*:

I say it was printed complete (and copyrighted). It was printed complete and many copies distributed among the members of the church, before the printing press owned by the church was destroyed. Brother Joseph and the brethren received it at first as being printed correctly, but they soon decided to print the *Doctrine and Covenants*. (*An Address to Believers in the Book of Mormon*, p. 5)

The *Doctrine and Covenants* was printed in the year 1835. Since the same revelations that were published in the *Book of Commandments* were put into the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, one would expect them to read exactly the same as when they were first published. This is not the case, however, and David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning this matter:

Some of the revelations as they now appear in the book of *Doctrine and Covenants* have been changed and added to. Some of the changes being of the greatest importance as the meaning is entirely changed on some very important matters; as if the Lord had changed his mind a few years after he give the revelations, and after having commanded his servants (as they claim) to print them in the “*Book of Commandments*,” and after giving his servants a revelation, being a preface unto His *Book of Commandments*, which says: “Behold this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the *Book of Commandments*, which I have given them to publish unto you, oh inhabitants of the earth.” Also in this preface, “Behold I am God, and have spoken it; These commandments are of me.” “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful.” The revelations were printed in the *Book of Commandments* correctly! This I know, . . . Joseph and the church received it as being printed correctly. This I know. But in the winter of 1834 they saw that some of the revelations in the *Book of Commandments* had to be changed, because the heads of the church had gone too far, and had done things in which they had already gone ahead of some of the former revelations. So the book of “*Doctrine and Covenants*” was printed in 1835, and some of the revelations changed and added to. (Letter written by David Whitmer, published in the *Saints’ Herald*, February 5, 1887)

## Not For Reproduction

The Mormon Church has suppressed the truth concerning the *Book of Commandments* and the changes in the revelations. The Brigham Young University allowed us to make photocopies of the first 41 pages of Wilford Woodruff’s copy of the *Book of Commandments*, which they had on microfilm. When the Church Historian’s Office found that we had obtained these photocopies, they immediately sent word to the Brigham Young University Library to keep us from obtaining any more photocopies of these rare documents. Consequently, when we wrote to the Brigham Young University Library, asking for the remaining pages of the *Book of Commandments*, we received a letter in which the following statement appeared:

We are unable to send you a photocopy of the *Book of Commandments*. We were supplied this copy by the Church Historian’s office for the use of our patrons **but not for photo-duplication** or other forms of publication . . . you will need to secure the permission of the Church Historian’s library to have it reproduced, as they own the manuscript copy. (Letter dated April 11, 1961)

Since the copyright on the *Book of Commandments* expired many years ago, it is very obvious that the only reason they would not allow us to have these photocopies was that they wanted to keep them hid from the general public. We appealed to William E. Berrett (Vice Administrator of the Brigham Young University) to help us obtain these photocopies of the *Book of Commandments*. Mr. Berrett did try to help us, and in a letter to us dated May 5, 1961, he stated:

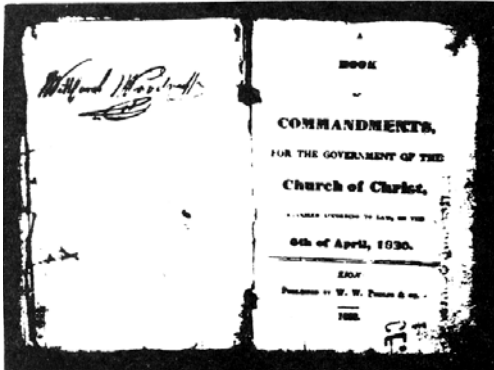
I regret that I cannot achieve any success in helping you obtain a copy of the *Book of Commandments* which you seem to desire. I have written to the Church Historian’s Office but find that their policy **will not permit**

the original *Book of Commandments* which they possess, . . .

I did not disclose to them who I wanted the copy for, but in their reply they indicated that they had refused a copy to you and that I would have to divulge the name of the individual who wanted a copy.

In 1961, with the help of several others, we had the *Book of Commandments* reprinted by photo-offset printing (the first 41 pages from the photocopies obtained at BYU and the remaining pages from a microfilm of the copy at Yale University).

(Below is a photograph of the title page of Wilford Woodruff's *Book of Commandments*.)



A man who did some of the photographic work on our reprint—work that had to be done before we could take it to the printer—told us that he was actually asked to destroy our photocopies of the *Book of Commandments* and then tell us that he had had an “accident” with them. Fortunately, he refused to do this, and we were able to bring out our reprint. Even though we were successful in getting the book printed, the newspapers in Salt Lake City refused to let us advertise it (see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pp. 51-52).

A few months after our reprint of the *Book of Commandments* came out, Wilford Wood—not to be confused with Wilford Woodruff—published a photographic reprint of the *Book of Commandments* and the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* under the title of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, vol. 2. He had previously published the first edition of the Book of Mormon under the title of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, vol. 1. The Mormon leaders were apparently not as worried about Mr. Wood's reprints as they were about ours, for the Deseret Press (the church press) did the printing, and they were advertised in the newspapers in Salt Lake City. Since Mr. Wood's reprints did not tell that the revelations and the Book of Mormon had been changed, the church leaders did not try to suppress his books at that time. Instead, they promoted them and allowed him to display his original copy of the *Book of Commandments* in the window of the Deseret Bookstore, which is owned by the Mormon Church. The leaders of the church evidently felt that by using reverse psychology they could make the Mormon people believe that they were glad that the *Book of Commandments* had been reprinted. Since Mr. Wood's books did not tell of the changes, the church leaders evidently felt that they were safe as long as members of the church did not compare them with the present editions. It appears, however, that this idea backfired and that members of the church did compare them and found that many changes had been made.

On October 9, 1964, a man reported to us that the Deseret Bookstore had refused to sell him copies of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, volumes 1 and 2. On October 10, 1964, Sandra Tanner went to the Deseret Bookstore and asked the clerk concerning these books. The clerk, supposing she was a Mormon, said: “President David O. McKay **won't let us sell that anymore.**” The clerk went on to say, “We've had several people leave the Church because of

those books. The priests and ministers of the other churches are using these books to confuse people. Because of the confusion we **can't sell them anymore.** President McKay has taken them out of circulation.”

On October 13, 1964, Wesley P. Walters wrote to the Deseret Bookstore requesting copies of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, volumes 1 and 2. Verny Noble, of the Paid Order Dept., replied:

Thank you for your letter ordering “Joseph Smith Begins His Works” Vol 1 & 2 by Wilford Wood. We are sorry to inform you that these two books are no longer available. (Letter dated October 16, 1964; photographically reproduced in our *Case*, vol. 1, p. 52)

When we told Wilford Wood that the church was trying to suppress his book he wrote us a letter in which he said:

I would like to know if you would permit me to use your letter to show it to President McKay or those responsible for stopping the sale of the book at the Deseret Book Company. . . . There are plenty of books, both volumes and always will be and anyone who is hurt from the original story of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the foundation of the Church upon which it is built will have to pay the consequences for pretending to love the Prophet and working against him. (Letter by Wilford C. Wood, dated Oct. 27, 1964)

We understand that Wilford Wood met with the President of the Church but was unsuccessful in his attempt to get the ban removed from his reprints. On March 22, 1967, Wilford Wood sent us a carbon copy of a letter which he wrote to Edmond C. Gruss. In this letter he stated:

Answering your letter of March 10th, . . . The answers are as follows:

One. Are these volumes presently out of print? No. They have never been out of print. . . .

Two. Did Pres. McKay stop the sale of the books at Deseret Book Store? The answer is, “No.” . . .

Three. Without mentioning any names or talking about the General Authorities personally, this is what happened. **The man who is supposed to answer all of the questions about the church in the Improvement Era is the man who stopped the Deseret Book from selling the book.** He it is who has constantly been a thorn in my side in almost every thing that I have done historically. **He can not stand for people to hear the facts about the early history of the church, especially those things which he can not answer.**

What a pity it is if the foundation and the establishment of the building which he lives in is wrong and far be it from me to say that anyone who belongs to the Church in this generation can claim to believe in the Prophet Joseph Smith and yet deny the facts about the restored gospel.

For your information President McKay **has told me more than once that he would see to it that the Deseret Book** sold Volumes one and two of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*. **So far he has been unable to do so.** I love President McKay with all of my heart and I know that he would do nothing to deny anything pertaining to the Prophet Joseph Smith. (Letter written by Wilford C. Wood to Edmond C. Gruss, dated March 22, 1967)

Those people who read the *Improvement Era* will know that Joseph Fielding Smith was the “man who is supposed to answer all of the questions about the Church.” For years he wrote an article entitled, “Your Question.” In 1970 Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth President of the Mormon Church. Since Joseph Fielding Smith became President of the Church the ban on Wilford Wood's reprints has continued. On November 6, 1971, we called the Deseret Bookstore and asked about these reprints. We were told that they were “OUT OF PRINT.” This statement is, of course, completely untrue. They have been making this same statement for several years, yet we have sold hundreds of copies during this period. Other bookstores which are not controlled by the Mormon Church have also continued to sell these reprints.



The suppression of Wilford Wood's reprints must be especially embarrassing to the Mormon Apostle Thomas S. Monson, for when these books were printed he was the Assistant Plant Manager of the church's Deseret Publishing Company. He signed affidavits stating that these books were photographically reproduced from the original books. In *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, vol. 2, for instance, we find an affidavit signed by Thomas S. Monson which contains this statement:

We the undersigned of the Deseret News Publishing Company certify that the printing of these original books, *A Book of Commandments*—1833, and *Doctrine and Covenants*—1835, as contained herein, were produced by photo-offset method from books in Wilford C. Wood's possession and owned by him.

For more information concerning the suppression of these reprints and photographic reproductions of Wilford Wood's letter to us see our *Case*, vol. 1, pages 52-56.

### Other Changes

Besides being printed in the *Book of Commandments*, many of the revelations were also printed in the church paper, *The Evening and Morning Star*; before they were ever printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The way they were printed in the *Evening and Morning Star* agreed with the way they were printed in the *Book of Commandments*.

When the revelations were altered in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the *Evening and Morning Star* was reprinted and the revelations were also changed in it to agree with the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In other words, it was not a true reprint but a falsified or bogus reprint. Clarence L. Wheaton and Angela Wheaton state:

... to make a bad matter worse, they reprinted the first fourteen numbers of the *Evening and Morning Star* at Kirtland in 1835, where they changed every revelation printed therein, which had harmonized with the *Book of Commandments*, so that they would be in agreement with the altered and mutilated versions as they appeared in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. (*The Book of Commandments Controversy Reviewed*, Independence, Mo., 1950, p. 67)

The *Book of Commandments* had 65 chapters, however, it can be shown that the changes made in these chapters did not constitute all of the changes made in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Section 68 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* was not printed in the *Book of Commandments*, but it was printed in the *Evening and Morning Star*. When it was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants* it was changed. In their book, *The Book of Commandments Controversy Reviewed*, page 81, Clarence and Angela Wheaton state that "323 words were added and 21 left out."

Just how many changes were made in the revelations can not be determined unless the church will allow all of the revelations, in their handwritten form, to be filmed. This, of course, they have refused to do.

When a woman wrote the Historian's office requesting a microfilm of these revelations in their handwritten form, she received the following reply:

We are enclosing herewith a \$25.00 in currency you forwarded for a microfilm of the original handwritten revelations of Joseph Smith. This work has never been microfilmed.

Melvin J. Petersen, who wrote his thesis at BYU, found that 703 words have been changed, 1,656 words added and 453 words deleted since the revelations were first printed in the *Book of Commandments* ("A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the Revelations . . .," typed copy, p. 118).

Besides the thousands of changes that were made in the revelations that were first published in the *Book of Commandments* and other early publications, one whole section on marriage has been removed. Also, the Lectures on Faith, which comprised 70

pages of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, have been completely removed from later editions. (Mormon writers admit that the section on marriage and the Lectures on Faith have been removed, but very few of them will admit that there have been actual meaning changes in the revelations which are still printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*.)

All of these alterations have been made within 140 years. Imagine what would have happened to the Bible if the churches that preserved it had altered it at the same rate the Mormons have altered the *Doctrine and Covenants*. We would be lucky to have anything the way it was originally written! Mormon writers accuse non-Mormons of making changes, yet their own church has been guilty of this very thing. For instance, Dr. Hugh Nibley made this statement concerning a non-Mormon writer:

He begins by telescoping a helpfully explanatory letter from Brigham Young into a short, cynical, and brutal note, **omitting the little dots which indicate that one is making deletions in a quotation**, so that the reader assumes that he has B.Y.'s own statement before his eyes. . . . This, we should warn the student, is a bit drastic; it is in fact libellous—but what are the chances of its being discovered? (*Sounding Brass*, p. 118)

Evidently Dr. Nibley is well informed on the rules a writer should follow when making quotations. Why have the Mormon leaders not followed these rules? Where are the "little dots" to show that deletions have been made in Joseph Smith's revelations?

### Study of Changes

In order to show some of the important changes that were made in the revelations we obtained photographs of Yale University's original copy of the *Book of Commandments*. Because of the age of the book a few of the pages were not too clear; therefore, we have used photographs from another original copy of the *Book of Commandments* to replace the photographs that were unclear.

We have compared these pages with the revelations as published in the 1966 printing of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and have marked the changes on the photographs. Therefore, the text is an exact photographic reproduction of the pages of the original *Book of Commandments*, and the handwriting shows the changes that would have to be made in the text to bring it into conformity with the 1966 printing of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Although there have been many changes in the chapter headings, we have not bothered to mark them.

The *Book of Commandments* has 160 pages in it, but since we are very limited on space in this study, we have selected only the pages which contain important changes. Notice that we have assigned a letter to some of the changes that we want to discuss later in the study.

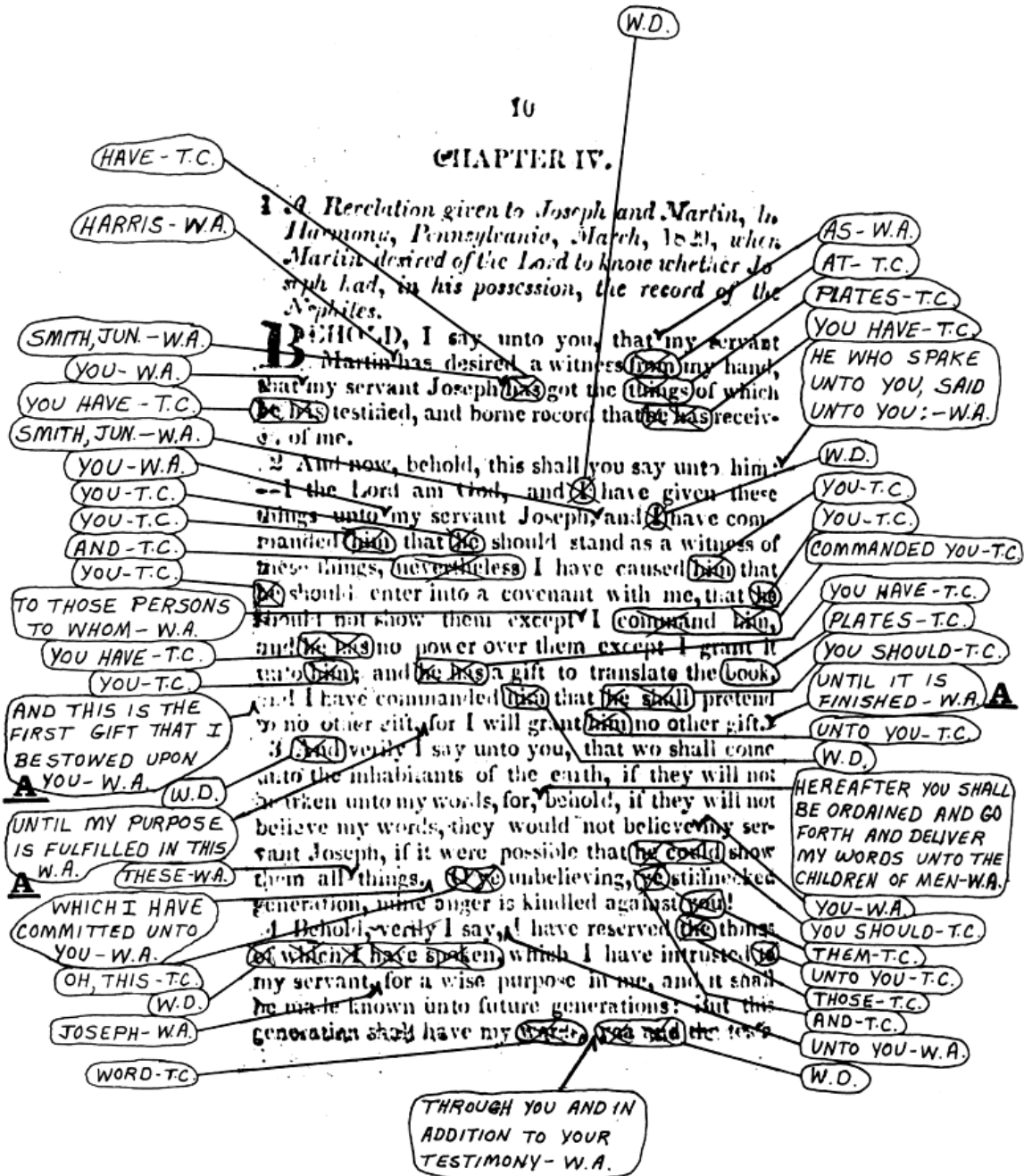
As we indicated earlier, other revelations besides the ones which appeared in the *Book of Commandments* were also changed. Some of these revelations were first published in the *Evening and Morning Star* and the *Times and Seasons*. We have cut out some of these revelations from photographs of the original publications and have marked the changes which would have to be made in them to bring them into conformity with the current edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Sections 121, 122 and 123 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* were taken from letters originally written by Joseph Smith and others while in Liberty Jail. More than 3,700 words were deleted from these letters when they were reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. We do not have room to show all of these changes here, but those who are interested will find all of these changes marked in our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 171-180.

#### Key to Abbreviations

W.A. ....	Words Added
W.D. ....	Words Deleted
T.C. ....	Textual Change



W.A. = Words Added  
W.D. = Words Deleted  
T.C. = Textual Change



Book of Commandments - Chapter 4  
Compare Doctrine and Covenants - Sec. 5:11-22

W.A. = Words Added  
W.D. = Words Deleted  
T.C. = Textual Change

11

THAT ARE GIVEN THROUGH YOU - T.C.

WHOM I SHALL CALL AND ORDAIN, UNTO WHOM I WILL SHOW THESE THINGS, AND THEY - W.A.

IN THIS THE BEGINNING OF THE RISING UP AND THE COMING FORTH OF MY CHURCH OUT OF THE WILDERNESS - CLEAR AS THE MOON, AND FAIR AS THE SUN, AND TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS. W.A.

THEY - T.C.

FROM HEAVEN WILL I DECLARE IT UNTO THEM. W.A.

OF - T.C.

WORDS - T.C.

ON - T.C.

EVEN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT - AND YOU MUST WAIT YET A LITTLE WHILE, FOR YE ARE NOT YET ORDAINED - W.A.

**B**

UNTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THIS GENERATION IF THEY HARDEN THEIR HEARTS AGAINST THEM; FOR A DESOLATING SCOURGE SHALL GO FORTH AMONG THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH, AND SHALL CONTINUE TO BE Poured OUT FROM TIME TO TIME, IF THEY REPENT NOT, UNTIL THE EARTH IS EMPTY, AND THE INHABITANTS THEREOF ARE CONSUMED AWAY AND UTTERLY DESTROYED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF MY COMING. W.A.

W.D.

**C**

YOU - W.A.

TO - W.A.

YOU - T.C.

5. And the voice of my servants shall go forth with my words ~~unto this generation~~; yea, ~~unto~~ shall know of a surety that these things are true, for I will give them power, that they may behold and view these things as they are, and to none else will I grant this power, to receive this same testimony among this generation. And the testimony of three witnesses will I send forth ~~and~~ my word, and behold, whosoever believeth ~~in~~ my ~~word~~ them will I visit with the manifestation of my spirit, and they shall be born of me, and their testimony shall also go forth.

6. And thus, ~~unto the people of this generation~~ ~~harden~~ ~~not~~ ~~their~~ ~~hearts,~~ ~~I~~ ~~will~~ ~~with~~ ~~a~~ ~~reformation~~ ~~among~~ ~~them,~~ ~~and~~ ~~I~~ ~~will~~ ~~put~~ ~~down~~ ~~all~~ ~~tyrants,~~ ~~and~~ ~~envies,~~ ~~and~~ ~~priestcrafts,~~ ~~and~~ ~~envying,~~ ~~and~~ ~~strife,~~ ~~and~~ ~~idolatries,~~ ~~and~~ ~~sorceries,~~ ~~and~~ ~~all~~ ~~manner~~ ~~of~~ ~~iniquities,~~ ~~and~~ ~~I~~ ~~will~~ ~~establish~~ ~~my~~ ~~church,~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~church~~ ~~which~~ ~~was~~ ~~taught~~ ~~by~~ ~~my~~ ~~disciples~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~days~~ ~~of~~ ~~old.~~

7. And now if this generation do harden their hearts against my word, behold I will do it as I have said, for he repenteth not, and hath much joy in it at this time, for he hath not yet felt the hearts of the people of this generation: and now I will bring down from the iniquities of Babylon and Gomorrah, in they come at this time: and behold the sword of justice hath withered their hearts, and I have given of the hardness of their hearts, the same which I have said must fall upon them. Behold I tell you these things even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem, and my word shall be verified at this time as it hath hitherto been verified.

8. And now I command my servant Joseph to repent, and walk more uprightly before me, and yield not to the persuasions of men no more; and that I will

D

CHAPTER VI.

1 A Revelation given to Joseph and Oliver, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, April, 1829, when they desired to know whether John, the beloved disciple, tarried on earth. Translated from parchment, written and hid up by himself.

FOR IF YE SHALL ASK WHAT YOU WILL, IT SHALL BE GRANTED UNTO YOU W.A.

OVER DEATH-W.A.

UNTIL-T.C.

DESIRED-T.C.

DESIRED-T.C.

THAT HE MIGHT DO MORE, OR-W.A.

2 AND the Lord said unto me, John my beloved, what desirest thou? and I said, Lord, give unto me power, that I may bring souls unto thee.

UNTO HIM-W.A.

LIVE AND-W.A.

And the Lord said unto me: Verily, verily I say unto thee, because thou desiredst this, thou shalt tarry ~~on~~ I come in my glory:

AND SHALT PROPHESE BEFORE NATIONS, KINDREDS, TONGUES AND PEOPLE-W.A.

3 And for this cause, the Lord said unto Peter:—

MIGHTEST-T.C.

If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? for he ~~desired~~ of me that he might bring souls unto me: but thou desiredst that thou ~~might~~ speedily come unto me in my kingdom: I say unto thee, Peter, this was a good desire, but my beloved has undertaken a greater work.

4 Verily I say unto you, ye shall both have according to your desires, for ye both joy in that which ye have desired.

YET AMONG MEN THAN WHAT HE HAS BEFORE DONE. YEA, HE HAS UNDERTAKEN A GREATER WORK; THEREFORE I WILL MAKE HIM AS FLAMING FIRE AND A MINISTERING ANGEL; HE SHALL MINISTER FOR THOSE WHO SHALL BE HEIRS OF SALVATION WHO DWELL ON THE EARTH. AND I WILL MAKE THEE TO MINISTER FOR HIM AND FOR THY BROTHER JAMES; AND UNTO YOU THREE I WILL GIVE THIS POWER AND THE KEYS OF THIS MINISTRY UNTIL I COME. -W.A.

E



CHAPTER VII.

1 A Revelation given to Oliver, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, April, 1829.

COWDERY-W.A.

**O**LIVELY, verily, verily I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, ~~which~~ <sup>WHO</sup> is your God and your Redeemer, even so ~~surely~~ <sup>SURELY</sup> shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive a knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are ancient, which contain those parts of my scripture of which ~~has~~ <sup>HAS</sup> been spoken, by the manifestation of my Spirit; yea, behold I will tell you in your mind and in your heart by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

WHO-T.C.

SURELY-T.C.

HAS-T.C.

2 Now, behold this is the Spirit of revelation: behold this is the Spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red sea on dry ground: therefore, this is thy gift; apply unto it and blessed art thou, for it shall deliver you out of the hands of your enemies, when, if it were not so, they would slay you and bring your soul to destruction.

THY GIFT-W.A.

3 O remember, these words and keep my commandments. Remember this is your gift. Now this is not all, for you have another gift, which is the gift of ~~working with the dead~~ <sup>THE POWER OF W.A.</sup>: behold it has told you things: behold there is no other power save God, that can cause this ~~and of nature, to work in your hands~~ <sup>W.D. F</sup>, for it is the ~~work~~ <sup>WORK</sup> of God; and therefore whatsoever you shall ask me to tell you by that means, that will I grant unto you, ~~that~~ <sup>AND</sup> you shall ~~know~~ <sup>AND YOU SHALL HOLD IT IN YOUR HANDS, AND DO MARVELOUS WORKS; AND NO POWER SHALL BE ABLE TO TAKE IT AWAY OUT OF YOUR HANDS, FOR IT IS THE WORK OF GOD. - W.A.</sup>.

F AARON-T.C.

MANY-W.A.

GIFT OF AARON TO BE WITH YOU-W.A.

THEREFORE, DOUBT NOT, -W.A.

HAVE KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING IT. T.C.

THE POWER OF W.A.

W.D. F

AND YOU SHALL HOLD IT IN YOUR HANDS, AND DO MARVELOUS WORKS; AND NO POWER SHALL BE ABLE TO TAKE IT AWAY OUT OF YOUR HANDS, FOR IT IS THE WORK OF GOD. - W.A.

4 Remember that without faith you can do nothing.

GIFT-T.C.

AND-T.C.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *Revelation given to Joseph, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, May, 1829, informing him of the alteration of the Manuscript of the fore part of the Book of Mormon.*

THOSE-T.C.

GIVEN UNTO YOU  
W.A.

NOW, behold I say unto you, that because you delivered up ~~so many~~ writings, which you had power to translate, into the hands of a wicked man,

BY THE MEANS OF  
THE URIM AND  
THUMMIM, -W.A.

you have lost them, and you also lost your gift at the same time, nevertheless it ~~has been~~ restored unto

IS NOW-T.C.

AND YOUR MIND  
BECAME DARKENED  
W.A.

you again: therefore, see that you are faithful and

OF TRANSLATION-W.A.

CONTINUE-T.C.

soon unto the finishing of the remainder of the work as you have begun. Do not run faster than you

OR LABOR MORE-W.A.

PRAY ALWAYS-W.A.

have strength and means provided to translate, but be diligent unto the end, that you may come off conqueror; yea, that you may conquer satan, and

ENABLE YOU TO-W.A.

HAS SOUGHT TO  
DESTROY YOU-W.A.

that do uphold his work. 2 Behold they have sought to destroy you; yea, even the man in whom you have trusted, and for this cause I said, that he is a wicked man, for he has sought to take away the things wherewith you have been in ~~trasted~~;

THAT YOU MAY  
ESCAPE THE HANDS  
OF THE SERVANTS  
OF SATAN-W.A.

W.D.

and he has also sought to destroy your gift; and because you have delivered the writings into his hands, behold ~~they~~ have taken them from you: therefore, you have delivered them up; yea, that which was sacred unto wickedness. And behold, satan ~~has~~ put it into their hearts to alter the words which you have caused to be written, or which you have translated, which have gone out of your hands; and behold I say unto you, that because they have altered the words, they read contrary from that which you translated and caused to be written; and

WICKED MEN-T.C.

HATH-T.C.

as this wise the devil has sought to lay a cunning

Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true :

3 Wherefore you know that they are true; and if you know that they are true, behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written, concerning my church, my gospel, and my rock.

**H**  
THE FOUNDATION OF -W.A.

**H**  
UPON THE FOUNDATION OF W.A.

4 Wherefore if you shall build up my church, ~~and~~ my gospel, and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

W.D.

5 Behold the world is ripening in iniquity, and it must needs be, that the children of men are stired up unto repentance, both the Gentiles, and also the house of Israel:

HANDS-T.C.  
JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.  
W.A.

6 Wherefore as thou hast been baptized by the ~~hand~~ of my servant, according to that which I have commanded him:

W.D.

7 ~~Wherefore~~ he hath fulfilled the thing which I commanded him.

8 And now marvel not that I have called him unto mine own purpose, which purpose is known in me:

9 Wherefore if he shall be diligent in keeping my commandments, he shall be blessed unto eternal life, and his name is Joseph.

WHITMER  
W.A.

10 And now Oliver, I speak unto you, and also unto David, by the way of commandment:

COWDERY  
W.A.

11 For behold I command all men every where to repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called.

12 Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God:

13 For behold the Lord your ~~(God)~~ ~~swored~~ death

REDEEMER  
T.C.

B?





Book of Commandments - Chapter 24  
Compare Doctrine and Covenants - Sec. 20:12-25

W.A. = Words Added  
W.D. = Words Deleted  
T.C. = Textual Change

~~orders by the ministering of angels, and declared~~  
~~unto the world by them:~~  
 12 Wherefore having so great witnesses, by them  
 shall the world be judged, even as many as shall  
 hereafter receive this work, ~~either to faith and right-~~  
~~eousness, or to the hardness of heart~~ in unbelief, to  
 their own condemnation, for the Lord God ~~hath~~  
 spoken it, ~~for~~ we, the elders of the church, have  
 heard and bear witness to the words of the glorious  
 Majesty on high; to whom be glory forever and  
 ever. Amen.

13 Wherefore, by these things we know that there  
 is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal,  
 from everlasting to everlasting, the same unchange-  
 able God; the ~~maker~~ of heaven and earth and all  
 things ~~that in them~~; and that he created man  
 male and female, ~~and~~ after his own image, and in  
 his own likeness created he them;

11 And ~~that he~~ gave unto ~~the children of men~~  
 commandments, that they should love and serve  
 him the only being whom they should worship, but  
 by the transgression of these holy laws, man became  
 sensual and devilish, and became fallen man.

15 Wherefore, the Almighty God gave his only  
 begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures,  
 which have been given of him, ~~that~~ he suffered  
 temptations, but gave no heed unto them;

16 ~~That~~ he was crucified, died, and rose again the  
 third day, and ~~that he~~ ascended into heaven to sit  
 down on the right hand of the Father, to reign with  
 Almighty power according to the will of the Fa-  
 ther.

17 ~~Therefore~~, as many as would believe and ~~were~~  
 baptized in his holy name, and ~~endured~~ in faith to  
 the end, should be saved;

W.D.

THEREFORE-T.C.  
COME TO A KNOWLEDGE  
OF-T.C.  
SHALL RECEIVE A  
CROWN OF ETERNAL  
LIFE; W.A.

AND-T.C.

AND THOSE WHO  
RECEIVE IT IN  
T.C.

WORK-W.A.

AND REJECT IT, IT  
SHALL TURN-W.A.

HAS-T.C.

BUT THOSE WHO  
HARDEN THEIR HEARTS  
T.C.

W.D.

WHICH ARE IN THEM;  
T.C.

FRAMER-T.C.

W.D.

W.D.

LIVING AND TRUE  
GOD AND THAT  
HE SHOULD BE  
THE ONLY -W.A.

THEM-T.C.

W.D.

W.D.

W.D.

THAT-T.C.

BE-T.C.

ENDURE-T.C.

WHEN THERE IS NO ELDER PRESENT;  
BUT WHEN THERE IS AN ELDER  
PRESENT, HE IS ONLY TO PREACH,  
TEACH, EXPOUND, EXHORT, AND  
BAPTIZE, AND VISIT THE HOUSE  
OF EACH MEMBER,  
EXHORTING THEM TO  
PRAY VOCALLY AND IN  
SECRET AND ATTEND  
TO ALL FAMILY DUTIES.  
IN ALL THESE DUTIES  
THE PRIEST - T.C.

HE IS TO - W.A.

and take the lead of meetings; but none of these  
offices is he to do when there is an elder present, but  
in all cases is to assist the elder.

W.D.

38 The teacher's duty is to watch over the church  
always, and be with them, and strengthen them,  
and see that there is no iniquity in the church, nei-  
ther hardness with each other, neither lying or back-  
biting, nor evil speaking;

IF OCCASION  
REQUIRES - W.A.

W.D.

39 And see that the church meet together often,  
and also see that all the members do their duty;

W.D.

40 And he is to take the lead of meetings in the  
absence of the elder or priest, and is to be assisted  
always, and in all his duties in the church by the  
deacons;

IF OCCASION REQUIRES  
W.A.

W.D.

W.D.

OR LAY ON HANDS;  
THEY ARE, HOWEVER,  
T.C.

41 But neither the teachers nor deacons have au-  
thority to baptize or administer the sacrament, but  
to warn, expound, exhort and teach, and invite  
all to come unto Christ.

SAID CONFERENCES  
T.C.

AND HE IS TO BE  
ORDAINED - W.A.

42 Every elder, priest, teacher or deacon, is to be  
ordained according to the gifts and callings of God  
unto him, by the power of the Holy Ghost which is  
in the one who ordains him.

W.D.

AND SAID CONFERENCES  
ARE - W.A.

TO BE DONE AT THE  
TIME. THE ELDERS ARE  
TO RECEIVE THEIR  
LICENSES FROM OTHER  
ELDERS, BY VOTE OF  
THE CHURCH TO WHICH  
THEY BELONG, OR  
FROM THE CONFERENCES  
W.A.

WHATEVER - W.A.

43 The several elders composing this church of  
Christ, are to meet in conference once in three  
months, or from time to time as they shall direct or  
appoint, to do church business whatever is neces-  
sary.

W.D.

MAY - T.C.

44 And each priest or teacher, who is ordained by  
a priest, shall take a certificate from him at the time,  
which when presented to an elder, he is to give him  
a license, which shall authorize him to perform the  
duty of his calling.

OR DEACON - W.A.  
SHALL ENTITLE  
T.C.

CERTIFICATE - W.A.

TO - W.A.

DUTIES - T.C.

W.D.

45 The duty of the members after they are receiv-  
ed by baptism.

46 The elders or priests are to have a sufficient

OR HE MAY RECEIVE IT FROM A CONFERENCE. NO PERSON IS TO BE ORDAINED TO ANY OFFICE IN  
THIS CHURCH, WHERE THERE IS A REGULARLY ORGANIZED BRANCH OF THE SAME, WITHOUT THE  
VOTE OF THAT CHURCH; BUT THE PRESIDING ELDERS, TRAVELING BISHOPS, HIGH COUNCILORS, HIGH  
PRIESTS, AND ELDERS, MAY HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF ORDAINING, WHERE THERE IS NO BRANCH OF THE  
CHURCH THAT A VOTE MAY BE CALLED. EVERY PRESIDENT OF THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD (OR  
PRESIDING ELDER), BISHOP, HIGH COUNCILOR, AND HIGH PRIEST, IS TO BE ORDAINED  
BY THE DIRECTION OF A HIGH COUNCIL OR GENERAL CONFERENCE.

W.A.



38  
CHAPTER XXVI.

1 A Revelation to Emma, given in Harmony, Pennsylvania, July, 1830.

HEARKEN UNTO THE VOICE OF THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHILE I SPEAK UNTO YOU, W.A.

W.D.

EMMA, my daughter ~~(in Zion)~~ a revelation I give unto you, concerning my will:

FOR VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, ALL THOSE WHO RECEIVE MY GOSPEL ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN MY KINGDOM. - W.A.

SMITH - W.A.  
AND IF THOU ART FAITHFUL AND WALK IN THE PATHS OF VIRTUE BEFORE ME, I WILL PRESERVE THY LIFE, AND THOU SHALT RECEIVE AN INHERITANCE IN ZION. W.A.

2 Behold thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou art an elect lady, whom I have called.

SMITH, JUN., W.A.

3 Murnur, not because of the things which thou hast not seen, for they are withheld from thee, and from the world, which is wisdom in me in a time to come.

WHILE THERE IS NO ONE TO BE A SCRIBE FOR HIM, - W.A.

4 And the office of thy calling shall be for a comfort unto my servant Joseph, thy husband, in his afflictions with consoling words, in the spirit of meekness.

COWDERY W.A.

5 And thou shalt go with him at the time of his going, and be unto him for a scribe, that I may send Oliver withersoever I will.

MY SERVANT W.A.

6 And thou shalt be ordained under his hand to expound scriptures, and to exhort the church, according as it shall be given thee by my Spirit:

J IN-T.C.

7 For he shall lay his hands upon thee, and thou shalt receive the Holy Ghost, and thy time shall be given to writing, and to learning much.

8 And thou needest not fear, for thy husband shall support thee ~~(in)~~ the church:

9 For unto them is his calling, that all things might be revealed unto them, whatsoever I will according to their faith.

10 And verily I say unto thee, that thou shalt lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better.

11 And it shall be given thee, also, to make a selection of sacred hymns, as it shall be given thee;

**K**

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AND TAKE UPON YOU MY WHOLE ARMOR, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND THE EVIL DAY, HAVING DONE ALL, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO STAND. STAND, THEREFORE, HAVING YOUR LOINS GIRT ABOUT WITH TRUTH, HAVING ON THE BREAST-PLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND YOUR FEET SHOD WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, WHICH I HAVE SENT MINE ANGELS TO COMMIT UNTO YOU; TAKING THE SHIELD OF FAITH WHEREWITH YE SHALL BE ABLE TO QUENCH ALL THE FIERY DARTS OF THE WICKED; AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION, AND THE SWORD OF MY SPIRIT, WHICH I WILL POUR OUT UPON YOU, AND MY WORD WHICH I REVEAL UNTO YOU, AND BE AGREED AS TOUCHING ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER YE ASK OF ME, — W.A.

**I** A Commandment to the church of Christ, given in Harmony, Pennsylvania, September 4, 1830.

**L**ISTEN to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God and your Redeemer, whose word is quick and powerful.

**2** For behold I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory;

**3** Remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins:

**4** Wherefore a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase wine, neither strong drink of your enemies:

**5** Wherefore you shall partake of none, except it is made new among you, yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth.

**6** Behold this is wisdom in me, wherefore marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you, on the earth, and with all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world:

**7** Wherefore lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins, and be faithful until I come: Amen.

(W.D.)

AND YE SHALL BE CAUGHT UP THAT WHERE I AM YE SHALL BE ALSO. — W.A.

MORONI, WHOM I HAVE SENT UNTO YOU TO REVEAL THE BOOK OF MOR-MON, CONTAINING THE FULNESS OF MY EVER-LASTING GOSPEL, TO WHOM I HAVE COMMITTED THE KEYS OF THE RECORD OF THE STICK OF EPHRAIM; AND ALSO WITH ELIAS, TO WHOM I HAVE COMMITTED THE KEYS OF BRINGING TO PASS THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS SPOKEN BY THE MOUTH OF ALL THE HOLY PROPHETS SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN, CONCERNING THE LAST DAYS; AND ALSO JOHN THE SON OF ZACHARIAS, WHICH ZACHARIAS HE (ELIAS) VISITED AND GAVE PROMISE THAT HE SHOULD HAVE A SON, AND HIS NAME SHOULD BE JOHN, AND HE SHOULD BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT OF ELIAS; WHICH JOHN I HAVE

SENT UNTO YOU, MY SERVANTS, JOSEPH SMITH, JUN., AND OLIVER COWDERY, TO ORDAIN YOU UNTO THE FIRST PRIESTHOOD WHICH YOU HAVE RECEIVED, THAT YOU MIGHT BE CALLED AND ORDAINED EVEN AS AARON; AND ALSO ELIJAH UNTO WHOM I HAVE COMMITTED THE KEYS OF THE POWER OF TURNING THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THE CHILDREN, AND THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN TO THE FATHERS, THAT THE WHOLE EARTH MAY NOT BE SMITTEN WITH A CURSE; AND ALSO WITH JOSEPH AND JACOB, AND ISAAC, AND ABRAHAM, YOUR FATHERS, BY WHOM THE PROMISES REMAIN; AND ALSO WITH MICHAEL, OR ADAM, THE FATHER OF ALL, THE PRINCE OF ALL, THE ANCIENT OF DAYS; AND ALSO WITH PETER, AND JAMES, AND JOHN, WHOM I HAVE SENT UNTO YOU, BY WHOM I HAVE ORDAINED YOU AND CONFIRMED YOU TO BE APOSTLES, AND ESPECIAL WITNESSES OF MY NAME, AND BEAR THE KEYS OF YOUR MINISTRY AND OF THE SAME THINGS WHICH I REVEALED UNTO THEM; UNTO WHOM I HAVE COMMITTED THE KEYS OF MY KINGDOM, AND A DISPENSATION OF THE GOSPEL FOR THE LAST TIMES; AND FOR THE FULNESS OF TIMES, IN THE WHICH I WILL GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE ALL THINGS, BOTH WHICH ARE IN HEAVEN, AND WHICH ARE ON EARTH; AND ALSO WITH — W.A.

BUT-T.C. ~~cast out; and~~ he that ~~commit~~<sup>HAS COMMITTED</sup> T.C. ~~eth~~ adultery and ~~repenteth~~ not, shall ~~be~~ cast out; ~~and~~ he that ~~commit~~<sup>IT-W.A.</sup> T.C. ~~eth~~ adultery and ~~repenteth~~ with all his heart, and forsaketh, and doeth ~~it~~ no more, thou shalt forgive ~~him~~; ~~but~~ if he doeth ~~it~~ again, he shall not be forgiven, but shall be cast out.

REPENTS-T.C. ~~do~~ him any harm.

W.D. 24 Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, ~~or~~ NOR-T.C.

25 Thou knowest my laws, ~~they~~ are given in my scriptures, he that sinneth and repenteth not, shall be cast out.

FOR THEIR SUPPORT-W.A. ~~they~~ are given in my scriptures, he that sinneth and repenteth not, shall be cast out.

I OF-T.C. 26 If thou lovest me, thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments; and behold, thou shalt ~~consecrate~~ ~~thy~~ properties, that which thou hast ~~unto~~ me, with a covenant and a deed which can not be broken; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church, and two of the elders, such as he shall appoint, and set apart for that purpose.

THEM-T.C. ~~unto~~ me, with a covenant and a deed which can not be broken; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church, and two of the elders, such as he shall appoint, and set apart for that purpose.

AND INASMUCH AS YE IMPART OF YOUR SUBSTANCE UNTO THE POOR, YE WILL DO IT UNTO ME W.A.

OR HAS APPOINTED-W.A. ~~unto~~ me, with a covenant and a deed which can not be broken; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church, and two of the elders, such as he shall appoint, and set apart for that purpose.

(AND-W.A. 27 And it shall come to pass, that the bishop of my church, after that he has received the properties of my church, that ~~it~~ can not be taken from the church, ~~he~~ shall appoint every man a steward over his own property, or that which he has received, ~~as~~asmuch as is sufficient for himself and family:

AGAIN, IF THERE SHALL BE PROPERTIES IN THE HANDS OF THE CHURCH, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OF IT, MORE THAN IS NECESSARY FOR THEIR SUPPORT AFTER THIS FIRST CONSECRATION, WHICH IS A RESIDUE TO BE CONSECRATED UNTO THE BISHOP, IT-W.A.

28 And ~~the~~ residue shall be kept to administer to ~~him~~ who ~~has~~ not, that every man may receive ~~according~~ ~~(as~~ he stands in need):

THOSE-T.C. 29 ~~And~~ the residue shall be kept in my storehouse, to administer to the poor and needy, as shall be appointed by the ~~elders~~ of the church and the bishop; and for the purpose of purchasing lands, and ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

W.D. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

HAVE-T.C. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

THEREFORE-T.C. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

AND HIS COUNCIL-W.A. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

TO HIS WANTS-T.C. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

HIGH COUNCIL T.C. ~~the~~ building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in ~~the~~ day ~~that~~ I shall come to my temple;

CONCERNING THESE THINGS-W.A.

WILT-T.C.

REMEMBER THE POOR AND -W.A.

TO IMPART-W.A.

OR HIGH PRIETS,-W.A.

HIS COUNSELORS,W.A.

AFTER THEY ARE LAID BEFORE -W.A.

THESE TESTIMONIES CONCERNING THE CONSECRATION OF-W.A.

THEY-T.C.

SHALL BE MADE ACCOUNTABLE UNTO ME -W.A.

W.D.

BY CONSECRATION-W.A.

AGREEABLE TO MY COMMANDMENTS-T.C.

BE AMPLY SUPPLIED AND-W.A.

WHO HAS NEED-W.A.

FROM TIME TO TIME-W.A.

THE-W.A.

W.D.

FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT OF THE CHURCH AND BUILDING HOUSES OF WORSHIP -W.A.

WHEN-T.C.

THAT-T.C.



you in my own due time where the New Jerusalem shall be built.

FORTH-T.C.

48 And behold, it shall come to pass, that my servants shall be sent ~~both~~ to the east, and to the west, to the north, and to the south; and even now let him that goeth to the east, teach them that shall be converted to flee to the west; and this in consequence of that which is ~~to come~~ on the earth, and of secret combinations.

COMING-T.C.

FOR UNTO YOU IT IS GIVEN TO KNOW-T.C.

49 Behold, thou shalt observe all these things, and great shall be thy reward.

BUT UNTO THE WORLD IT IS NOT GIVEN TO KNOW THEM-T.C.

50 Thou shalt observe ~~to keep~~ the mysteries of the kingdom ~~unto thyself, for it is not given to the world to know the mysteries.~~

AND BE FAITHFUL-W.A.

YE SHALL OBSERVE W.A.

51 The laws which ye have received, and shall hereafter receive, shall be sufficient ~~for you both~~ here, and in the New Jerusalem.

YE-W.A.

CHURCH COVENANTS, SUCH AS-W.A.

TO-T.C.

52 Therefore, he that lacketh ~~knowledge~~, let him ask of me and I will give him liberally and upbraid him not.

ESTABLISH-W.A.

WISDOM-T.C.

OR IN OTHER WORDS, THE KEYS OF THE CHURCH-W.A.

53 Lift up your hearts and rejoice, for unto you the kingdom ~~has~~ been given; even so: Amen.

HAVE-T.C.

STEWARDSHIPS-T.C.

54 The priests and teachers, shall have their ~~stew-~~

W.D.

AS COUNSELERS W.A.

OR HIGH PRIESTS WHO-W.A.

~~and~~ ~~shall~~ ~~be~~ ~~as~~ ~~the~~ ~~members~~; and the elders ~~are~~ to assist the bishop in all things, ~~and~~ ~~be~~

ARE TO HAVE-T.C.

APPOINTED-W.A.

~~as~~ ~~we~~ ~~see~~ ~~that~~ their families ~~are~~ supported out of the property which is consecrated to the ~~Lord~~, either a stewardship, or otherwise, as may be thought best by the ~~elders~~ and bishop.

W.D.

BISHOP, -T.C.

COUNSELORS-T.C.

OR DECIDED-W.A.

W.D.

55 Thou shalt contract no debts with the world, except thou art commanded.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE POOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, AS BEFORE MENTIONED; OR THEY ARE TO RECEIVE A JUST REMUNERATION FOR ALL THEIR SERVICES, -W.A.

AND THE BISHOP, ALSO, SHALL RECEIVE HIS SUPPORT, OR A JUST REMUNERATION FOR ALL HIS SERVICES IN THE CHURCH. -W.A.

56 And again, the elders and bishop, shall counsel together, and they shall do ~~by~~ the direction of the Spirit as it must needs be necessary.

57 There shall be as many appointed as must

36

W.D. — ~~It shall be necessary to assist the bishop in obtaining places for the brethren from New York, that they may be together as much as can be, and as they are directed by the Holy Spirit; and every family shall have a place, that they may live by themselves. And every church shall be organized in as close bodies as they can be; and this for a wise purpose:— even so. Amen.~~

## CHAPTER XLV.

*2 Revelation to the elders of the church, assembled in Kirtland, Ohio, given February, 1831.*

**O** HEARKEN, ye elders of my church, and give ear to the words which I shall speak unto you:

2 For behold, verily, verily I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you, to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.

3 And this ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

4 But verily, verily I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead:

5 And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments:

6 And this I give unto you, that you may not be

THE EVENING AND THE MORNING STAR.

Vol. I. Independence, Mo. March, 1833. No. 10.

REVELATION GIVEN KIRTLAND, OHIO, JANUARY 3, 1838.

ARE-T.C.  
AND AGAIN-W.A.  
OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SCHOOL-W.A.  
PRESIDENT-W.A.  
THEREFORE, HE SHALL BE FIRST-W.A.  
CAREFULLY-T.C.

OF THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS, ESTABLISHED FOR THEIR-W.A.  
W.D.  
THOSE-T.C.  
OF THE CHURCH-W.A.  
THEM, EVEN FOR ALL-W.A.  
IN THE HOUSE-W.A.  
OR-T.C.  
OR REMEMBRANCE W.A.  
W.D.  
W.D.  
OR REMEMBRANCE W.A.  
AMEN-W.A.  
PRESIDENT OR-W.A.  
THEY-W.A.  
IF THEY BE-W.A.  
AN ENSAMPLE-T.C.  
W.D.  
IN THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS-W.A.

THE order of the house prepared for the presidency (and) instruction in all things, that (is) expedient for the officers, or in other words (these) who are called to the ministry in the church, beginning at the highpriests even down to the deacons.

And this shall be the order of the house: V  
He that is appointed to be (a) teacher shall be found standing in his place, which shall be prepared for him in the house of God; in a place that the congregation in the house may hear his words (correctly), and distinctly, not with loud speech.

And when he cometh into the house of God, for he should be first in the house:  
Behold this is beautiful, that he may be an example, let him offer himself in prayer upon his knees before God, in token of the everlasting covenant.  
And when any shall come in after him, let the teacher arise and with uplifted hands to heaven:  
Ye even directly (and) salute his brother, or brethren with these words, (say- ing):  
Art thou a brother or brethren, I salute you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token of the everlasting covenant; in which covenant I receive you to fellowship in a determination that is fixed, immovable and unchangeable to be your friend and brother through the grace of God, in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving forever and ever. V  
And he that cometh in, and is a brother or brethren, shall salute the teacher with uplifted hands to heaven, with this same prayer and covenant, or by saying amen, in token of the same.

Behold, verily I say unto you, this is (a) example unto you for a salutation to one another in the house of God. V  
And to you the called to the ministry of the ordinances of the house of God; and ye are called to do this by prayer and thanksgiving, as the Spirit shall give utterance, in all your doings in the house of the Lord, that it may become a sanctuary, a tabernacle of the Holy Spirit, to your edification: Amen.

AND HE THAT IS FOUND UNWORTHY OF THIS SALVATION SHALL NOT HAVE PLACE AMONG YOU; FOR YE SHALL NOT SUFFER THAT MINE HOUSE SHALL BE POLLUTED BY HIM. W.A.

AND IS FAITHFUL BEFORE ME -W.A.  
IN THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS.-W.A.

AND YE SHALL NOT RECEIVE ANY AMONG YOU INTO THIS SCHOOL SAVE HE IS CLEAN FROM THE BLOOD OF THIS GENERATION; AND HE SHALL BE RECEIVED BY THE ORDINANCE OF THE WASHING OF FEET, FOR UNTO THIS END WAS THE ORDINANCE OF THE WASHING OF FEET INSTITUTED. AND AGAIN, THE ORDINANCE OF WASHING FEET IS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE PRESIDENT, OR PRESIDING ELDER OF THE CHURCH. IT IS TO BE COMMENCED WITH PRAYER; AND AFTER PARTAKING OF BREAD AND WINE, HE IS TO GIRD HIMSELF ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN GIVEN IN THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF JOHN'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING ME. W.A.



THE EVENING AND THE MORNING STAR.

Vol. I.

Independence, Mo. October, 1832.

No. 5.

A REVELATION, GIVEN NOVEMBER, 1831.

- HYDE-W.A.
- ORDINATION-T.C.
- JOHNSON-W.A.
- JOHNSON-W.A.
- HYDE-W.A.
- E. M'LELLIN-W.A.
- COVENANTS-T.C.
- W.D.
- THEY-T.C.
- REMAIN-T.C.
- ARE-T.C.
- PRIESTS-T.C.
- W.D.
- THEY-T.C.
- THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CHURCH-T.C.
- THIS PRESIDENCY-T.C.
- COVENANTS AND COMMANDMENTS-T.C.
- OR IN ANY OF HER STAKES WHICH ARE ORGANIZED - W.A.
- HIGH PRIEST WHO T.C.
- AND IF HE REPENT HE SHALL BE-T.C.
- SHALL ALSO-T.C.
- OR IN ANY OF HER STAKES WHICH ARE ORGANIZED-W.A.
- HEADS-T.C.
- COWDERY-W.A.

**M**Y servant, Oliver, was called, by his ordinance, to proclaim the everlasting gospel, by the spirit of the living God, from people to people, and from land to land, in the congregations of the wicked, in their synagogues, reasoning with and expounding all scriptures unto them: And behold and lo, this is an example unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth: And this is the example unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and whatsoever they shall speak, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, shall be scripture; shall be the will of the Lord; shall be the mind of the Lord; shall be the word of the Lord; shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation; Behold this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants: wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me as a Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God; that I was; that I am; and that I am to come. This is the word of the Lord unto you my servant, Oliver; and also unto my servant, Luke, and unto my servant, Lyman, and unto my servant Will; and unto all the faithful elders of my church: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; acting in the authority which I have given you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned, and he that believeth shall be blessed with signs following, even as it is written: And unto you it shall be given to know the signs of the times, and the signs of the coming of the Son of man; and of as many as the Father shall bestow records, to you shall be given power to seal them up unto eternal life: Amen.

And now, concerning the items in addition to the laws and commandments, they are these: The first which hereafter in the due time of the Lord, other bishops to be set apart unto the church, to minister even according to the first; wherefore, shall be high priest, who is worthy; and he shall be appointed by a conference of high priests. And again, no bishop or pastor, which shall be set apart for the ministry, shall be tried or condemned for any crime, save it be before a conference of high priests; and in as much as he is found guilty before a conference of high priests, by testimony first caused to be impaled, he shall be condemned according to the laws of the church. And again, in as much as priests have children in Zion, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance; faith in Christ the Son of the living God; and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, with eight years old: the sin be upon the heads of the parents, for this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, and their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands: and they shall teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord. And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy. And the inhabitants of Zion, also, shall remember their labors, in as much as they are appointed to labor, in all faithfulness, for the altar shall be had in remembrance before the Lord. Now I the Lord am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them; and their children are also growing up in wickedness: They also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of grackness. These things ought not to be, and must be done away from among them: wherefore let my servant Oliver carry these sayings unto the land of Zion. And a commandment I give unto you, that he that doeth not his part before the Lord in the season thereof, let him

be had in remembrance before the judge of my people. These sayings are true and faithful: wherefore transgress them not, neither take therefrom. Behold I am Alpha and Omega, and I come quickly: Amen.

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD, EXCEPT THEY BE LITERAL DESCENDANTS OF AARON, AND IF THEY BE LITERAL DESCENDANTS OF AARON THEY HAVE A LEGAL RIGHT TO THE BISHOPRIC, IF THEY ARE THE FIRSTBORN AMONG THE SONS OF AARON; FOR THE FIRSTBORN HOLDS THE RIGHT OF THE PRESIDENCY OVER THIS PRIESTHOOD, AND THE KEYS OR AUTHORITY OF THE SAME. NO MAN HAS A LEGAL RIGHT TO THIS OFFICE, TO HOLD THE KEYS OF THIS PRIESTHOOD, EXCEPT HE BE A LITERAL DESCENDANT AND THE FIRSTBORN OF AARON. BUT, AS A HIGH PRIEST OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD HAS AUTHORITY TO OFFICIATE IN ALL THE LESSER OFFICES HE MAY OFFICIATE IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP WHEN NO LITERAL DESCENDANT OF AARON CAN BE FOUND, PROVIDED HE IS CALLED AND SET APART AND ORDAINED UNTO THIS POWER, UNDER THE HANDS OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD. AND A LITERAL DESCENDANT OF AARON, ALSO, MUST BE DESIGNATED BY THIS PRESIDENCY, AND FOUND WORTHY, AND ANOINTED, AND ORDAINED UNDER THE HANDS OF THIS PRESIDENCY, OTHERWISE THEY ARE NOT LEGALLY AUTHORIZED TO OFFICIATE IN THEIR PRIESTHOOD.

**R** BUT, BY VIRTUE OF THE DECREE CONCERNING THEIR RIGHT OF THE PRIESTHOOD DESCENDING FROM FATHER TO SON, THEY MAY CLAIM THEIR ANOINTING IF AT ANY TIME THEY CAN PROVE THEIR LINEAGE, OR DO ASCERTAIN IT BY REVELATION FROM THE LORD UNDER THE HANDS OF THE ABOVE NAMED PRESIDENCY. -T.C.

**TIMES AND SEASONS.**

"TRUTH WILL PREVAIL."

Vol. 1. No. 7. NAUVOO, ILLINOIS, MAY, 1840. [Whole No. 7.]

SEASONS.

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**COPY OF A LETTER, WRITTEN BY J. SMITH JR. AND OTHERS, WHILE IN PRISON. Liberty Jail, Clay Co. Mo.**

To Bishop Partridge, and to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, in Quincy Illinois, and to those scattered abroad, throughout all the regions round about.

Your humble servant Joseph Smith is prisoner for Christ's sake, and the saints, taken and held by the power of mobocracy under the exterminating reign of the execrable Governor Lilburn W. Boggs, in company with the other prisoners had beloved brethren, Caleb Baldwin, Lyman Wight, Hysom Smith, and Alexander McKee, send unto you greeting: May the grace of God the Father, and the Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ, rest upon you all, and abide with you for ever; and may faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity dwell in you and abound, so that you may not be barren or unfruitful.

We know, that the greater part of you are acquainted with the wrongs, high toned injustice and cruelty which is practised upon us; we have been taken prisoners, charged falsely with all kind of crimes and thrown into a prison enclosed with strong walls, and are surrounded with a strong guard who are as indefatigable in watching us, as their master is in laying snares for the people of God. Therefore under these circumstances, dearly beloved brethren, we are the more ready to claim your fellowship and love. Our situation is calculated to awaken our minds to a sacred remembrance of your affection, and kindness; and we think that your situation will have the same effect; therefore, we believe, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and our fellowship one with another; and that every species of wickedness and cruelty practised upon us, will only tend to bind our hearts and seal them together in love.

It is probably, as unnecessary for us to say, that we are thus treated and held in bonds, without cause as it would be for you to say, that you were smitten and driven from your homes without any provocation; we mutually understand and verily know, that if the citizens of the state of Missouri, had not

W.D.

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TIMES A

abused the saints, and had been as desirous of peace as we were, there would have been nothing but peace and quietude to this day and we should not have been in this wretched place but burthened with the society of demons in human form and compelled to hear nothing but oaths and curses, and virgins echoes of drunkenness and debaucheries of every description; neither would the cries of orphans and widows have ascended to God or the blood of the saints have stained the soil, and cried for vengeance against them. But "we dwell with those who hate peace" and who delighted in war and surely their unrelenting hearts, their inhuman and murderous disposition—and their cruel practices, shock humanity, and defy description. It is truly a tale of sorrow, lamentation and we, too much for humanity to contemplate. Such a transaction cannot be found where kings and tyrants reign, or among the savages of the wilderness, or even among the furious beasts of the forest. To think that man should be mangled for sport, after being cruelly put to death. Wrench him to their last mortal agon from them, while their helpless children were clinging around them and crying for food—and then, to gratify the insatiable desires of their more than inhuman oppressors, be violated, is held to be extreme.

W.D.

They practice these things upon the saints who have done them no wrong, had committed no crime, and who were as innocent and virtuous people; and have proved themselves lovers of God by forsaking and enduring all things for his sake. "If men needs be that offences come, but wo to those by whom they come."

THINE EYE, YEA-W.A.

O God! whored art thou? and where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place! how long shall thy hand be stayed, and thy pure eyes behold from the heavens, the wrongs and sufferings of thy people and of thy servants; and thine eyes be penetrated with their cries! How long, O Lord! shall they thus suffer, before thine heart shall be softened towards them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion towards them? O Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controllest and subjectest the devil and the

EYE-T.C.

ETERNAL-W.A.

EAR-T.C.

YEA-T.C.

W.D.

TOWARD-T.C.

ARE-T.C.

W.D.

HOW LONG-W.A.

THESE WRONGS AND UNLAWFUL OPPRESSIONS-W.A.

TOWARD-T.C.



W.A. = Words Added  
W.D. = Words Deleted  
T.C. = Textual Change

**TIMES AND**

W.D. before the foundation of the world, to hold the keys of the mysteries of these things, which have been kept hid for ages and generations, which have been revealed in babes, even to the weak and despisable ones of the earth. We would beseech you to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and at the same time exhort one another to a reformation, both teachers and taught, male and female, so that honesty, sobriety, candor, solemnity, plainness, meekness and virtue may characterize us from henceforth; and that we be like little children without guile, guile or hypocrisy; and our brethren after your tribulations, if you do those things, and exercise fervent prayer in the night of God always, he shall give unto you knowledge, by his holy Spirit, ye shall shall pour out the Holy Ghost as such copious effusion have not been since the creation until now; (and the fulness of that promise which our Fathers have waited for with such anxious expectation which was to be revealed in the last days, and held in reserve until a time when nothing shall be withheld, when all the glories of earth and heaven, time and eternity shall be manifest to all those who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ. If there be bounds set to the heavens, the seas, the dry land, they shall be manifest, as well as the various revolutions of the sun, moon, and planets; and a full development of all the glorious hours by which they are governed shall be revealed in the "dispensation of the fulness of times" according to that which was ordained in the midst of the council of heaven in the presence of the eternal God before this world was.

BY THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT OF - T.C.

W.D. THAT HAS - T.C.

WORLD WAS - T.C. REVEALED - W.A.

W.D. OF THAT PROMISE WHICH OUR FATHERS HAVE W.D.

AWAITED - T.C. WAITED FOR WITH SUCH ANXIOUS EXPECTATION WHICH WAS TO BE REVEALED IN THE W.D.

W.D. LAST DAYS, AND HELD IN RESERVE UNTIL A TIME WHEN NOTHING SHALL BE WITHHELD, W.D.

TIMES - T.C. FOR THE FULNESS OF THEIR GLORY; - W.A.

TO COME IN THE WHICH - T.C. WHICH THEIR MINDS WERE POINTED TO BY THE ANGELS, AS - W.A.

WHETHER THERE BE ONE GOD OR MANY GODS, THEY - T.C. W.D.

ALL THRONES AND DOMINION, PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, SHALL BE REVEALED AND SET FORTH UPON - W.A. AND ALSO - W.A.

OR TO - W.A. OR TO - W.A.

W.D. OR TO THE SUN, MOON, OR STARS - ALL THE TIMES OF THEIR REVOLUTIONS, ALL THE APPOINTED DAYS, MONTHS, AND YEARS, AND ALL THE DAYS OF THEIR DAYS, MONTHS, AND YEARS, AND ALL THEIR GLORIES, LAWS, AND SET TIMES, - W.A.

DAYS OF THE - W.A.

W.D. THAT SHOULD BE RESERVED UNTO THE FINISHING AND THE END THEREOF, WHEN EVERY MAN SHALL ENTER INTO HIS ETERNAL PRESENCE AND INTO HIS IMMORTAL REST. HOW LONG CAN ROLLING WATERS REMAIN IMPURE? - W.A.

T OF ALL OTHER GODS W.A.

W.D. Ignorance, bigotry, and superstition are frequently in the way of the progress of the church, and are like the torrent of rain rushing down from the mountains, which floods the clear stream with mire and dirt; but when the storm is over and the rain has ceased the mire and dirt are washed away, and the stream again is pure and clear as the fountain, so shall the church appear when ignorance, superstition and bigotry are washed away. What power shall stay the heavens, as well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the mighty Missouri river in its course, W.D.

SHALL - T.C. DECREED - W.A.

W.D.



## Important Changes

As we indicated earlier, we have placed letters by some of the changes which we wish to discuss.

CHANGE A. (see page 18) This is certainly one of the most significant changes in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave this interesting information:

After the translation of the Book of Mormon was finished, early in the spring of 1830, before April 6th, Joseph gave the stone to Oliver Cowdery and told me as well as the rest that he was through with it, and he did not use the stone anymore. **He said he was through the work God had given him to perform, except to preach the gospel.** He told us that we would all have to depend on the Holy Ghost hereafter to be guided into truth and obtain the will of the Lord. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, p. 32)

The fact that Joseph Smith was not planning on doing any other work besides the Book of Mormon is well verified by the revelation given in March of 1829. This revelation was printed in the *Book of Commandments* as Chapter 4. Verse 2 reads as follows: “. . . and he has a gift to translate the book, and **I have commanded him that he shall pretend to no other gift, for I will grant him no other gift.**”

By the year 1835, when this revelation was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Joseph Smith had pretended to at least one other gift besides that of translating the Book of Mormon. He had pretended to the gift of rewording the Bible (Inspired Version), and a short time after this he brought forth the Book of Abraham. Certainly this revelation commanding Joseph Smith to pretend to no other gift but to translate the Book of Mormon could not remain in its original uncensored form. The church had decided to go beyond the Book of Mormon and accept Joseph Smith's other writings as scripture. This change in church policy necessitated a change in the revelation. Therefore, it was changed to read as follows:

And you have a gift to translate the plates; and this is **the first gift that I bestowed upon you**; and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift, **until my purpose is fulfilled in this**; for I will grant unto you no other gift until it is finished. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 5, verse 4)

Thus the entire meaning of this revelation was changed, making it appear that the Lord would grant him other gifts besides that of translating the Book of Mormon. At least 22 words were added to this verse to make the change. David Whitmer made this statement about this matter:

. . . he [Joseph Smith] was not called to organize and establish the church any more than the rest of us Elders. . . . as if God had commanded Joseph to pretend to no other gift but to translate the Book of Mormon, that he would “grant him no other gift,” and then afterwards God had changed his mind and concluded to grant him another gift. God does not change and work in this manner. The way the revelation has been changed, twenty-two words being added to it, it would appear that God had broken His word after giving His word in plainness; commanding Brother Joseph to pretend to no other gift but to translate the Book of Mormon, and then the Lord had **changed** and concluded to grant Joseph the gift of a **Seer to the Church**. . . .

May God have mercy on the heads of the church for their transgression is my prayer. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, pp. 57-58)

CHANGE B. (see page 18) Notice that the words “you must wait yet a little while, for ye are not yet ordained” have been added to this revelation. This revelation was supposed to have been given in March of 1829. Some Mormon writers have claimed that God has a right to add to His word after it is given. But, we ask, why would the Lord wait more than five years to give them this information? What good would it do to give them this information years later? In order for a warning to do any good it has to be given right at the time.

Many of the changes in the revelations appear to be equivalent to locking the barn door after the horse has got out.

CHANGE C. (see page 18) Notice that 154 words have been deleted from verses 5 and 6 of this revelation. Melvin J. Petersen, a Mormon apologist, stated:

Joseph Smith . . . was dissatisfied with the wording of verses five and six in portraying the concept he had received, and therefore he **omitted** verses five and six of Chapter four and **rewrote** in their place verse three of the 1835 edition . . . (“A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the Revelations . . .,” typed copy, p. 140)

Melvin Petersen seems to feel that Joseph Smith had a perfect right to do this. Although we feel that Joseph Smith had a right to revise his own writings, we do not feel that he had a right to revise the revelations which he claimed to be the words of God. In the very first revelation that was published in the *Book of Commandments* we read:

Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my Preface unto the *Book of my Commandments*, . . .

Search these commandments, for they are **true** and **faithful**, and the prophecies and promises which are in them, shall all be fulfilled. **What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken**, and I excuse not myself, and though the heavens and the earth pass away, **my word shall not pass away**, . . . (*Book of Commandments* 1:2 and 7)

If these were really revelations from God, Joseph Smith would have had no right to revise them. David Whitmer made this statement concerning the change in Chapter 4:

The next change I will notice is one of importance. It is in Section 4, *Doctrine and Covenants* [section 5 of current Utah Edition]: Chapter 4. *Book of Commandments*. Half a page has been left out of this revelation. I believe that the object of those who left it out was to strike out the following words:

And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lying, etc., \*\*\*\*and I will establish my church, **like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old**.

They knew that the order of offices in the Church of Latter Day Saints, was *not* like the order in the Church of Christ of old; because the Church of Christ of old had in it only elders, priests and teachers: so they left out this part of the revelation when they published the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 60)

CHANGE D. (see page 19) This revelation is supposed to contain a **translation** of a parchment written by the Apostle John. Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated it by means of the Urim and Thummim. When this revelation was published in the *Book of Commandments* in 1833, it contained 143 words, but when it was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835, it contained 252 words. Thus 109 words had been added.

Mormon writers are unable to explain why Joseph Smith changed this revelation. Melvin J. Petersen made this statement:

In Chapter six of the *Book of Commandments* we find a revelation which was a **translation** from parchment upon which the Apostle John wrote his Gospel. When the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* was published this revelation had many additions and a few changes. (Section thirty-four.) The additional words and sentences reveal more concerning John and his ministry. How Joseph Smith had this information revealed to him, by means of the Urim and Thummim, is not clear. . . . What part revelation played in receiving this information concerning John is not known, nor is it known as to **how** the translation was enacted. We do know that **additions and changes were made** by Joseph Smith. . . .

Joseph Smith left nothing in his writings to indicate why he added to this translated version . . . and so any plausible answers will be merely conjecture (“A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the





The next important change I will speak of, is made in a revelation which was given to Brothers Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and myself in Fayette, New York, June, 1829. . . . In the *Book of Commandments* [Chapter 15] it reads thus:

Behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written, **concerning my church, my gospel, and my rock**. Wherefore if you shall build up my church, and my gospel, and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

But in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* [Sec. 18:2-11] it has been changed and reads thus:

Behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written, concerning **the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock**; wherefore, if you shall build up my church **upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock**, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

The change in this revelation is of great importance; the word “them” refers to the plates—the Book of Mormon: We were commanded to rely upon it in building up the church; that is, in establishing the doctrine, the order of offices, etc.:

**For in them are all things written concerning my church, my gospel, and my rock.**

But this revelation has been changed by man to mean as follows: That therein is *not* all things written concerning the church, but only all things concerning “*the foundation of*” the church—or the *beginning* of the church: that you must build up the church, beginning according to the written word, and add new offices, new ordinances, and new doctrines as I (the Lord) reveal them to you from year to year: . . . When the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* was compiled in 1834, the church had then received many revelations to establish new offices and doctrines that are not even mentioned in the New Covenant of either of the two sacred books. They changed this revelation in order to sustain these new doctrines. If they had not made this change, the plain language of the original revelation would have condemned the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. I want to repeat that I was present when Brother Joseph received this revelation through the stone: . . . I know of a surety that it was changed when printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1834 . . . There are several of the old *Book of Commandments* yet in the land; bring them to light and see for yourselves that these revelations were changed just as I tell you.

These changes were made by the leaders of the church, who had drifted into error and spiritual blindness. Through the influence of Sydney Rigdon, Brother Joseph was led on and on into receiving revelations every year, to establish offices and doctrines which are not even mentioned in the teachings of Christ in the written word. In a few years they had gone away ahead of the written word, so that they had to **change these revelations**, as you will understand when I have finished. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, 1887, pp. 58-59)

CHANGE I. (see page 22) Notice that 97 words have been added. David Whitmer made this statement concerning this interpolation:

The next change of importance is in a revelation given in Fayette, New York, June, 1830 . . .

The heading over it in the *Book of Commandments* is as follows: “The Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ, given in Fayette, New York, June, 1830.” Two paragraphs have been added to it, having been thrust into the middle of it. Paragraphs 16 and 17 is the part added, [verses 65-67 in current Utah Ed.] which part speaks of high priests and other high offices that the church never knew of until almost two years after its beginning: As if God had made a mistake in the first organization of the church, and left out these high important offices which are all above an elder; and as if God had made a mistake and left these high offices out of that revelation when it was first given. Oh the weakness and blindness of man! (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 59)

CHANGE J. (see page 22) Notice that in this revelation Emma Smith, Joseph’s wife, is told that she would be supported “**from**” the church, but in the *Doctrine and Covenants* it has been changed to make it appear that Joseph Smith would support her “**in**” the church. The Mormon leaders have condemned other churches for having a paid ministry. This change seems to have been made to cover up the fact that Joseph Smith was receiving money from the church.

CHANGE K. (see page 23) Notice that over 400 words have been added to this revelation. Part of the interpolation concerns the visitation of Peter, James and John to Joseph Smith. The Mormon leaders claim that they restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. David Whitmer, however, claimed that the Melchizedek Priesthood came into the church by a process of evolution rather than by revelation. The fact that these words concerning the visitation of Peter, James and John had to be added to the revelation tends to confirm David Whitmer’s charge. We hope to say more about this in a chapter on Priesthood.

CHANGE L. (see page 23) Notice that in the *Book of Commandments* the Mormons were told to “consecrate **all**” their properties to the church, but in the *Doctrine and Covenants* they were told only to “consecrate **of**” their properties.

The Mormons were accused of attempting “to establish communism.” The change in the revelation was evidently made to cover up the truth concerning this matter. Fawn Brodie says that

Joseph Smith set up an economic order in his church which followed with a certain fidelity the life history of the typical communistic society of his time. . . . Joseph issued a revelation setting up the United Order of Enoch. . . . Private property became church property, and private profit a community spoil. . . .

Whatever surplus the steward exacted from the land, or whatever profit the mechanic derived from his shop, was contributed to the church storehouse and treasury, the convert keeping only what was “needful for the support and comfort” of himself and family. The spirit of true Marxian communism—“from each according to his ability, to each according to his need”—was implicit in the whole system. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 106)

Sidney Rigdon may have been the one who influenced Joseph Smith to start the United Order. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen states:

Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery and two other Elders, . . . stopped over at Kirtland, Ohio, and converted almost the entire Campbellite congregation of Sidney Rigdon, including Rigdon himself. These “Disciples of Christ,” who lived in a communistic order, became the nucleus for the Mormon settlement in Ohio. Joseph Smith, at first, likewise attempted to establish a communitarian society. (“The Theory and Practice of the Political Kingdom of God in Modern History, 1829-1890,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1959, typed copy, pp. 74-75)

Fawn Brodie says that “Joseph’s enthusiasm for the United Order was always tempered by the fact that it was Rigdon’s conception” (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 108). He decided that it would not work out as he had planned, and therefore it became necessary to change the revelation to cover up the original plan.

CHANGES M, N, O, P and Q. These changes are concerning Priesthood which we will deal with in another chapter.

CHANGES R and S. (see page 26) Aleah Koury, of the Reorganized LDS Church, made this accusation against the Utah Mormon Church:

In order to lend support to the doctrine of a plurality of gods, the contents of a letter written by Joseph Smith and others on March 20, 1839, were deliberately altered. . . .

Approximately a year after Joseph obtained his freedom from prison, these original letters were published in the *Times and Seasons*, Nauvoo, Illinois, . . . If there had been any errors in these letters, Joseph and those who signed them with him had ample opportunity to correct them, . . . this was the only printing of these letters during



Joseph's lifetime.

However in January, 1855, more than ten years after the death of Joseph Smith, the Utah church reprinted the first letter in the *Millennial Star*, . . . and in doing so, deliberately changed and altered the letter from the original as printed in the *Times and Seasons*. . . . portions of this altered letter were placed in the 1876 edition of the *Utah Doctrine and Covenants* as revelations from God, . . .

A comparison . . . reveals some of the deliberate alterations made in order to support the doctrine of a plurality of gods. Reference to deity in the *Times and Seasons* account reads:

. . . was ordained in the midst of the council of heaven in the presence of the eternal God, before this world was.

This statement was altered in the Utah church publications to read:

. . . was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of **all other gods** before this world was . . .

In addition, the following statement was also added to the Utah church publications which has no counterpart in the original letter:

A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be **one God or many gods**, they shall be manifest.

This whole fabrication was a deliberate misrepresentation to implicate Joseph Smith in the promulgation of an unscriptural doctrine of a plurality of gods foreign to the teachings of the original church. (*The Truth and the Evidence*, Independence, Mo., 1965, pp. 25-27)

Garland E. Tickemyer, a minister in the Reorganized LDS Church, presents an entirely different view, however. His idea seems to be that Joseph Smith himself may have changed the letter before it was printed in the *Times and Seasons*:

The writer has joined in criticisms of the Utah Mormon Church for this apparently unwarranted "doctoring" of the letter to make it compatible with their plurality of Gods views.

In the process of doing research for this thesis, the writer became aware of a claim of the Utah Mormons that they had the original letter in their archives and that their *Doctrine and Covenants* version was taken direct from the original.

On March 30, 1954, while passing through Salt Lake City, the writer spent considerable time in gaining access to this purported original letter. . . .

The letter originally published in the *Times and Seasons* is evidently a synopsis of this letter and even the Utah Mormon *Doctrine and Covenants* version **contains only excerpts of this letter**. . . . We did not attempt to compare the wording throughout because of shortage of time. Since our interest was principally in the two disputed phrases we looked for them. We found that the Utah version is a correct copy of the letter we examined so far as the two phrases are concerned.

The disputed statements "whether there be one God or many," is not a forthright endorsement of a plurality of Gods concept. However, the phrase "in the midst of the council of Gods" is a fairly obvious reference to a plurality of Gods.

We now have the first evidence in this letter of something that was written during Joseph's lifetime. . . . when the letter was published **the wording was changed**, undoubtedly with the consent of and probably by its writers. We are still left to wonder which represented Joseph Smith's true view; the one written under the stress of prison life, or the more carefully considered version that he released to the world as representing the belief of the church. One gains the impression that he or his companions may have been speculating on the possibility of eternal progression but were not sufficiently certain of their position to make it official. ("A Study of Some Representative Concepts of a Finite God in Contemporary American Philosophy With Application to the God Concepts of the Utah Mormons," M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1954, typed copy, pp. 48-51)

If Joseph Smith suppressed the statements on the plurality of Gods when the letter was printed in the *Times and Seasons* (as Garland Tickemyer's thesis suggests), then he was guilty of deliberate deception. In a speech delivered June 19, 1844, when Joseph Smith was openly teaching the plurality of Gods, he stated:

"I will preach on the plurality of Gods. . . . I am bold to declare I have taught all the strong doctrines publicly, and always teach stronger doctrines in public than in private" (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 474). If Joseph Smith suppressed the words concerning the plurality of Gods from the *Times and Seasons*, this statement would certainly be false.

Be this as it may, the Utah Mormon leaders find themselves faced with a dilemma. If they say that Joseph Smith changed the letter, they make him a deceiver. If, on the other hand, they say that the letter was changed in 1855 when Joseph Smith's *History* was printed in the *Millennial Star*, they implicate Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, who approved the revision of Joseph Smith's *History*. The Reorganized Church is in trouble if it can be shown that Joseph Smith changed the letter (which Tickemyer's thesis seems to show), but the Utah Mormon Church is in trouble either way. Even if the references to the plurality of Gods were in the original letter, why did Joseph Smith delete them before publication? And why were many of the words—approximately 3,700—which were printed in the *Times and Seasons* deleted in the *Doctrine and Covenants*?

## Unthinkable?

Mormon leaders have been very free in accusing others of making changes. The Apostle Mark E. Petersen says that "deliberate **falsifications and fabrications were perpetrated**" in the Bible (*As Translated Correctly*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 4). On page 27 of the same book, the Apostle Petersen states: "It seems unthinkable to the honest and devout mind that any man or set of men would **deliberately change the test of the Word of God** to further their own peculiar purposes."

We certainly agree that it would be dishonest to change the "Word of God," but we wonder how the Mormon leaders can justify the changes in Joseph Smith's revelations, since they consider them to also be the "Word of God." Bruce R. McConkie stated: "As now constituted the *Doctrine and Covenants* contains 136 sections . . . Most of these sections came to Joseph Smith by **direct revelation**, the recorded words being those **of the Lord Jesus Christ himself**" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 206).

Now, certainly after we see the charges made against the Bible by the Mormon leaders, we would expect Mormon writings to be completely free of changes or alterations of any kind. Of all Mormon writings we would expect the *Doctrine and Covenants* to be the most pure and free from revision. The reason for this is that the *Doctrine and Covenants* purports to be the revelations given directly from God to Joseph Smith—not just a translation. We would expect these revelations to be completely free from alteration. Yet, upon careful examination, we find thousands of changes. How can the Mormon leaders explain this?

While many of the Mormons deny that the revelations were changed, some admit that changes were made but try to justify them by saying that God has a right to change His word. Melvin J. Petersen wrote:

Once a man has been recognized and accepted as a prophet and favored with communications from God, his great responsibility is to make sure, inasmuch as he has power to do so, that those to whom the communications are directed, understand what God has revealed for them. The power is his to revise, correct, omit, or change any of his writings in order that he might manifest more clearly what God revealed through him. . . .

A prophet cannot be justly criticized when he rewrites the commandments he received from God, for he is only doing that which is part of his role as a prophet. ("A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the Revelations . . .," pp. 164-165)

We cannot understand how Melvin Petersen can reason in this way. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning this matter: “Is it possible that the minds of men can be so blinded as to believe that God would give these revelations—command them to print them in His *Book of Commandments*—and then afterwards command them to change and add to them some words which change the meaning entirely? As if God had changed his mind entirely after giving his word? Is it possible that a man who pretends to any spirituality would believe that God would work in any such manner?” (*Saints’ Herald*, February 5, 1887).

Outwardly, Joseph Smith seemed to be very opposed to any changes being made in the revelations. When Oliver Cowdery asked him to change one of the revelations, he wrote:

I immediately wrote to him in reply, in which I asked him by what authority he took upon him to command me to alter or erase, to add to or diminish from a revelation or commandment from Almighty God. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 105)

Joseph Fielding Smith says that “Joseph immediately answered by letter that he could **not** alter the revelations of the Lord” (*Essentials in Church History*, p. 109).

Edward Stevenson wrote the following:

In order to show how particular the Prophet was regarding revelations which he received from the Lord, I will relate an incident which occurred in Liberty jail. While the Prophet was receiving a revelation, the late Bishop Alexander McRae was writing as Joseph received it. Upon this occasion Brother McRae suggested a slight change in the wording of the revelation, when Joseph sternly asked:

Do you know who you are writing for?

Brother McRae, who at once discovered his mistake, begged the Prophet’s pardon for undertaking to correct the word of the Lord. (*Reminiscences of Joseph, the Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1893, p. 42)

David Whitmer claimed that Cowdery told him that Rigdon was the one who convinced Joseph Smith that it would be all right to change the revelations:

I want to tell the brethren, that when the *Doctrine and Covenants* was published and presented to that assembly on that occasion, a very few of the brethren knew at that time about those “changes” in revelations concerning “Joseph’s gift” and “to rely upon the Book of Mormon in building up the church,” etc. In time it was generally found out, and the result was as I have stated. I want to state also that Oliver Cowdery told me that Rigdon was the cause of those changes being made: by smooth talk he convinced Joseph, Oliver, and F. G. Williams that it was all right. Oliver told me that he had sorely repented of that thing; and he repented of the other errors he had been led into by Rigdon and others. Bro. John Whitmer likewise. Thank God I can say that Bro. John and Bro. Oliver come out of their errors, repented of them, and died believing as I do to-day. I stand today just where I and the others stood in the early days of the church when the Bible and the Book of Mormon were the rule and guide to our faith. (*Saints’ Herald*, February 5, 1887)

In the “Explanatory Introduction” to the *Doctrine and Covenants* (p. v) we find what purports to be the testimony of the Twelve Apostles to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Among the names signed on this purported document we find that of the Apostle William E. McLellin. In later years, however, McLellin claimed that this “testimony” was a “base forgery” (see our *Case*, vol. 1, p. 189). McLellin also had a great deal to say about the changes in the revelations. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for October 6, 1875, printed the following statement regarding McLellin:

His faith was first shaken by the changes made in the revelations. He had been careful to keep copies of the originals, presented

proof that all the early revelations were changed three times, and considerably amended before they appeared in their present form.

William E. McLellin is reported as saying:

“In 1835 in Kirtland another committee was appointed to fix up the revelations for print again. I was teaching their high school in the lower room, the printing office being overhead. And I was often in Joseph’s office, and know positively that some of the revelations were so altered, mutilated and changed that a good scholar would scarcely know them. In one revelation I counted 20 alterations! Hence, who can depend upon them? I cannot. I will not. . . . All your trouble arises from your taking that mutilated and altered *Doctrine and Covenants*.” (*Saints’ Herald*, vol. 17:556-557, as quoted in *Changing of the Revelations*, by Daniel Macgregor, Independence, Mo., p. 6)

Chas. W. Lamb quotes this statement from a letter written by W. E. McLellin in 1877:

For instance he says: — “I found that Smith did not always tell the truth. . . . He materially altered his own revelations before they were ever printed.” (*The Return*, Davis City, Iowa, Nov. 1890, p. 364)

Since William E. McLellin was an Apostle in the Mormon Church, his statements are certainly important. Even more significant, however, is the fact that David Whitmer, one of the three special witnesses to the Book of Mormon, would write a book in which he criticized Joseph Smith for changing the revelations. He stated:

. . . when the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* was published, . . . a very few of the brethren then knew about most of the important changes that had been put in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. In time it was generally found out, and the result was that some of the members left the church on account of it. . . . When it became generally known that these important changes had been made in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, many of the brethren objected seriously to it, but they did not want to say much for the sake of peace, as it was Brother Joseph and the leaders who did it. The majority of the members—poor weak souls—thought that anything Brother Joseph would do, must be all right; so in their blindness of heart, trusting in an arm of flesh, they looked over it and were led into error, . . .

Some of the Latter Day Saints have claimed that God had the same right to authorize Brother Joseph to add to any revelations certain words and facts, that He had to give him any revelations at all: . . . God does not change and work in any such manner as this; all those who believe that God does work this way, my prayer for them is that they may repent, for they are in utter spiritual blindness. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., 1887, p. 61)

On page 49 of the same book, David Whitmer stated:

You have changed the revelations from the way they were first given and as they are to-day in the *Book of Commandments*, to support the error of Brother Joseph in taking upon himself the office of Seer to the church. You have changed the revelations to support the error of high priests. You have changed the revelations to support the error of a President of the high priesthood, high counselors, etc. **You have altered the revelations to support you in going beyond the plain teachings of Christ in the new covenant part of the Book of Mormon.** You have changed and altered the revelations to support the error of publishing these revelations in a book: the errors you are in, revelations have been changed to support and uphold them. **You who are now living did not change them, but you who strive to defend these things, are as guilty in the sight of God as those who did change them.** (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 49)

For more information on the changes in the revelations see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pages 131-191.





## Was the Book of Commandments Finished?

On page 15 of this book we quoted David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon, as making this statement about the *Book of Commandments*: “Many of the books were finished and distributed among the members of the church . . .” RLDS Church Historian Richard P. Howard, however, maintains that the last part of the book had not been completed at the time the printing press was destroyed by the mob:

. . . the typesetting for the *Book of Commandments* had progressed through five large galley-proof sheets, each containing thirty-two pages (sixteen printed on either side of each sheet) or a total of 160 pages including the title page. . . . The typesetting on the *Book of Commandments* was interrupted, . . . by the mob depredation committed against the church . . .

Church members managed to salvage a small number of sets of the five galley sheets already printed and later had them bound and distributed. It is impossible to determine the precise number of copies of the unfinished *Book of Commandments* distributed in this way, but there must have been several hundred at least, since a number of references to the *Book of Commandments* were made in the writings of church leaders of that period. (*Restoration Scriptures*, Independence, Missouri, 1969, p. 200)

On page 266 of the same book, Richard Howard has published a photograph from the “MS to the Book of Commandments” which seems to show that the last portion of the book had not been printed when the mob arrived. In any case, some of the printed pages were salvaged and bound into books, and there is no reason to question David Whitmer’s statement that

These revelations . . . were printed just exactly as they were arranged by Brother Joseph and the others. And when the *Book of Commandments* was printed, Joseph and the church received it as being printed correctly.

## More on Suppression of Wood Reprints

On pages 16-17 of this book we speak of the suppression of Wilford Wood’s photographic reprints of the *Book of Commandments* and the first editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and Book of Mormon. These books were originally printed by the church’s own Deseret Press under the title, *Joseph Smith Begins His Works*, volumes 1 and 2. After we called attention to the ban on these books, Deseret Bookstore made some effort to counteract our charges. It was reported to us that these volumes were sold or displayed at some of the Deseret Bookstores. On September 18, 1976, we called the main store in Salt Lake City to enquire about the matter. We were told that they were “not permitted to” sell those books. When we called the Cottonwood branch, a man stated he had “never seen it in [the] year I’ve been here.” A woman at the Fashion Place branch said it was “out of stock.” The Valley Fair branch, however, had the books and was selling them for \$2.95 less than the regular price.

On January 10, 1981, we decided to check out this matter again. A woman at the church section of the main store in Salt Lake City said they “haven’t ever sold them.” When she was pressed about the matter, however, she indicated that another department which handled out of print books might be able to help. The man in this department said that he did have volume 2. The branch stores all indicated they were “out of stock” but would have some in a week or two. On December 3, 1981, we checked again and found that

the main store and two of the three other branches in Salt Lake City had the books for sale.

This whole matter with regard to the Wood reprints demonstrates the inability of the Mormon leaders to deal forthrightly with the issues. In a letter dated February 28, 1977, Apostle Mark E. Petersen made this surprising statement:

I do not happen to have a copy of “Joseph Smith Begins His Work,” by Wilford Wood, because we do not accept his writings. He was a man who was “far out” to say the least, and of course he took great delight in embarrassing us by digging up things that certain of our men had said or written but which were not authentic or valid.

Apostle Petersen was apparently reminded that *Joseph Smith Begins His Works* is an exact photographic reproduction of Joseph Smith’s own publications and that when he worked for Deseret Publishing Company Apostle Thomas S. Monson had signed an affidavit certifying to the authenticity of the reproduction (see page 17 of this book). In a letter dated April 4, 1977, Apostle Petersen added to the confusion by stating:

I have just received your letter of March 28. You certainly have a gift either to misunderstand what I say, or to misinterpret, or to put a wrong conclusion on my words.

When I wrote you about Wilford Wood and said that I did not have his book “Joseph Smith Begins His Work,” I was not commenting on that book at all because I have never seen it. How could I comment on it? You yourself say that it contains the Lectures on Faith, which I knew nothing about because, as I say, I have not seen the book.

I am well acquainted with the Lectures on Faith. We have accepted them all through the years from the time of Joseph Smith. They were published in our *Doctrine and Covenants* for many years . . .

This “affidavit” that you speak about is merely to certify that the Deseret News Publishing Company printed these books as originals from Wilford Wood. There is nothing wrong with that affidavit. I might say to you that when Wilford Wood had that publication made, I myself was the general manager of the Deseret News, and I gave permission for our plant to publish that book. The affidavit was simply to say that we published it for him, so nobody needs to either trust or distrust that certified statement so far as church doctrine is concerned.

My comment on Wilford Wood was simply that he was an unreliable man. . . . I have gone over many of his writings before we published them and I have argued with him and persuaded him to change some of his things when he was wrong, although I was not successful always. . . .

I am reading again another paragraph of your letter, on page 2, concerning Wilford Wood and “Joseph Smith Begins His Work,” and again say to you that I was not commenting on the contents of that book because I have never seen it and I try not to talk about things I don’t know anything about.

You say, “I think that you can very easily see why I would be greatly confused.” There is no reason why you should be confused because we are telling the truth and we stand by the truth, but we don’t stay by alleged statements made by irresponsible people and Wilford Wood was one of those individuals.

Joseph Anderson, of the Church Historical Department, was certainly more forthright about this matter. In a letter dated July 29, 1974, he wrote:

The two volumes issued by Wilford Wood entitled, *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, were actual photographic reproductions of the 1830 Book of Mormon, the 1833 *Book of Commandments*, the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants* and the Lectures on Faith. Therefore, they are accurate reproductions because they are photographically reproduced. The 14 Articles of Faith were taken by Wilford Wood from an early newspaper and are not officially approved by the Church.

. . . Joseph Smith made many corrections in the 1837 and the



1840 editions of the Book of Mormon. . . . you will find in comparison with the 1830 and the current Book of Mormon that there are many changes, but these were made by Joseph Smith. The same is true of the revelations contained in the 1833 *Book of Commandments* and the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*. Joseph Smith, being the one who received these revelations and had them recorded, likewise would have a right to add or to subtract from, or change, the revelations and did so in some cases. Therefore, there will be some differences between those early publications and the current *Doctrine and Covenants*.

### Important Change in Recently Canonized Revelation

On April 3, 1976, the Church Section of the *Deseret News* reported:

Two revelations received by former Presidents of the Church, were accepted as scripture Saturday afternoon, April 3, by vote of Church membership. . . .

The new scriptures, which will be arranged in verses as part of the *Pearl of Great Price*, include the account of the Prophet Joseph Smith's vision of the Celestial Kingdom received Jan. 21, 1836. . . .

It was later decided that these revelations should be added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In any case, after these two revelations were canonized by the Mormon Church, H. Michael Marquardt, a student of church history, discovered that the one concerning Joseph Smith's vision of the Celestial Kingdom had been altered. Mr. Marquardt found that this revelation was recorded in Joseph Smith's own diary under the date of January 21, 1836, and read as follows:

The heavens were opened upon us and I beheld the celestial Kingdom of God, . . . I saw father Adam and Abraham **and Michael** and my father and mother, my brother Alvin . . . (*Joseph Smith's 1835-36 Diary*, January 21, 1836; printed by Modern Microfilm Co.)

When the Mormon leaders printed this revelation they deleted the words "and Michael" without any indication. It reads as follows in the new edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, . . . I saw Father Adam and Abraham; and my father and my mother; my brother Alvin, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1981, Section 137, verses 1, 5)

At first glance the deletion of the words "and Michael" does not appear too important. In Mormon theology, however, a serious problem is created by the statement, "I saw father Adam and Abraham and Michael." According to Joseph Smith's other revelations, **Adam is Michael**. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 107:54 we read: "And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel." In 27:11 we read: "And also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days." Thus it is clear that if Adam is Michael, Joseph Smith could not have seen "Adam, and Abraham and Michael." Mormon leaders must have been aware that this would create a problem in Mormon theology, and therefore they deleted the words "and Michael" from the revelation.

This change was apparently made sometime while the church was under Brigham Young's leadership. The fact that the change was made after Joseph Smith's death is evident from Mr. Marquardt's research. He found that the revelation was copied into the handwritten manuscript of the *History of the Church* (Book B-1, p. 695), with the words "and Michael" still included. Mr. Marquardt also found that the words were in the duplicate copy of the "Manuscript History" (Book B-2, p. 618). This is significant

because the Mormon leaders did not even start the duplicate copy until almost a year after Joseph Smith's death (see *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 469). This would mean that the change had to have been made **after** Smith's death. By the time the revelation was published in the *Deseret News*, September 4, 1852, the words "and Michael" had been deleted. Thus it appears that the change took place sometime between 1845 and 1852 and that current Mormon leaders have canonized a falsified revelation.

With regard to the vision of the Celestial Kingdom, it is also interesting to note that the Mormon leaders have only canonized the first part of the vision. Over 200 words which appear in Joseph Smith's diary are not included. (The *History of the Church* 2:380-81 also bears witness to this fact.) Among the words missing from the canonized revelation, we find the following:

. . . I also beheld Elder McLellin in the South, standing upon a hill surrounded with a vast multitude preaching to them and a lame man standing before him supported by his crutches, he threw them down at his word and leaped as a hart, by the mighty power of God . . .

It would probably prove to be embarrassing if the Mormon leaders canonized this prophecy about McLellin, because the *History of the Church* informs us that he was "Excommunicated from the Church at Far West. Thence forward he took an active part in the persecution of the Saints in Missouri, and at one time expressed the desire to do violence to the person of Joseph Smith, . . . Subsequently he attempted what he called a reorganization of the Church, . . ." (vol. 3, pp. 31-32).

In the same revelation Joseph Smith claimed that he "saw the 12 apostles of the Lamb who are now upon the earth who hold the keys of this last ministry in foreign lands standing together in a circle . . . and I finally saw the 12 in the celestial Kingdom of God . . ."

In the Bible, Jesus predicted that the Apostle Judas would fall; Joseph Smith, however, seemed to be oblivious to what was about to happen to his Apostles. At least half of the Apostles were eventually excommunicated, and four of them apparently died out of the church (see *Essentials in Church History*, 1942, pp. 663-65). Since Apostles William E. McLellin and William Smith (Joseph Smith's own brother) tried very hard to destroy the Mormon Church, we wonder how Joseph Smith could have seen "**the 12 in the celestial Kingdom of God**." In any case, the present-day leaders of the Mormon Church did not seem to feel that it would be wise to canonize this part of the revelation.

### The Kirtland Revelation Book

In 1979 we photographically printed a manuscript which had been suppressed by the Mormon leaders for a century and a half. This is *Joseph Smith's Kirtland Revelation Book*, a handwritten manuscript containing copies of early revelations. Although the *Kirtland Revelation Book* does not give us original copies of the revelations which were first printed in the *Book of Commandments*, it does provide evidence concerning falsifications made in some later revelations. For instance, a revelation given on March 15, 1832, has been altered to disguise the fact that Jesse Gause, a man who later denied the faith, had been called to one of the highest offices in the Mormon Church—i.e., a "councillor unto my Servant Joseph." Michael Marquardt called this change to our attention several years ago. He had been studying another handwritten copy of this revelation and noticed that Jesse Gause's name was crossed out and the name Frederick G. Williams inserted in its place. The name "Frederick G. Williams" appears in the *Doctrine and Covenants* 81:1, and the heading to the revelation

every man his portion and he that is a faith-  
 -ful and wise steward shall inherit all things  
 -----  
 Kirtland Postage Co Ohio March 15<sup>th</sup> 1832  
 Verily Verily I say unto you my servant  
 Frederick G. Williams I have called to thee  
 to the word of the Lord your God, and hearken

83 Revelation given to ~~Jesse Gause~~ <sup>Fredrick G. Williams</sup>  
 Postage March 15. 1832 \*la Ohio  
 Verily I say unto you my servant ~~Jesse Gause~~ <sup>Fredrick G. Williams</sup> I have called to thee  
 to the word of the Lord your God, & hearken to  
 calling whom with you are called, even to be a High Priest in  
 Church & counsellor unto my servant Joseph, unto whom  
 I have given the keys of the Kingdom which belong always to  
 the presidency of the High Priesthood, therefore verily I do say  
 I do say & will bless him, & also thee, inasmuch as thou  
 art faithful in counsel, in the office which I have appointed  
 thee, & in prayer always vocally & in thy heart in publi-  
 cation in private also in thy ministry, in proclaiming the  
 gospel in the land of the Living & among thy brethren;

Photographs of two handwritten copies of the revelation to Jesse Gause. Notice that the name has been changed to Frederick G. Williams in both copies (see arrows). The photograph at the top is taken from Joseph Smith's Kirtland Revelation Book in the Church Historical Department. The second copy is owned by the RLDS Church and appeared in H. Michael Marquardt's article, "The Strange Beginnings of the Mormon High Priesthood Presidency" (The Journal of Pastoral Practice, vol. IV, no. 2, p. 91).

states: “Frederick G. Williams called to be a High Priest and a Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church.” The 1981 printing of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, which appears in the new “triple combination,” has a longer heading to the revelation. It admits that, “The historical records show that when this revelation was received in March 1832, it called Jesse Gause to the office of counselor to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency. However, when he failed to continue in a manner consistent with this appointment, the call was subsequently transferred to Frederick G. Williams.” Although we feel that this is certainly a step in the right direction, the wording is so evasive that a person would not understand that the revelation has actually been changed.

The *Kirtland Revelation Book* establishes beyond all doubt that it was Jesse Gause that the revelation was given to and the name Frederick G. Williams is a falsification. The page index at the front of the book plainly stated that on page 17 the reader would find a “Revelation to Jesse Gauze,” but when we turn to the revelation itself we find his name blotted out and the name “Frederick G. Williams” inserted between the lines. Moreover, on pages 10 and 11 of the same book, under the date of March 8, 1832, we find this statement by Joseph Smith:

Chose this day and ordained brother Jesse Gause and Broth Sidney to be my councillors of the ministry of the presidency of the high Priesthood . . .

Mormon scholar D. Michael Quinn has admitted that this revelation has been tampered with:

For some reason, the introductory words “my servant Jesse” in this document were altered to read “my servant Frederick G. Williams,” and the latter version appears in the published editions of the revelation. There is no question that the revelation was directed to Gause, because the page index to the book read “Revelation to Jesse Gauze [sic] March 15—1832.” Since Williams later replaced Gause in the presidency apparently someone felt justified in substituting the names. This unfortunate alteration has not only violated the context of the original document, but it has further obscured the existence of Gause as one of the General Authorities of the church and has erroneously indicated that Williams was a counselor in 1832 [see *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 81]. (*Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 1, 1974, p. 24, n. 15)

In the Preface to *Joseph Smith’s Kirtland Revelation Book*, we show other instances where this manuscript proves falsification in the revelations. At the present time H. Michael Marquardt is compiling early texts of Joseph Smith’s revelations from manuscript and printed sources. This work will throw more light on the question of changes in Joseph Smith’s revelations.





## 4. Joseph Smith and Money-Digging

In this chapter we will discuss the evidence showing that Joseph Smith was involved in money-digging and how this relates to the Book of Mormon.

### Joseph Smith's 1826 Trial

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for August, 1971, we announced one of the most important discoveries since Joseph Smith founded the Mormon Church in 1830. This is the discovery by Wesley P. Walters of an original document which is more than 140 years old, found in Norwich, New York. This document proves that Joseph Smith was a "glass looker" and that he was arrested, tried and found guilty by a justice of the peace in Bainbridge, New York, in 1826. (The reader will find a photograph of this document on the next page.) The importance of this discovery cannot be overstated, for it establishes the historicity of the account of the trial which was first published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1873. We quote the following from that publication:

#### STATE OF NEW YORK v. JOSEPH SMITH

Warrant issued upon written complaint upon oath of Peter G. Bridgeman, who informed that one Joseph Smith of Bainbridge was **a disorderly person and an impostor.**

Prisoner brought before Court March 20, 1826. Prisoner examined: says that he came from the town of Palmyra, and had been at the house of Josiah Stowel in Bainbridge most of time since; had small part of time been employed by said Stowel on his farm, and going to school. That he had a certain stone which he had occasionally looked at to determine where hidden treasures in the bowels of the earth were; that he professed to tell in this manner where gold mines were a distance under ground, and had looked for Mr. Stowel several times, and had informed him where he could find these treasures, and Mr. Stowel had been engaged in digging for them. That at Palmyra he pretended to tell by looking at this stone where coined money was buried in Pennsylvania, and while at Palmyra had frequently ascertained in that way where lost property was of various kinds; that he had occasionally been in the habit of looking through this stone to find lost property for three years, but of late had pretty much given it up on account of its injuring his health, especially his eyes, making them sore; that he did not solicit business of this kind, and had always rather declined having anything to do with this business.

Josiah Stowel sworn: says that prisoner had been at his house something like five months; had been employed by him to work on farm part of time; that he pretended to have skill of telling where hidden treasures in the earth were by means of looking through a certain stone; that prisoner had looked for him sometimes; once to tell him about money buried in Bend Mountain in Pennsylvania, once for gold on Monument Hill, and once for a salt spring; and that he positively knew that the prisoner could tell, and did possess the art of seeing those valuable treasures through the medium of said stone; that he found the (word illegible) at Bend and Monument Hill as prisoner represented it; that prisoner had looked through said stone for Deacon

Attleton for a mine, did not exactly find it, but got a p—— (word unfinished) of ore which resembled gold, he thinks; that prisoner had told by means of this stone where a Mr. Bacon had buried money; that he and prisoner had been in search of it; that prisoner had said it was in a certain root of a stump five feet from surface of the earth, and with it would be found a tail feather; that said Stowel and prisoner thereupon commenced digging, found a tail feather, but money was gone; that he supposed the money moved down. That prisoner did offer his services; that he never deceived him; that prisoner looked through stone and described Josiah Stowel's house and outhouses, while at Palmyra at Simpson Stowel's, correctly; that he had told about a painted tree, with a man's head painted upon it, by means of said stone. That he had been in company with prisoner digging for gold, and had the most implicit faith in prisoner's skill.

Arad Stowel sworn: says that he went to see whether prisoner could convince him that he possessed the skill he professed to have, upon which prisoner laid a book upon a white cloth, and proposed looking through another stone which was white and transparent, hold the stone to the candle, turn his head to book, and read. The deception appeared so palpable that witness went off disgusted.

McMaster sworn: says he went with Arad Stowel, and likewise came away disgusted. Prisoner pretended to him that he could discover objects at a distance by holding this white stone to the sun or candle; that prisoner rather declined looking into a hat at his dark coloured stone, as he said that it hurt his eyes.

Jonathan Thompson says that prisoner was requested to look for chest of money; did look, and pretended to know where it was; and prisoner, Thompson, and Yeomans went in search of it; that Smith arrived at spot first; was at night; that Smith looked in hat while there, and when very dark, and told how the chest was situated. After digging several feet, struck upon something sounding like a board or plank. Prisoner would not look again, pretending that he was alarmed on account of the circumstances relating to the trunk being buried, [which], came all fresh to his mind. That the last time he looked he discovered distinctly the two Indians who buried the trunk, that a quarrel ensued between them, and that one of said Indians was killed by the other, and thrown into the hole beside the trunk, to guard it, as he supposed. Thompson says that he believes in the prisoner's professed skill; that the board which he struck his spade upon was probably the chest, but on account of an enchantment the trunk kept settling away from under them when digging; that notwithstanding they continued constantly removing the dirt, yet the trunk kept about the same distance from them. Says prisoner said that it appeared to him that salt might be found at Bainbridge, and that he is certain that prisoner can divine things by means of said stone. That as evidence of the fact prisoner looked into his hat to tell him about some money witness lost sixteen years ago, and that he described the man that witness supposed had taken it, and the disposition of the money:

And therefore the Court find the Defendant guilty. Costs: Warrant, 19c. Complaint upon oath, 25 1/2 c. Seven witnesses, 87 1/2 c. Recognisances, 25c. Mittimus, 19c. Recognisances of witnesses, 75c. Subpoena, 18c.—\$2.68. (*Fraser's Magazine*, Feb. 1873, pp. 229-230)

Chenango County to Albert Neely

People vs Appaunt & Battery  
 vs Tuning Brazee Trial at G. C. Lead battery  
 same vs Justice  
 vs Brazee James Humphrey  
 same vs Leander Tarkenton  
 vs Sherman Albert Neely

To my fees in trial of above cause 3 3, 68

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People vs Appaunt & Battery  
 vs Samuel May To my fees in the cause \$2.99  
 March 22. 1826

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same vs Misdemeanor  
 vs Joseph Smith The Glass looker  
 March 20. 1826

To my fees in examination of the above cause 3 2, 68

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same vs Champerty  
 vs Nanci Evans To examination of above cause 2, 18  
 Sept 2. 1826

---

same vs Appaunt & Battery  
 vs Nanci Evans To my fees in above cause 1.45

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same vs Petit Larceny  
 vs Robert Jurdell To fees in above cause 1.85  
 Oct 3. 1826

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same vs Appaunt and Battery  
 vs Ira Church To fees in above cause 2.53  
 Nov 9. 1826

Albert Neely, Just. of Peace \$16.37



same  
 vs  
 Joseph Smith  
 The Glass looker  
 March 20, 1826

Misdemeanor  
 To my fees in examination  
 of the above cause 2.68

Above is a photograph of Justice Albert Neely's bill showing the costs involved in several trials in 1826. The fifth item from the top mentions the trial of "Joseph Smith The Glass looker." When the letter "s" was repeated in documents of Joseph Smith's time, as in the word "glass," the two letters appeared as a "p" (see the word "assault" in items 1, 4, 7 and 9). To the left we have typed out the portion of the bill which mentions Joseph Smith. This bill proves that the published court record is authentic.

Although the Bainbridge court record was printed a few times it did not become too well known until Fawn Brodie printed it in her book *No Man Knows My History*. Immediately after her book appeared the Mormon leaders declared that the record was a forgery. The following appeared in the “Church Section” of the *Deseret News*:

... the alleged find is no discovery at all, for the purported record has been included in other books . . . after all her **puffing and promise** the author produces **no court record at all**, though persistently calling it such. . . . This alleged record is obviously **spurious** . . . The really vital things which a true record must contain are not there, though there is a lot of surplus verbiage set out in an impossible order which the court was not required to keep.

This record could not possibly have been made at the time as the case proceeded. It is patently a **fabrication** of unknown authorship and never in the court records at all. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, May 11, 1946, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ in America*, vol. 2, 1959, pp. 430-431)

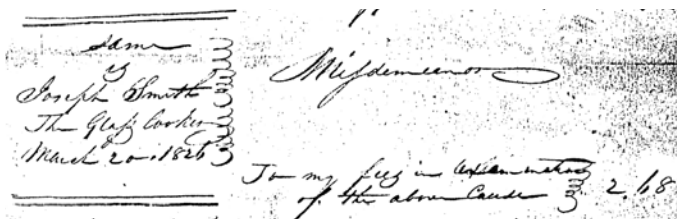
The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

This alleged court record . . . seems to be a literary attempt of an enemy to ridicule Joseph Smith by bringing together all the current gossip of that day and making him appear to confess to it. . . . There is no existing proof that such a trial was ever held. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, Salt Lake City, 1951, p. 78)

The Mormon scholar Francis W. Kirkham claimed that he did a great deal of research with regard to this matter and came to the conclusion that the court record was spurious:

A careful study of all facts regarding this alleged confession of Joseph Smith in a court of law that he had used a seer stone to find hidden treasure for purposes of fraud, must come to the conclusion that no such record was ever made, and therefore, is not in existence. . . . No record exists and there is no evidence to prove one was ever made in which he confessed in a justice of the peace court that he had used a seer stone to find hidden treasures for purposes of fraud and deception. (*A New Witness For Christ in America*, vol. 1, pp. 385, 386, 391)

The document which Wesley P. Walters found is Justice Albert Neely’s bill showing the costs involved in several trials in 1826. The fifth item from the top mentions the trial of “**Joseph Smith The Glass looker.**” Below is a photograph of this portion of the document (see complete document on page 33 of this book).



The fact that the document says that Joseph Smith was a “**Glass looker**” fits very well with the published version of the trial. In fact, this statement alone seems to show that the published account of the trial is authentic. Besides this, however, Neely’s bill provides additional evidence. It states that the trial took place on “March 20, 1826,” and this is precisely the date found in the published account of the trial: “Prisoner brought before Court March 20, 1826” (*Fraser’s Magazine*, February 1873, p. 229). In Albert Neely’s bill the fee for this trial is listed as “2.68,” and this is the exact figure found in the printed record: “Costs: . . . \$2.68.”

In the face of this evidence it is impossible to continue to deny the authenticity of the court record.

In the book *Joseph Smith and Money Digging* we devoted over 15 pages to a study of this court trial. On page 38 we concluded:

“Although the evidence supporting the authenticity of the ‘court record’ seems to be rather convincing, more research needs to be done.” We did show, however, that the court record was brought to Salt Lake City by Emily Pearsall, the niece of Albert Neely. When Charles Marshall published the record in *Fraser’s Magazine*, he stated:

During my stay in Salt Lake permission was courteously accorded me to copy out of a set of such judicial proceedings not hitherto published. I cannot doubt their genuineness. The original papers were lent me by a lady of well-known position, in whose family they had been preserved since the date of the transactions. (*Fraser’s Magazine*, Feb. 1873, vol. VII, p. 229)

In her attack on Fawn Brodie’s book, F. L. Stewart cast doubt upon the statement that Albert Neely was a justice of the peace in Bainbridge in 1826:

But was Albert Neely a justice of the peace in Bainbridge in 1826? He lost an election as justice for the year 1828. The election was held in November, 1827, and he received the fewest votes of all the candidates. He was later a justice of the peace in Manlius, New York, in 1838. No known records indicate that he was a justice in Bainbridge in 1826. (*Exploding The Myth About Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, New York, 1967, pp. 69-70)

During the past few years Wesley P. Walters has been doing a great deal of research concerning the court record. He has made several trips to New York in search of evidence. By June 23, 1971, he was able to give this encouraging report in a letter to a friend:

As I am sure you are aware, the document was printed three times—once in England (with a reprinting of this in N.Y.), once by Tuttle in the *Schaff-Herzog Ency.*, and once by the Methodists. The first and last of these printings give the court costs. This summer I spent a few days at Norwich and among the county records I found some bills from the town of Bainbridge. Bills for the years 1826 and 1827 were missing, presumably among the water-damaged items the court house threw out some while back. However, the bills from 1825 and 1828 were there and give an example of what the J.P. charges were at that time. A subpoena was 6¢ each, so that a charge of 18¢ in the document must represent 3 subpoenas; Recognisance charge was 25¢, so that the document’s charge of 25¢ is in perfect agreement and the charge of 75¢ for “recognisance of witnesses” must represent three such witnesses. . . . To my mind there is enough agreement here to make the possibility of the document being a forgery out of the realm of possibility.

Finally, the other surrounding circumstances all are in proper place. . . . Miss F. L. Stewart in *Exploding the Myth* casts doubt on the court record because there was no evidence that Albert Neely was a J.P. in 1826. Well, I found his official appointment papers signed by the 3 circuit judges and the 15 county supervisors and the date of his appointment was November 16, 1825. If the bills for 1826 had been available still, I am sure there would have been an itemized account of all the warrants he issued, and cost involved for the town and county, as there are in the other justices bills for 1825 and 1828. In fact, the itemized bills were totaled and at the annual meeting of the Board of Supervisors the total amounts were “audited and allowed.” In their Supervisor’s record book for 1826 Albert Neely’s name appears under the town of Bainbridge as being paid \$6.34 by the town and \$15.44 by the county. So as far as I am concerned, there is no question in my mind that Albert Neely was a J.P. in 1826 and that Smith was tried before him, and that the published record is really a genuine account of what happened.

There are other little details that fit into place as well . . . from every angle the whole matter has the ring of genuineness about it. (Letter written by Wesley P. Walters, dated June 23, 1971)

Just about a month after writing this letter, Wesley P. Walters

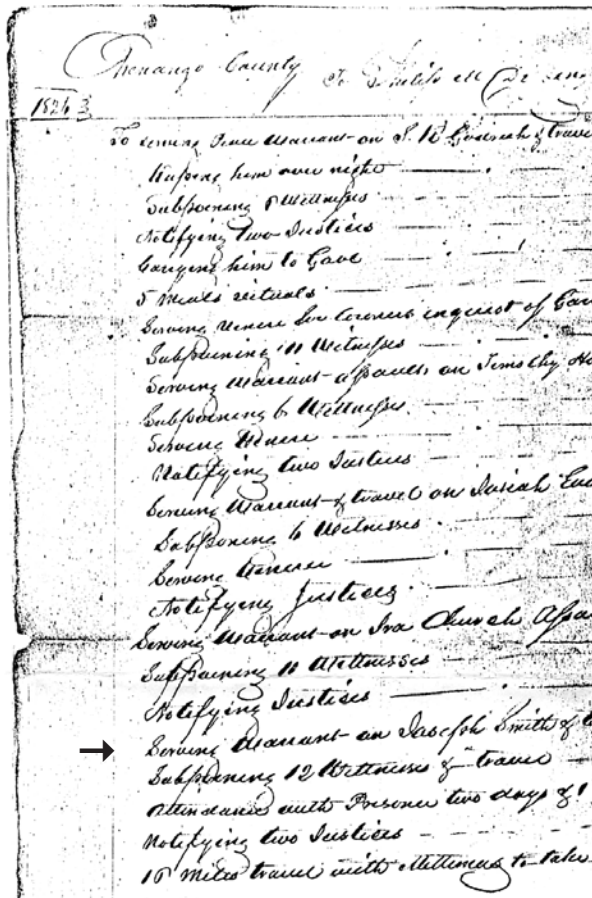


was back searching for the missing bills. Toward the end of July, 1971, we received a phone call announcing the important discovery—i.e., the discovery of Justice Neely’s bill for 1826. Wesley P. Walters also sent us a letter telling of other important discoveries. In this letter we find the following:

By this time you should have gotten over the shock of my phone call about finding the 1826 Neely bill. . . .

In addition to what I sent you recording the bill for the trial of “Joseph Smith The Glass Looker” . . . there is also the bill of Constable Philip M. DeZeng. His charges include ones for “Serving warrant on Joseph Smith and tr[avel]” ???<<?? very faint, water damage, “Subpoening 12 Witnesses & travel”; “attendance with Prisoner two days & 1 nigh[t]”; “Notifying two Justices” and “10 miles travel with mittimus to take him.” . . . There are also bills from Arad Stowell (one of the witness[es] in the trial) for 1826 when he was serving as school commissioner.

Below is a photograph of the bill of Constable Philip M. DeZeng. Notice that the date 1826 is written at the top of the bill. The arrow points to the place where Constable DeZeng tells of “Serving Warrant on Joseph Smith . . .”



On October 28, 1971, Wesley P. Walters made an affidavit concerning the discovery of these documents:

REVEREND WESLEY P. WALTERS, being first duly sworn upon his oath, deposes and states:

On Saturday, May 22, 1971, while in Norwich, New York, I, Wesley P. Walters, of Marissa, Illinois, was shown by the County Historian, Mrs. Mae Smith, where Chenango County kept their dead storage, which was in a back, poorly-lit room in the basement of the County Jail. While looking through this material in company with Mrs. Smith, we came across the county bills from the early eighteen hundreds. These bills were arranged in bundles by townships, and the townships bound together by years. There were bills from all the

town officials, including an itemized listing of cases tried by each of the local Justices of the Peace, and an itemized listing of costs by the Constables who served warrants and made arrests. I realized that if the bills for 1826 and 1830 for the Town of Bainbridge could be located, there would doubtless be references to the two trials of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church. I was successful in locating the bills for 1824, 1825, 1828, and 1829, but could not find those for 1826 and 1830. There was still much material to look through, and my schedule required that I leave without finishing my search.

On July 28, 1971, I was able to return to Norwich and in the late afternoon I went back to the County Jail accompanied by Mr. Fred Poffarl of Philadelphia. After looking through some of the remaining material for a short while, Mr. Poffarl discovered two cardboard boxes in the darkest area of the room, containing more bundles of bills, all mixed up as to date, and some badly water-soaked and mildewed from being shoved against a leaky wall. I looked in one box while Fred looked in the other. It was in Mr. Poffarl’s box that the 1826 bills were soon found, followed by the 1830 ones. When I opened the 1826 bundle and got part way through the pile of Bainbridge bills, all of which were very damp and mildewed, I came upon, first, the J.P. bill of Albert Neely and then upon the Constable’s bill of Philip M. DeZeng. On Mr. Neely’s bill was the item of the trial of “Joseph Smith The Glass Looker” on March 20, 1826, and a cost to the county from Mr. Neely of \$2.68. On the bill of Mr. DeZeng were the charges for arresting and keeping Joseph Smith, notifying two justices, subpoenaing 12 witnesses, as well as a mittimus charge for 10 miles travel “to take him,” with no specification as to where he was taken on the Mittimus. Likewise, in the 1830 bundles I found both the Constable’s and Justice’s bills that mentioned the arrest and trial of Joseph Smith as a disorderly person July 1, 1830. I photographed as well as made Xerox copies of all these items, as well as some typical examples of other 1825, 1826, and 1828 bills.

In my opinion, the bills are authentic, of the same paper quality and ink quality as the other 1826 and 1830 bills and appeared to me to have remained tied up and untouched since the day they were bound up and placed away in storage by the Board of Supervisors of Chenango County, New York. The historical importance of these bills was drawn to the attention of the County and they, at last report, were making arrangements to house these items in a safer and more suitable place. (Affidavit by Wesley P. Walters, dated October 28, 1971)

### Importance of Discovery

Now that Wesley P. Walters has proven beyond all doubt that the Bainbridge court record is authentic, it will be very interesting to see how the Mormon leaders will react. As we have shown, their position in the past has been that the court record is “spurious.” The Mormon scholar Francis W. Kirkham has stated that if the court record could be proven authentic, it would show that Mormonism itself is untrue:

A careful study of all facts regarding this alleged confession of Joseph Smith in a court of law that he had used a seer stone to find hidden treasure for purposes of fraud, must come to the conclusion that **no such record was ever made**, and therefore, is not in existence. . . . If any evidence had been in existence that Joseph Smith had **used a seer stone** for fraud and deception, and especially **had he made this confession in a court of law as early as 1826**, or four years before the Book of Mormon was printed, and this confession was in a court record, it would have been **impossible** for him to have organized the restored Church. (*A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 1, pp. 385-387)

If a court record could be identified, and if it contained a confession by Joseph Smith which revealed him to be a poor, ignorant, deluded, and superstitious person—unable himself to write a book of any consequence, and whose church could not endure because it attracted only similar persons of low mentality—if such a court record confession could be identified and proved, then it follows

that **his believers must deny his claimed divine guidance** which led them to follow him. . . . How could he be a **prophet of God**, the leader of the Restored Church to these tens of thousands, **if he had been the superstitious fraud** which “the pages from a book” declared he confessed to be? (*Ibid.*, pp. 486-487)

In his book *The Myth Makers*, Dr. Hugh Nibley has written almost 20 pages in an attempt to discredit the “Bainbridge court record.” On page 142 of Dr. Nibley’s book we find this statement: “. . . **If this court record is authentic it is the most damning evidence in existence against Joseph Smith.**” Dr. Nibley’s book also states that if the authenticity of the court record could be established it would be “the most devastating blow to Joseph Smith ever delivered. . . .” (*Ibid.*).

In his *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith admitted that he worked for Josiah Stowel, but did not acknowledge the fact that he was arrested or that he used a “seer stone” to find treasures:

In the month of October, 1825, I hired with an old gentleman by the name of Josiah Stowel, who lived in Chenango county, state of New York. He had heard something of a silver mine having been opened by the Spaniards in Harmony, Susquehanna county, state of Pennsylvania; and had, previous to my hiring to him, been digging, in order, if possible, to discover the mine. After I went to live with him, he took me, with the rest of his hands, to dig for the silver mine, at which I continued to work for nearly a month, without success in our undertaking, and finally I prevailed with the old gentleman to cease digging after it. Hence arose the very prevalent story of my having been a money-digger.

“During the time that I was thus employed, I was put to board with a Mr. Isaac Hale, of that place; it was there I first saw my wife (his daughter), Emma Hale. On the 18th of January, 1827, we were married, . . . at the house of Squire Tarbill, in South Bainbridge, Chenango county, New York.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 17)

Joseph Smith’s mother did not mention the trial but admitted that Josiah Stowel came to seek Joseph Smith’s help in locating hidden treasures:

A short time before the house was completed, a man, by the name of Josiah Stoyal, came from Chenango county, New York, with the view of getting Joseph to assist him in digging for a silver mine. He came for Joseph on account of **having heard that he possessed certain keys**, by which he could **discern things** invisible to the natural eye.

Joseph endeavoured to divert him from his vain pursuit, but he was inflexible in his purpose, and offered high wages to those who would dig for him, in search of said mine, and still insisted upon having Joseph to work for him. Accordingly, Joseph and several others, returned with him and commenced digging. (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, London, 1853, pp. 91-92)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts states that Stowell came to Joseph Smith because he had “heard of Joseph Smith’s gift of seership”:

. . . in October, 1825, to be exact, Joseph engaged to work for an elderly gentleman, Josiah Stoyal, of Bainbridge, . . . Near Bainbridge was an extensive cave, . . . a local legend had it that it was an old mine formerly worked by Spaniards; and that they had concealed within it much of the treasure they had discovered, . . .

Mr. Stoyal believed this legend and had employed men to explore the cave for the treasure. Having heard of Joseph Smith’s **gift of seership**, he came to the Smith residence to employ him in this undertaking. Joseph hired out to Mr. Stoyal and went with him and the rest of his men to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where for something like a month they vainly sought to find the “hidden treasure.” . . . Although Mr. Stoyal gave up the search for the “Spanish treasure,” Joseph continued for some time in his employment. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 81-82)

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus made these interesting comments concerning this matter:

According to Mother Smith, he wanted the Prophet to work for him because he had heard that Joseph “possessed certain means by which he could discern things invisible to the natural eye.” She does not say what Joseph had in his possession. But Stoyal was acquainted with Joseph Knight, Sr., and may have heard from him of the Urim and Thummim which were with the gold plates. Joseph could also have had the **seer stone** at this time. . . . Having worked for Josiah Stoyal, he was marked in the popular mind as a money digger; and in the opinion of those with whom he had worked, he was subject to the code of the money diggers which required him to share what he found. Martin Harris stated that the money diggers claimed “they had as much right to the plates as Joseph had, as they were in company together.” In taking this position, they asserted “that Joseph had been traitor, and had appropriated to himself that which belonged to them.” That these men were actively opposed to the Prophet is attested to by David Whitmer. While in Palmyra in 1828, he conversed with some men who assured him “that Joseph Smith certainly had golden plates, and that before he had attained them he had promised to share with them, but had not done so and they were very much incensed with him.” (*God, Man and the Universe*, Salt Lake City, 1968, pp. 70, 71, 74, 75)

At any rate, since Joseph Smith did not mention the 1826 trial in his *History*, and since the court record was not printed until many years after his death, Mormon scholars concluded that the record must be “spurious.” Fawn Brodie reprinted it from the *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. Since this was not printed until 1883, there was a wide gap between the date of the trial and the published version. Because Mormon writers contested the authenticity of the trial, scholars began to search for more documentation. Helen L. Fairbanks, of Guernsey Memorial Library, Norwich, N.Y., made a very interesting discovery. She found that W. D. Purple, who had lived at Bainbridge and claimed to be an eyewitness to the trial had written concerning it in *The Chenango Union*, May 3, 1877. Wesley P. Walters has confirmed the fact that W. D. Purple was in Bainbridge in 1826. In a letter dated July 30, 1971, he stated: “. . . William D. Purple in May 1826 entered a complaint against someone whom he thought had stolen his coat, so he is there in 1826. This is mentioned in Tarble’s bill.” We have printed W. D. Purple’s account in its entirety in the book *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*, but we feel that it is so important that we shall include a portion of it in this book:

More than fifty years since, at the commencement of his professional career, the writer spent a year in the present village of Afton, in this County. It was then called South Bainbridge, . . .

In the year 1825 we often saw in that quiet hamlet, Joseph Smith, Jr., . . . He was an inmate of the family of Deacon Isaiah Stowell, . . . Mr. Stowel . . . took upon himself a monomaniacal impression to seek for hidden treasures which he believed were buried in the earth. He hired help and repaired to Northern Pennsylvania, in the vicinity of Lanesboro, to prosecute his search for untold wealth which he believed to be buried there. . . .

There had lived a few years previous to this date, in the vicinity of Great Bend, a poor man named Joseph Smith . . . Mr. Stowell, while at Lanesboro, heard of the fame of one of his sons, named **Joseph**, who, **by the aid of a magic stone had become a famous seer of lost or hidden treasures.** . . . He, with the magic stone, was at once transferred from his humble abode to the more pretentious mansion of Deacon Stowell. Here, in the estimation of the Deacon, he confirmed his conceded powers as a seer, by means of **the stone which he placed in his hat**, and by excluding the light from all other terrestrial things, could see whatever he wished, even in the depths of the earth. . . .

In February, 1826, the sons of Mr. Stowell, who lived with their father, were greatly incensed against Smith, as they plainly saw their father squandering his property in



the fruitless search for hidden treasures, and saw that the youthful seer had unlimited control over the illusions of their sire. . . . They caused the arrest of Smith as a vagrant, without visible means of livelihood. The trial came on in the above mentioned month, before Albert Neeley, Esq., the father of Bishop Neeley of the State of Maine. I was an intimate friend of the Justice, and was invited to take notes of the trial, which I did. There was a large collection of persons in attendance, and the proceedings attracted much attention.

The affidavits of the sons were read, and Mr. Smith was fully examined by the Court. . . .

On the request of the Court, he exhibited the stone. It was about the size of a small hen's egg, in the shape of a high-insteped shoe. It was composed of layers of different colors passing diagonally through it. It was very hard and smooth, perhaps by being carried in the pocket.

Joseph Smith, Sr., was present, and sworn as a witness. . . .

The next witness called was Deacon Isaiah Stowell. He confirmed all that is said above in relation to himself, and delineated many other circumstances not necessary to record. He swore that the prisoner possessed all the power he claimed, and declared he could see things fifty feet below the surface of the earth, as plain as the witness could see what was on the Justice's table, and described very many circumstances to confirm his words. Justice Neeley soberly looked at the witness and in a solemn, dignified voice, said, "Deacon Stowell, do I understand you as swearing before God, under the solemn oath you have taken, that you believe the prisoner can see by the aid of the stone fifty feet below the surface of the earth, as plainly as you can see what is on my table?" "Do I believe it?" says Deacon Stowell, "do I believe it? No, it is not a matter of belief. I positively know it to be true."

Mr. Thompson, an employee of Mr. Stowell, was the next witness. . . . The following scene was described by this witness, and carefully noted: Smith had told the Deacon that very many years before a band of robbers had buried on his flat a box of treasure, and as it was very valuable they had by a sacrifice placed a charm over it to protect it, so that it could not be obtained except by faith, accompanied by certain talismanic influences. So, after arming themselves with fasting and prayer, they sallied forth to the spot designated by Smith. Digging was commenced with fear and trembling, in the presence of this imaginary charm. In a few feet from the surface the box of treasure was struck by the shovel, on which they redoubled their energies, but it gradually receded from their grasp. One of the men placed his hand upon the box, but it gradually sunk from his reach. . . . Mr. Stowell went to his flock and selected a fine vigorous lamb, and resolved to sacrifice it to the demon spirit who guarded the coveted treasure. Shortly after the venerable Deacon might be seen on his knees at prayer near the pit, while Smith, with a lantern in one hand to dispel the midnight darkness might be seen making a circuit around the spot, sprinkling the flowing blood from the lamb upon the ground, as a propitiation to the spirit that thwarted them. They then descended the excavation, but the treasure still receded from their grasp, and it was never obtained. . . . These scenes occurred some four years before Smith, by the aid of his luminous stone, found the Golden Bible, or the Book of Mormon. (*The Chenango Union*, Norwich, N.Y., May 3, 1877, as reprinted in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, pp. 362-367)

For a complete reprint and study of Dr. Purple's account see our book *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*, pages 23-29. While Mormon writers were willing to concede that Purple mentioned the trial in 1877, they felt confident that no earlier mention of the trial would be discovered. Dr. Francis W. Kirkham made this statement:

No account of the life of Joseph Smith . . . prior to Purple in 1877, and Tuttle in 1883, assert that Joseph Smith confessed in a court of law that he had used a seer stone for any purpose, and especially that the record of such confession was in existence. (*A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 1, pp. 386-387)

Further research, however, led to the discovery that the court record had been printed in *Fraser's Magazine* ten years prior to the time when it was printed by Tuttle. In a "Supplement" to his book, Dr. Kirkham conceded that it had been printed in 1873.

Finally, Dale L. Morgan, a noted historian, discovered that the trial was actually mentioned as early as 1831 in a letter published in the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, printed in Utica, N.Y. The letter is "signed A.W.B., and Mr. Morgan identifies him from subsequent articles as A. W. Benton" (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 418A). Since Mr. Benton lived in Bainbridge, his account is very important. Wesley P. Walters has furnished us with a photograph of Benton's account as it appears in the *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*. We cite the following from that publication:

Messrs. Editors— . . . thinking that a fuller history of their founder, Joseph Smith, jr., might be interesting . . . I will take the trouble to make a few remarks . . . For several years preceding the appearance of his book, **he was about the country in the character of a glass-looker: pretending, by means of a certain stone, or glass, which he put in a hat, to be able to discover lost goods, hidden treasures, mines of gold and silver, &c.** . . . In this town, a wealthy farmer, named Josiah Stowell, together with others, spent large sums of money in digging for hidden money, which this Smith pretended he could see, and told them where to dig; but they never found their treasure. At length the public, becoming wearied with the base imposition which he was palming upon the credulity of the ignorant, for the purpose of sponging his living from their earnings, had him arrested as a **disorderly person, tried and condemned before a court of justice.** But considering his youth, (he then being a minor,) and thinking he might reform his conduct, he was designedly allowed to escape. This was **four or five years ago.** (*Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, April 9, 1831, p. 120)

In the book *Joseph Smith and Money Digging* we have photographically reproduced A. W. Benton's entire letter. From what we quoted above, however, the reader will notice that Benton claimed that Joseph Smith was "arrested as a disorderly person." This agrees well with the court record, for it states that Joseph Smith was "a disorderly person and an impostor." Benton also agrees with the court record in stating that Joseph Smith was found guilty. Benton said that Joseph Smith was a "glass-looker," and the reader will remember that Justice Neely's bill refers to "Joseph Smith **The Glass looker.**" The court record states that the trial took place on March 20, 1826. This would have been five years prior to the time Benton wrote his letter in 1831. Mr. Benton states that the trial took place "four or five years ago."

Dr. Hugh Nibley tried to dismiss Benton's letter as "fiction." In his book, *The Myth Makers*, page 157, we find this statement:

. . . we are inclined to regard A.W.B.'s story of the 1826 trial as fiction . . . without the reality of the peep-stones, the whole legend of the 1826 trial collapses. . . . the 1826 trial, unattested in any source but his for fifty years, was a product of A.W.B.'s own wishful thinking.

Actually, there was some good evidence from a Mormon source to show that Joseph Smith had some trouble with the law at the time he was working for Josiah Stowell. In 1835 Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, wrote the following:

Soon after this visit to Cumorah, a gentleman from the south part of the State, . . . employed our brother . . . This gentleman, whose name is Stowel, resided in the town of Bainbridge, . . . Some forty miles south, . . . is said to be a cave . . . where a company of Spaniards, . . . coined a large quantity of money; . . . our brother was required to spend a few months with some others in excavating the earth, in pursuit of this treasure. . . .

On the private character of our brother I need add



nothing further, at present, previous to his obtaining the records of the Nephites, only that while in that country, **some very officious person complained of him as a disorderly person, and brought him before the authorities of the county**; but there being no cause of action he was honorably acquitted. (*Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*, Oct. 1835, vol. 2, pp. 200-201)

While Oliver Cowdery disagrees with the court record when he states that Joseph Smith was acquitted, he is in agreement with the court record and with A. W. Benton's letter in stating that Joseph Smith was charged with being **"a disorderly person."**

The Mormon writer F. L. Stewart tried to make it appear that the statement by Cowdery referred to another incident altogether, but Richard L. Anderson, who rejected the authenticity of the court record, had to admit that she was in error:

... Stewart attempts to equate this early trial with one mentioned by Lucy Smith in Wayne County in 1829. But this conclusion violates Cowdery's description both in location and chronology; the trial he mentions took place "previous to his obtaining the records of the Nephites." (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 232)

Now that the authenticity of the court record has been established, the Mormon Church leaders are faced with a dilemma. The court record plainly shows that Joseph Smith was deeply involved in magic practices at the very time he was supposed to be preparing himself to receive the plates for the Book of Mormon. The court record shows that Joseph Smith was searching for buried treasure in 1826, and according to his own story, the plates for the Book of Mormon were taken from the Hill Cumorah the following year. Joseph Smith claimed, however, that he had known that the plates were buried in the Hill Cumorah since 1823. He made this statement concerning the discovery of the plates:

Convenient to the village of Manchester, . . . stands a hill . . . not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box. This stone was thick and rounding in the middle on the upper side, and thinner toward the edges, so that the middle part of it was visible above the ground, but the edge all around was covered with earth.

Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever, which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, . . .

I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger, and was again informed that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would it, until four years from that time; . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:51-53)

Now, it is interesting to note that in the court record Joseph Smith confessed that "for three years" prior to 1826 he had used a stone placed in his hat to find treasures or lost property. According to Joseph Smith's own statement, then, he began his money-digging activities in about 1823. The reader will remember that the messenger was supposed to have informed Joseph Smith of the gold plates on September 21, 1823. From this it would appear that Joseph Smith became deeply involved in money-digging at the very time the messenger told him of the gold plates and that he was still involved in these practices for at least three of the four years when God was supposed to be preparing him to receive the gold plates for the Book of Mormon. These facts seem to undermine the whole foundation of Mormonism.

## A Common Practice

At the time the Book of Mormon was printed many people were engaged in searching for buried treasures. On July 24, 1822, the *Palmyra Herald* reprinted the following statements from the "*Montpelier (Vt.) Watchman*":

Indeed, digging for money hid in the earth is a very common thing; and in this state it is even considered an honorable and profitable employment. We could name, if we pleased, at least five hundred respectable men, who do, in the simplicity and sincerity of their hearts, verily believe that immense treasures lie concealed upon our Green Mountains; many of whom have been for a number of years, most industriously and perseveringly engaged in digging it up.

On February 16, 1825, the *Wayne Sentinel* (a newspaper published in Joseph Smith's neighborhood) reprinted the following from the "*Windsor, (Vermont) Jour.*":

Money digging.—We are sorry to observe even in this enlightened age, so prevalent a disposition to credit the accounts of the Marvellous. Even the frightful stories of money being hid under the surface of the earth, and enchanted by the Devil or Robert Kidd, are received by many of our respectable fellow citizens as truths. . . .

A respectable gentleman in Tunbridge, was informed by means of a dream, that a chest of money was buried on a small island . . . he started off to enrich himself with the treasure. After having been directed by the mineral rod where to search for the money, he excavated the earth . . . Presently he and his laborers came . . . upon a chest of gold . . . One of the company drove an old file through the rotten lid of the chest, and . . . the chest moved off through the mud, and has not been seen or heard of since. . . . Whether he actually saw the chest, or whether it was the vision of a disordered brain, we shall leave to the public to determine.

Many of the people who were digging for buried treasure in Joseph Smith's time were very superstitious. There were many strange stories connected with these treasure hunts. Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, related the following:

Mr. Stowel was at this time at old Mr. Smith's, digging for money. It was reported by these money-diggers, that they had found boxes, but before they could secure them, they would sink into the earth. A candid old Presbyterian told me, that on the Susquehannah flats he dug down to an iron chest, that he scraped the dirt off with his shovel, but had nothing with him to open the chest; that he went away to get help, and when they came to it, it moved away two or three rods into the earth, and they could not get it. There were a great many strange sights. One time the old log school-house south of Palmyra, was suddenly lighted up, and frightened them away. Samuel Lawrence told me that while they were digging, a large man who appeared to be eight or nine feet high, came and sat on the ridge of the barn, and motioned to them that they must leave. They motioned back that they would not; but that they afterwards became frightened and did leave. At another time while they were digging, a company of horsemen came and frightened them away. These things were real to them, I believe, because they were told to me in confidence, and told by different ones, and their stories agreed, and they seemed to be in earnest—I knew they were in earnest. (An interview with Martin Harris, published in *Tiffany's Monthly*, 1859, p. 165)

On another occasion Martin Harris admitted that he participated in some money-digging activities and that a stone box slipped back into the hill:

Martin Harris (speaking to a group of Saints at Clarkston, Utah in the 1870's): I will tell you a wonderful thing that happened after Joseph had found the plates. Three of us took some tools to go to the hill and hunt for some more boxes, or gold or something, and indeed we found a stone box. We got quite excited about it and dug quite carefully around it, and we were ready to take it up, but behold by some unseen power, **it slipped back into the hill**. We stood there and looked at it, and one of us took a crow bar and tried to drive it through the lid to hold it, but it glanced and broke one corner off the box. Some time that box will be found and you will see the corner broken off, and then you will know I have told the truth. (Testimony of Mrs. Comfort Godfrey Flinders, *Utah Pioneer Biographies*, vol. X, p. 65, Genealogical Society of Utah, as cited in an unpublished manuscript by LaMar Petersen)

It appears that even Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, was influenced by the superstitions of his day. In a sermon delivered June 17, 1877, he stated:

But do you know how to find such a mine? No, you do not. These treasures that are in the earth are carefully watched, they can be removed from place to place according to the good pleasure of Him who made them and owns them. . . . Orin P. Rockwell is an eye-witness to some powers of removing the treasures of the earth. He was with certain parties that lived near by where the plates were found that contain the records of the Book of Mormon. There were a great many treasures hid up by the Nephites. Porter was with them one night where there were treasures, and they could find them easy enough, but they could not obtain them.

I will tell you a story . . . told me by Porter, . . . he is a man that does not lie. He said that on this night, when they were engaged hunting for this old treasure, they dug around the end of a chest for some twenty inches. The chest was about three feet square. One man who was determined to have the contents of that chest, took his pick and struck into the lid of it, and split through into the chest. The blow took off a piece of the lid, which a certain lady kept in her possession until she died. That chest of money went into the bank. Porter describes it so [making a rumbling sound]; he says this is just as true as the heavens are. I have heard others tell the same story. I relate this because it is marvelous to you. But to those who understand these things, it is not marvelous. . . . I could relate many very singular circumstances. . . . I believe I will take the liberty to tell you of another circumstance that will be as marvelous as anything can be. . . . Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph when he deposited these plates. Joseph did not translate all of the plates; there was a portion of them sealed, . . . the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room **more plates than probably many wagon loads**; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: "This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ." . . .

. . . People do not know it, but I know there is a seal upon the treasures of earth; men are allowed to go so far and no farther. I have known places where there were treasures in abundance; but could men get them? No. You can read in the Book of Mormon of the ancient Nephites holding their treasures, and of their becoming slippery; so that after they had privately hid their money, on going to the place again, lo and behold it was not there, but was somewhere else, but they knew not where. (A Sermon by Brigham Young, Delivered at a Special Conference Held at Farmington, June 17, 1877, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, pp. 36-39)

Brigham Young also tells that even the priests from the various churches were influenced by a fortune-teller:

I never heard such oaths fall from the lips of any man as I heard uttered by a man who was called a fortune-teller, and who knew where those plates were hid. He went three times in one summer to get them,—the same summer in which Joseph did get them. Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist priests and deacons **sent for him** to tell where those plates were, and to get them out of the hill where they were deposited; . . . this fortune-teller, . . . was a man of profound learning.

He had put himself in possession of all the learning in the States,— . . . had been educated for a priest, and turned out to be a devil . . . He could preach as well as the best of them, and I never heard a man swear as he did. He could tell that those plates were there, and that they were a treasure whose value to the people could not be told; for that I myself heard him say. (Remarks of Brigham Young, July 19, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 55)

The man I refer to was a fortune-teller, a necromancer, an astrologer, a soothsayer, and possessed as much talent as any man that walked on the American soil, and was one of the wickedest men I ever saw. The last time he went to obtain the treasure **he knew where it was**, and told where it was, but did not know its value. Allow me to tell you that a Baptist deacon and others of Joseph's neighbors were the very men who sent for this necromancer the last time he went for the treasure. . . . He would call Joseph everything that was bad, and say, "I believe he will get the treasure after all." He did get it, and the war commenced directly. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, pp. 180-181)

In 1831 *The Palmyra Reflector* suggested that there was a relationship between the "fortune-teller" and Joseph Smith:

It is well known that Jo Smith never pretended to have any communion with angels, until a long period after the pretended finding of his book, and that the juggling of himself or father, went no further than the pretended faculty of seeing wonders in a "peep stone," and the occasional interview with the spirit, supposed to have the custody of hidden treasures; and it is also equally well known, that **a vagabond fortune-teller by the name of Walters**, . . . was the constant companion [sic] and bosom friend of these money digging impostors.

There remains but little doubt, in the minds of those at all acquainted with these transactions, that Walters, who was sometimes called the conjurer, and was paid three dollars per day for his services by the money diggers in this neighborhood, first suggested to Smith the idea of finding a book. Walters, . . . had procured an old copy of Cicero's Orations, in the Latin language, out of which he read long and loud to his credulous hearers, uttering at the same time an unintelligible jargon, which he would afterwards pretend to interpret, and explain, as a record of the former inhabitants of America, and a particular account of the numerous situations where they had deposited their treasures previous to their final extirpation. (*The Palmyra Reflector*, February 28, 1831, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ in America*, vol. 2, p. 73)

However this may be, the early Mormon leaders grew up at a time when people were very superstitious. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made these comments:

Credulity: Yes, the Prophet's ancestors were credulous in that some of them believed that they were healed of bodily ailments by the power of faith in God. Others had dreams, as their neighbors had, . . . It may be admitted that some of them believed in fortune telling, in warlocks and witches—. . . Indeed it is scarcely conceivable how one could live in New England in those years and not have shared in such beliefs. To be credulous in such things was to be normal people. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 1, 1965, pp. 26-27)

## Peep Stones

At the time the Book of Mormon came forth many people believed in "peep stones." These stones were sometimes placed in a hat and used to locate buried treasure. The following appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on December 27, 1825:

Mr. Strong—Please insert the following and oblige one of your readers.

Wonderful Discovery.—A few days since was discovered in this town, by the help of a mineral stone, (which

becomes transparent when placed in a hat and the light excluded by the face of him who looks into it, provided he is fortune's favorite,) a monstrous potash kettle in the bowels of old mother Earth, filled with the purest bullion. Some attempts have been made to dig it up, but without success. His Satanic Majesty, or some other invisible agent, appears to keep it under marching orders; for no sooner is it dug on to in one place, than it moves off like "false delusive hope," to another still more remote. But its pursuers are now sanguine of success—they entrenched the kettle all round, and driven a steel ramrod into the ground directly over it, to break the enchantment. Nothing now remains, but to raise its ponderous weight, . . .

By the rust on the kettle, and the color of the silver, it is supposed to have been deposited where it now lies, prior to the flood. (*Wayne Sentinel*, Dec. 27, 1825, p. 2)

Joseph Smith's "seer stone" was apparently found while he was helping to dig a well. Willard Chase made these statements in an affidavit dated December 11, 1833:

I became acquainted with the Smith family, . . . in the year 1820. At that time, they were engaged in the money digging business, which they followed until the later part of the season of 1827. In the year 1822, I was engaged in digging a well. I employed Alvin and Joseph Smith to assist me; . . . After digging about twenty feet below the surface of the earth, **we discovered a singularly appearing stone**, which excited my curiosity. I brought it to the top of the well, and as we were examining it, Joseph put it into his hat, and then his face into the top of his hat. . . . The next morning he came to me, and wished to obtain the stone, alledging that he could see in it; but I told him I did not wish to part with it on account of its being a curiosity, but would lend it. After obtaining the stone, he began to publish abroad what wonders he could discover by looking in it, and made so much disturbance among the credulous part of community, that I ordered the stone to be returned to me again. . . . some time in 1825, Hiram Smith . . . came to me, and wished to borrow the same stone, . . . I told him it was of no particular worth to me, but merely wished to keep it as a curiosity, and if he would pledge me his word and honor, that I should have it when called for, he might take it; . . .

In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon me and wished to see that stone, . . . But to my surprize, on going to Smith's, and asking him for the stone, he said, "you cannot have it;" I told him it belonged to me, repeated to him the promise he made me, at the time of obtaining the stone: upon which he faced me with a malignant look and said, "I don't care who in the Devil it belongs to, you shall not have it."

In the month of June, 1827, Joseph Smith, Sen., related to me the following story: "That some years ago, a spirit had appeared to Joseph his son, in a vision, and informed him that in a certain place there was a record on plates of gold; and that he was the person that must obtain them," . . .

He [Joseph Smith] then observed that if it had not been for that stone, (which he acknowledged belonged to me,) he would not have obtained the book . . .

In April, 1830, I again asked Hiram for the stone which he had borrowed of me; he told me I should not have it, for Joseph made use of it in translating his Bible. (*Mormonism Unveiled*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pp. 240, 241, 242, 246 and 247)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts accepted the story that Joseph Smith's stone was found in a well. He made the following statement in the *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 129:

The **seer stone** referred to here was a chocolate-colored, somewhat egg-shaped stone which the Prophet found while digging a well in company with his brother Hyrum, for a Mr. Clark Chase, near Palmyra, N.Y. It possessed the qualities of Urim and Thummim, since by means of it—as described above—as well as by means of the Interpreters found with the Nephite record, Joseph was able to translate the characters engraven on the plates.

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

Some use was made also of the **seer stone** and occasional mention was made of it. This was a **stone** found while the Prophet assisted in digging a well for Clark Chase. By divine power this stone was made serviceable to Joseph Smith in the early part of his ministry. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, by John A. Widtsoe, 1952, p. 267)

George Q. Cannon, who became a member of the First Presidency, stated:

One of Joseph's aids in searching out the truths of the record was a peculiar **pebble or rock** which he called a seer stone, and which was sometimes used by him in lieu of the Urim and Thummim. This **stone** had been discovered to himself and his brother Hyrum at the bottom of a well; and under divine guidance they had brought it forth for use in the work of translation. (*Life of Joseph Smith*, by George Q. Cannon, 1958, p. 56)

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning Joseph Smith's "stone":

"These plates were found at the north point of a hill two miles north of Manchester village. Joseph had a **stone** which was dug from the well of Mason Chase, twenty-four feet from the surface. In this stone he could see many things to my certain knowledge. **It was by means of this stone he first discovered these plates.**

"In the first place, he told me of this stone, and proposed to bind it on his eyes, and **run a race** with me in the woods. A few days after this, I was at the house of his father in Manchester, two miles south of Palmyra village, and was picking my teeth with a pin while sitting on the bars. The pin caught in my teeth, and dropped from my fingers into shavings and straw. I jumped from the bars and looked for it. Joseph and Northrop Sweet also did the same. We could not find it. I then took Joseph on surprise, and said to him—I said, 'Take your stone.' I had never seen it, and did not know that he had it with him. He had it in his pocket. He took it and placed it in his hat—the old white hat—and placed his face in his hat. I watched him closely to see that he did not look one side; he reached out his hand beyond me on the right, and moved a little stick, and there I saw the pin, which he picked up and gave to me. I know he did not look out of the hat until after he had picked up the pin.

"Joseph had had this stone for some time. There was a company there in that neighborhood, who were digging for money supposed to have been hidden by the ancients. Of this company were old Mr. Stowel—I think his name was Josiah—also old Mr. Beman, also Samuel Lawrence, George Proper, **Joseph Smith, Jr.**, and his father, and his brother Hiram Smith. They dug for money in Palmyra, Manchester, also in Pennsylvania, and other places. When **Joseph** found this **stone**, there was a company digging in Harmony, Pa., and they took Joseph to **look in the stone for them, and he did so for a while**, and then he told them the enchantment was so strong that he could not see, and they gave it up. There he became acquainted with his future wife, the daughter of old Mr. Isaac Hale, where he boarded. He afterwards returned to Pennsylvania again, and married his wife, taking her off to old Mr. Stowel's, because her people would not consent to the marriage. She was of age, Joseph was not.

"After this, on the 22d of September, 1827, before day, Joseph took the horse and wagon of old Mr. Stowel, and taking his wife, he went to the place where the plates were concealed, and while he was obtaining them, she kneeled down and prayed. He then took the plates and hid them in an old black oak tree top which was hollow. . . .

"The money-diggers claimed that they had as much right to the plates as Joseph had, as they were in company together. They claimed that Joseph had been a traitor, and had appropriated to himself that which belonged to them. For this reason Joseph was afraid of them, and continued concealing the plates. . . . Joseph had before this described the manner of his finding the plates. He **found them by looking in the stone** found in the well of Mason Chase. The family had likewise told me the same thing.



“Joseph said that the angel told him he **must quit the company of the money-diggers**. That there were wicked men among them. He must have no more to do with them. He must not lie, nor swear, nor steal.” (Interview with Martin Harris, *Tiffany’s Monthly*, 1859, pp. 163-165, 167 and 169)

After Joseph Smith organized the Mormon Church he did not have much to say about his money-digging activities. He did, however, admit that he had been engaged in this practice. In the July, 1838, issue of the *Elders’ Journal*, Joseph Smith attempted to answer the questions that were most frequently asked him. Question No. 10 read as follows:

Question 10. Was not Jo Smith a money digger.

Answer. **Yes**, but it was never a very profitable job to him, as he only got fourteen dollars a month for it. (*Elders’ Journal*, July, 1838, p. 43; reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 29)

According to David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith gave the stone which he used to translate the Book of Mormon to Oliver Cowdery. Later this stone was brought to Utah. A newspaper reporter wrote the following in his account of an interview with David Whitmer:

With this stone all of the present Book of Mormon was translated. It is the only one of these relics which is not in the possession of the Whitmers. For years Oliver Cowdery surrounded it with care and solicitude, but at his death old Phineas Young, a brother of Brigham Young, and an old-time and once intimate friend of the Cowdery family, came out from Salt Lake City, and during his visit he contrived to get the stone from its hiding place, through a little deceptive sophistry, expended upon the grief-stricken widow. When he returned to Utah he carried it in triumph to the apostles of Brigham Young’s “lion house.” (*Des Moines Daily News*, October 16, 1886)

We know that by 1856 Joseph Smith’s “seer stone” had been brought to Utah, for Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary under the date of February 25, 1856:

President Young exhibited the **seer’s stone** with which The Prophet Joseph discovered the plates of the Book of Mormon, to the Regents this evening

It is said to be a silicious granite dark color almost black with light colored stripes some what resembling petrified poplar or cotton wood bark It was about the size but not the shape of a hen’s egg. (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, 1964, p. 593)

### Book of Mormon From Stone

In the Book of Mormon we read: “And the Lord said: I will prepare unto my servant Gazelem, **a stone**, which shall shine forth in darkness unto light, . . .” (*Book of Mormon*, Alma 37:23). Prior to 1981 the *Doctrine and Covenants* 78:9 identified “Joseph Smith, Jun.” as Gazelam.

Joseph Smith claimed that his Urim and Thummim—which he also used to translate—consisted of “two **stones** in silver bows . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 12). It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith fastened two of his “seer stones” together to make his “Urim and Thummim.” The testimony given in the 1826 trial shows that as early as 1826 Joseph Smith was using two different stones.

However this may be, Joseph Smith’s father-in-law, Isaac Hale, noticed a definite relationship between the method Joseph Smith used to translate the Book of Mormon and the way he searched for buried treasures. Isaac Hale’s affidavit was published in *Mormonism Unveiled* in 1834, but Mormon writers have claimed that the affidavits published in this book were corrupted by Philastus Hurlburt. The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson, however, has discovered that the statements from “Joseph Smith’s in-laws and their Pennsylvania friends” were “apparently procured by Howe’s direct correspondence **independent** of Hurlburt”

(*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, p. 25). They were first printed in the *Susquehanna Register* and then reprinted in the *New York Baptist Register*. Wesley P. Walters has sent us a photograph of Isaac Hale’s affidavit as it appeared in the *Susquehanna Register*. The following is taken from Mr. Hale’s affidavit:

“I first became acquainted with Joseph Smith, Jr. in November, 1825. He was at that time in the employ of a set of men who were called ‘money-diggers;’ and his occupation was that of seeing, or pretending to see by means of **a stone placed in his hat, and his hat closed over his face**. In this way he pretended to discover minerals and hidden treasure. . . . Smith, and his father, with several other ‘money-diggers’ boarded at my house while they were employed in digging for a mine that they supposed had been opened and worked by the Spaniards, many years since. Young Smith gave the ‘money-diggers’ great encouragement, at first, but when they had arrived in digging, to near the place where he had stated an immense treasure would be found—he said the enchantment was so powerful that he could not see. . . .

“After these occurrences, young Smith made several visits at my house, and at length asked my consent to his marrying my daughter Emma. This I refused, and gave him my reasons for so doing; some of which were, that he was a stranger, and followed a business that I could not approve: he then left the place. Not long after this, he returned, and while I was absent from home, carried off my daughter, into the state of New York, where they were married without my approbation or consent. . . . In a short time they returned, . . .

“Smith stated to me, that he had given up what he called ‘**glass-looking**,’ and that he expected to work hard for a living, and was willing to do so. He also made arrangements with my son Alva Hale, to go up to Palmyra, and move his (Smith’s) furniture &c. to this place. . . . Soon after this, I was informed they had brought a wonderful book of Plates down with them. . . . The manner in which he pretended to read and interpret, was the **same as when he looked for the money-diggers**, with the **stone in his hat**, and his hat over his face, while the Book of Plates were at the same time hid in the woods!” (*The Susquehanna Register*, May 1, 1834)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, frankly admitted that Joseph Smith placed the “seer stone” into a hat to translate the Book of Mormon:

I will now give you a description of the manner in which the Book of Mormon was translated. **Joseph would put the seer stone into a hat**, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, by David Whitmer, 1887, p. 12)

Emma Smith, Joseph Smith’s wife, related the following to her son:

In writing for your father I frequently wrote day after day, after sitting by the table close by him, he sitting with **his face buried in his hat, with the stone in it**, and dictating hour after hour with nothing between us. (*The Saints’ Herald*, May 19, 1888, p. 310)

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, also stated that a stone was used:

On Sunday, Sept. 4, 1870, Martin Harris addressed a congregation of Saints in Salt Lake City. He related an incident which occurred during the time that he wrote that portion of the translation of the Book of Mormon which he was favored to write direct from the mouth of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and said that the Prophet possessed a **seer stone**, by which he was enabled to translate as well as from the Urim and Thummim, and for **convenience** he then used the seer stone. . . . Martin said that after continued translation they would become weary, and would go down to the river and exercise by throwing stones out on the river, etc. While so doing, on one occasion, Martin Harris found a stone very much resembling the one used for translating, and on resuming

their labor of translation, he put in place the **stone** he had found. He said that the Prophet remained silent, unusually and intently gazing in darkness, no traces of the usual sentences appearing. Much surprised, Joseph exclaimed, “Martin! What is the matter! All is as dark as Egypt!” Martin’s countenance betrayed him, and the Prophet asked Martin why he had done so. Martin said, to stop the mouths of fools, who had told him that the Prophet had learned those sentences and was merely repeating them, etc. (*Historical Record*, by Andrew Jensen, vol. 6, 1887, p. 216)

The Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds stated: “This stone did shine forth to us in darkness when he received the B. of M. characters with their English equivalents when **he had his eyes hidden from natural light in a hat** as testified by his associates” (*How Did Joseph Smith Translate?*, by Arch S. Reynolds, p. 7). Mr. Reynolds also gave the following information:

The Seerstone that the Prophet Joseph Smith used was, according to the *Millennial Star*, Vol. 24, p. 86, a chocolate-colored stone about the size of an egg that was oval in shape. It was found by Joseph in a well . . .

It is well known that Joseph used this stone to translate the first part of the Book of Mormon record while Martin Harris was scribe. This is proved by Martin’s description of the medium and its use. After Joseph used it for receiving revelations and translating the Nephite record, he gave it in the care of Oliver Cowdery . . . We find Joseph using this instrument, however, after that date. Orson Pratt declared that:

Joseph received several revelations to which I was witness by means of the Seerstone, but he could receive also without any instrument. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 40, no. 49) . . .

On May 17, 1888, we find this same Seerstone offered on the altar of the Manti Temple by President Wilford Woodruff. Brother B. H. Roberts describes the incident:

President Woodruff May 17, 1888, at a private dedication mentioned, “before leaving I consecrated upon the altar the **Seerstone** that Joseph Smith found by revelation some thirty feet under the earth, and carried by him throughout life.”

This is the very Seerstone that the Prophet used part of the time when translating the Book of Mormon; the one he took from the well he was digging with his brother Hyrum, near Palmyra, for Mr. Clark Chase, and which he was falsely accused of taking from the children of Mr. Chase, spoken of in chapter ten of this work. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 230)

On the next page Roberts says:

What became of the Seerstone immediately after this is not known. The writer (Roberts) knows, that it was in the possession of the Church as a matter of conversation between President Smith and himself (Roberts); and he has reason for knowing that it is now in possession of the Church—this year of 1930. (*Ibid.*, p. 231)

(*The Urim and Thummim*, by Arch S. Reynolds, 1953, pp. 18-20)

In a letter written March 27, 1876, Emma Smith, who was married to Joseph Smith, stated that **the entire Book of Mormon**, that we have today, was translated by the use of a stone. James E. Lancaster states:

How can the testimonies of Emma Smith and David Whitmer, describing the translation of the Book of Mormon with a **seer stone**, be reconciled with the traditional account of the church that the Book of Mormon was translated by the “interpreters” found in the stone box with the plates? It is the extreme good fortune of the church that we have testimony by Sister Emma Smith Bidamon on this important issue. . . . a woman . . . wrote to Emma Bidamon, requesting information as to the translation of the Book of Mormon. Emma Bidamon rep[li]ed . . . March 27, 1876. Sister Bidamon’s letter states in part:

Now the first that my husband translated, was translated by the use of the Urim and Thummim, and that was the part that Martin Harris **lost**, after that he **used a small stone**, not exactly black, but was rather a dark color. . . .

Sister Bidamon’s letter indicated that at first the Book of Mormon was translated by the Urim and Thummim. She refers to the instrument found with the plates. However, this first method was used only for the portion written on the 116 pages of foolscap which Martin Harris later lost. After that time the translation was done with the seer stone. (*Saints’ Herald*, November 15, 1962, p. 15)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses, admitted that he never did see Joseph Smith use what was later known as the Urim and Thummim—i.e., the two stones set in silver bows. This information is found in the article by James E. Lancaster:

According to the testimony of Emma Smith and David Whitmer, the angel **took the Urim and Thummim from Joseph Smith** at the time of the loss of the 116 pages. This was in June, 1828, one year before David became involved with the work of translation. David Whitmer could never have been present when the Urim and Thummim were used. All of this he clearly states in his testimony to Brother Traugher:

With the sanction of David Whitmer, and by his authority, I now state that he **does not say that Joseph Smith ever translated in his presence by aid of Urim and Thummim**, but by means of **one dark colored, opaque stone** called a “Seer Stone,” which was placed in the **crow of a hat**, into which **Joseph put his face**, so as to exclude the external light. Then, a spiritual light would appear before Joseph, upon which was a line of characters from the plates, and under it, the translation in English; at least, so Joseph said.

(*Saints’ Herald*, November 15, 1962, p. 16)

Mr. Lancaster quotes an interview with David Whitmer which was published in the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, October 17, 1886. In this interview the following statement appeared:

By fervent prayer and by otherwise humbling himself, the prophet, however, again found favor, and was presented with a strange, oval-shaped, chocolate-colored stone, about the size of an egg, only more flat, which, it was promised, should serve the same purpose as the missing Urim and Thummim (the latter was a pair of transparent stones set in a bow-shaped frame and very much resembled a pair of spectacles). **With this stone all of the present Book of Mormon was translated.** (*Saints’ Herald*, November 15, 1962, p. 16)

One thing that has caused confusion is the fact that the “seer stone” was sometimes called the Urim and Thummim. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, makes this statement concerning the seer stone:

The Prophet also had a **seer stone** which was separate and distinct from the Urim and Thummim, and which (speaking loosely) has been called by some a Urim and Thummim. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 818)

Joseph Smith’s brother William referred to the stone as the Urim and Thummim:

The manner in which this was done was by looking into the Urim and Thummim, which was placed in a **hat** to exclude the light, (the plates lying near by covered up), and reading off the translation, which appeared in the **stone** by the power of God. (*William Smith On Mormonism*, reprinted in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, p. 417)

Wilford Woodruff also called the seer stone the Urim and Thummim. The following is found in a thesis submitted to the Brigham Young University by Walter L. Whipple:

Some have felt to question Wilford Woodruff’s correctness in calling the instrument the Urim and Thummim. On the same date of December 27, 1841, Elder Woodruff claims to have been shown the Urim and Thummim, Brigham Young recorded in his history the showing of the instrument—only he said that it was the “seer stone.”—27.—I met with the Twelve at brother Joseph’s. He conversed with us in a familiar manner on a variety



of subjects, and explained to us the Urim and Thummim which he found with the plates, called in the Book of Mormon the Interpreters. He said that every man who lived on the earth was entitled to a seer stone, and should have one, but they are kept from them in consequence of their wickedness, and most of those who **do find one make an evil use of it; he showed us his seer stone.** (“Textual Changes in the Pearl of Great Price,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, typed copy, p. 9)

President Joseph Fielding Smith admits that the “seer stone” was sometimes called the Urim and Thummim:

The statement has been made that the Urim and Thummim was on the altar in the Manti Temple when that building was dedicated. The Urim and Thummim so spoken of, however, was the **seer stone** which was in the possession of the Prophet Joseph Smith in early days. This seer stone is **now** in the possession of the Church. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 225)

### Embarrassed Over Stone

The fact that Joseph Smith used a stone, which he placed in a hat, to translate the Book of Mormon has caused a great deal of embarrassment because it so closely resembled crystal gazing. Crystal gazing is an ancient practice, and crystal gazers have claimed to see writings in their stones in the same way that Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated the Book of Mormon. In the book *Strange Superstitions and Magical Practices*, page 53, we read:

Among primitive peoples there is a widespread belief in the magical efficacy of quartz crystals—one of the most common of all luminous stones. These mineralogical specimens are frequently the main prop of the magician. They are used for this purpose by the aborigines of Australia, Polynesia and North America, among others.

On pages 137-138 of the *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*, by Rossell Hope Robbins, the following information appears: “In England, for example, in 1467 a William Byg was convicted of using a crystal stone to locate stolen property; . . .”

The Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds stated:

During the early history of the Latter-day Saints’ Church, many people arose with so-called seer-stones, claiming to have power of seeing many things such as seeing the place where lost articles were also where the Book of Mormon plates were hidden. Some of these clairvoyants were the means of leading many astray from the truth. One of the earliest of these peepstone gazers was . . . Miss Chase, sister of Willard Chase, . . . Miss Chase found a green glass, through which she claimed she could see where Joseph Smith kept the Gold Plates. . . .

Brewster had a stone by which he pretended to receive revelations. There were others in the early rise of the Church . . . who tried to lead factions from the Church and pretended to receive revelations by stone or Urim. . . .

From the earliest days of the Church we have had many who have claimed to have had the power to see things in so-called peepstones. There are stones among the Church members that are considered by some to be the means of their receiving communications from the unseen world.

Edwin Ruston dug in the ground in the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, as a dream had previously shown, and obtained a seerstone about five feet underground, on May 4, 1846. He was a resident of Nauvoo at the time he obtained it. The stone, which still exists, appears to be a little smaller than a quarter of a baseball, and is crystal clear. He never tried to use the stone, as far as we know. It now reposes in the possession of his son-in-law, C. W. Christensen, of Salt Lake City, Utah. (*The Urim and Thummim*, by Arch S. Reynolds, pp. 21-24)

Not only true media have been used by God’s seers throughout the centuries; but false ones such as peepstones, crystal balls, etc. have been brought forth by the Adversary to further his diabolic work and hinder God’s plan on earth. (*Ibid.*, p. 28)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, made this statement:

In imitation of the true order of heaven whereby seers receive revelations from God through a Urim and Thummim, the devil gives his own revelations to some of his followers through peep stones or crystal balls. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, pp. 565-566)

In early Utah the anti-Mormon paper, *Valley Tan*, accused the Mormons of using “peep stones”:

. . . the Mormons . . . have better facilities for obtaining information than through newspapers. About every other family, and generally the one between, is possessed of either astrological science or a “peep-stone.” . . . through the latter—a small globular-shaped pebble—they can see cattle beyond mountains twenty or a hundred miles, or even a greater distance off. (*Valley Tan*, October 5, 1859, p. 2)

Although this is probably an exaggeration, there were many who used “peep stones” in Utah. In John M. Whitaker’s journal, for instance, we find the following:

Sister Greaves . . . told me of her troubles with her Bishop, Orson F. Whitney, going to her sisters place and getting information from a **sear** [seer?] **stone**. I tried in several ways to explain what a fine man Bishop Whitney was, and could not understand why he sought such a source of information—“I sincerely believe he has more faith than that,—” and she said, “you see dear, he has a little Adam in him.” (Excerpts from the Daily Journal of John M. Whitaker, typed copy, vol. 1, p. 151)

For more information on “seer stones” and their use by the Mormon people see our book, *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*, pages 10-12.

Mormon apologists have a difficult time explaining the fact that Joseph Smith used a “seer stone.” The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement:

Some use was made also of the **seer stone** and occasional mention was made of it. This was a stone found while the Prophet assisted in digging a well for Clark Chase. By divine power this stone was made serviceable to Joseph Smith in the early part of his ministry. There is no evidence that this stone was used in Joseph’s sacred work. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, 1951, p. 267)

Notice that the Apostle Widtsoe states there is “**no** evidence that this **stone** was used in Joseph’s **sacred** work,” yet on page 260 of the same book Widtsoe states that Joseph did use the stone in his “**spiritual work**”:

Before Joseph received the Urim and Thummim he had a stone, obtained during the digging of a well for Clark Chase. This stone, through the blessing of the Lord, became a **seer stone** which was used frequently by him in his **spiritual work**.

The use of the **seer stone** explains in part the charge against Joseph Smith that he was a “peep stone gazer.” . . . The use of the **seer stone** and the Urim and Thummim was well-known to the people of his time and neighborhood.

The use of stones in sacred work has been frequent; for example, the ball known as the Liahona, the rod of Aaron, and the twelve stones used by Lehi. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 260)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, seems to be embarrassed over the use of the stone. Although he admits that Joseph Smith had a stone, he is unwilling to admit that he used it in the translation of the Book of Mormon:

While the statement has been made by some writers that the Prophet Joseph Smith used a **seer stone** part of the time in his translating of the record, and information points to the fact that he did have in his possession **such a stone**, yet there is no authentic statement in the history of the Church which states that the use of such a stone was made in that translation. The information is all hearsay, and personally, I do not believe that this stone was used for this purpose. . . . It hardly seems reasonable to suppose that the Prophet would substitute something



evidently **inferior** under these circumstances. It may have been so, but it is so easy for a story of this kind to be circulated due to the fact that the Prophet did possess a seer stone, which he may have used for some other purposes. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, vol. 3, pp. 225-226)

A few things should be noted concerning Joseph Fielding Smith's statement. He says that the information concerning the use of the stone in the translation of the Book of Mormon is "hearsay." In making this statement Mr. Smith seems to overlook the fact that not only Joseph Smith's wife and brother testified that a stone was used, but also David Whitmer and Martin Harris, who were witnesses to the Book of Mormon. These people were all eye witnesses to the translation. Joseph Fielding Smith claims that "there is no authentic statement in the history of the Church which states that the use of such a stone was made in that translation." While it is true that Joseph Smith suppressed this in his own *History of the Church*, still the *Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, very definitely states that a stone was used in the translation of the Book of Mormon.

The fact that Joseph Fielding Smith is embarrassed over the use of the stone is evident from his statement that "It hardly seems reasonable to suppose that the Prophet would substitute something evidently **inferior** under these circumstances." Perhaps President Smith is reluctant to admit that a stone was used because of the criticism of anti-Mormon writers.

M. T. Lamb made this observation concerning the use of the stone:

Finally, according to the testimony of Martin Harris, Mr. Smith often used the "seer stone" in place of the Urim and Thummim, even while the later remained in his possession—using it as a mere matter of convenience.

It seems almost too bad that he should thus inadvertently give the whole thing away. You must understand that the Urim and Thummim spoken of, and called throughout the Book of Mormon "the Interpreters," had been provided with great care over 2500 years ago by God himself, for the express purpose of translating these plates. They are often mentioned in the Book of Mormon as exceedingly important. They were preserved with the greatest care, handed down from one generation to another with the plates, and buried with them in the hill Cumorah over 1400 years ago; as sacred as the plates themselves. So sacred that only one man was allowed to handle or use them, the highly favored prophet, Joseph Smith himself. But now, alas! after all this trouble and pains and care on the part of God, and on the part of so many holy men of old this "Urim and Thummim" is found at last to be *altogether superfluous; not needed at all*. This "peep stone" found in a neighbor's well will do the work *just as well*—and is *even more convenient*, "for convenience he used the seer stone." So we are left to infer that when he used the Urim and Thummim at all, it was at *some inconvenience*. And probably he only did it out of regard to the feelings of his God, who had spent so much time and anxiety in preparing it so long ago, and preserving it to the present day for his special use! (*The Golden Bible*, by M. T. Lamb, 1887, pp. 250-51)

Joseph Fielding Smith, confronted with so much evidence that a stone was used in the translation of the Book of Mormon, finally has to admit, "**It may have been so**, but it is so easy for a story of this kind to be circulated due to the fact that **the Prophet did possess a seer stone**, which he may have used for some other purposes." President Smith does not explain what "other purposes" the stone might have been used for.

In an unpublished manuscript on the Book of Mormon, La Mar Petersen states:

Today the Church is silent regarding the stone. It seems somehow beneath the dignity of a Prophet to have ever placed one in his hat. Little or no information can be obtained as to the present whereabouts of the stone. [A.] William Lund, assistant Church historian says: "I have been here in the Library more than forty years and I have never seen it." Yet there are at least three definite statements in responsible Church organs that it does, or did, repose there.

On page 225 of his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

The Urim and Thummim so spoken of, however, was the **seer stone** which was in the possession of the Prophet Joseph Smith in early days. This **seer stone** is **now** in the possession of the Church.

David C. Martin presents some evidence to show that President Smith keeps the "seer stone" locked in a safe:

As an added note, Dean Hooper, Rockford, Illinois, in a conversation with Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve of the "Utah" Church, at a Chicago Stake Conference, January, 1971, quotes Anderson as saying that the "Seer" Stone that Joseph Smith used in the early days of the church is in the possession of the church and is kept in a safe in Joseph Fielding Smith's office. Anderson has seen it a number of times there. Slightly smaller than a chicken egg, oval, chocolate in color. (*Restoration Reporter*, vol. 1, no. 2, June, 1971, p. 8)

## Relationship to Book of Mormon

A careful examination of the whole story of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and even the text of the book itself reveals that it originated in the mind of someone who was familiar with the practice of money-digging. To begin with, the "seer stone" used in "translating" the book seems to have been nothing but a common "peep stone." Many people in Joseph Smith's area were using these stones to search for buried treasures. Mormon scholars admit that Joseph Smith found the stone while digging a well, and the testimony given in the 1826 trial shows that he used his stone to search for treasures. Even Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, admitted that the money-diggers "took Joseph to look in the stone for them, and he did so for a while, . . ." (*Tiffany's Monthly*, 1859, p. 164). On page 169 of the same publication Martin Harris claimed that Joseph "had before this described the manner of his finding the plates. He found them by looking in the stone found in the well of Mason Chase. The family had likewise told me the same thing." Henry Harris also stated that Joseph Smith told him he saw the plates in the hill Cumorah by means of the stone: "He said he had a revelation from God that told him they were hid in a certain hill and he **looked in his stone** and saw them in the place of deposit; . . ." (Affidavit of Henry Harris, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 1, p. 133). Hosea Stout also claimed that Joseph Smith used the stone to find the Book of Mormon plates: "President Young exhibited the **seer's stone with which the prophet discovered the plates** of the Book of Mormon, to the Regents this evening" (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 593).

Evidence also shows that in "translating" the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith placed the stone in a hat in the same manner "as when he looked for the money-diggers." According to witnesses, the plates didn't even have to be present when Joseph Smith was "translating." The Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds gives this information:

At another time David Whitmer gave a description of the procedure:

Joseph Smith did **not see the plates** in translation, but would hold the interpreters (Urim and Thummim) to his eyes and cover his face with a hat, excluding all light, and before him would appear what seemed to be parchment on which would appear the characters of the plates on a line at the top, and immediately below would appear the translation in English, . . . (*Kansas City Journal*, June 5, 1881.)

(*How Did Joseph Smith Translate?* p. 6)

The evidence proves that the plates were not always before Joseph during the translation. His wife and mother state that the plates were on the table wrapped in a cloth while Joseph translated with his eyes **hid in a hat** with the **seer stone** or the Urim and Thummim. David Whitmer, Martin Harris and others state that Joseph hid the

plates **in the woods** and other places while he was translating. Also if Joseph hid his face in a hat while translating what good would the plates have been to him in helping him read the characters? Where it was dark he could not have seen the characters anyway, and the plates were too large to be hidden in a hat. (*Ibid.*, p. 21)

As we examine the Book of Mormon story in the light of the money-digging activities of the 1820's, we notice that the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was "translated" were supposed to have been a very valuable treasure. In fact, when the "first published consecutive account of the origin of the Church" appeared in 1834 and 1835 it stated that Joseph Smith desired to have the Book of Mormon plates to make himself wealthy. This account was republished in the *Times and Seasons* as follows:

... I have said that two invisible powers were operating upon his mind during his walk from his residence to Cumorah, and that the one urging the certainty of **wealth** and ease in this life, has so powerfully wrought upon him, that the great object so carefully and impressively named by the angel, had entirely gone from his recollection, that only a fixed determination to obtain now urged him forward, ... No sooner did he behold this sacred **treasure** than his hopes were renewed, ... he thought, perhaps, there might be something more equally as valuable, ... which could he secure, would still add to his store of **wealth**. These, in short, were his reflections, without once thinking of the solemn instruction of the heavenly messenger, that all must be done with an express view of glorifying God.

On attempting to take possession of the record a shock was produced upon his system, by an invisible power, which deprived him, in a measure, of his natural strength. He desisted for an instant, and then made another attempt, but was more sensibly shocked than before. What was the occasion of this he knew not—there was the pure unsullied record, as had been described—he had heard of the power of **enchantment**, and a thousand like stories, which **held the hidden treasures** of the earth, and supposed that physical exertion and personal strength was only necessary to enable him to yet obtain the object of his wish. He therefore made the third attempt with an increased exertion, when his strength failed him more than at either of the former times, and without premeditating he exclaimed: "Why can I not obtain this book?"

"Because you have **not** kept the commandments of the Lord," answered a voice, within a seeming short distance.

He looked, and to his astonishment, there stood the angel who had previously given him the directions concerning this matter. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, pp. 392-393)

In Joseph Smith's *History* as published in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:53, he does not mention the fact that the angel rebuked him for attempting to obtain the plates to become wealthy:

I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger, and was again informed that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would it, until four years from that time; ...

Fortunately, Paul R. Cheesman has brought to light a document written by Joseph Smith which the church suppressed for 130 years. In this manuscript Joseph Smith stated:

... I immediately went to the place and found where the plates was deposited ... and straightway made three attempts to get them ... I cried unto the Lord in the agony of my soul why can I not obtain them behold the the [sic] angel appeared unto me again and said unto me you have **not** kept the commandments of the Lord which I gave unto you therefore you cannot now obtain them for the time is not yet fulfilled ... I had been tempted of the adversary and sought the Plates to **obtain riches** and kept not the commandment that I should have an eye singled to the glory of God therefore I was chastened and sought diligently to obtain the plates and obtained them not until I was twenty one years of age ... ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1965, pp. 130-131)

Even Joseph Smith's mother seems to have had an interest in the value of the treasures found in the hill Cumorah. Speaking of the breastplate which was found with the Book of Mormon plates, she said: "The whole plate was **worth at least five hundred dollars**: ..." (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, London, 1853, p. 107). In later printings of Mrs. Smith's book, these words have been completely deleted without any indication (see photograph in our *Case*, vol. 1, p. 61). The Mormon leaders have also deleted her description of the Urim and Thummim. In this description Joseph's mother claimed that the Urim and Thummim "consisted of two smooth three-cornered **diamonds** set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows, which were connected with each other in much the same way as old fashioned spectacles" (*Ibid.*, p. 101).

In an affidavit given December 8, 1833, William Stafford told of the great interest which the Smith family had in money-digging:

... I first became acquainted with Joseph, Sen., and his family in the year 1820. ... They would say, for instance, that in such a place, in such a hill, on a certain man's farm, there were deposited kegs, barrels and hogsheds of coined silver and gold-bars of gold, golden images, brass kettles filled with gold and silver—gold candlesticks, swords, &c &c. They would say, also, that nearly all the hills in this part of New York, were thrown up by human hands, and in them were large caves, which Joseph, Jr., could see, by placing a stone of singular appearance in his hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light; at which time they pretended he could see all things within and under the earth,—that he could see within the above mentioned caves, **large gold bars and silver plates**—that he could also discover the spirits in whose charge these treasures were clothed in ancient dress. (*Mormonism Unveiled*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pp. 237-238)

It is very interesting to compare Stafford's statement about the caves with a statement by Brigham Young which we have previously quoted:

Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a **cave**, in which there was a large and spacious room. ... They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room **more plates than probably many wagon loads**; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the **gold plates**; ... (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, p. 38)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, also spoke of "the vision that Joseph and others had, when they went into a **cave** in the hill Cumorah, and saw more records than ten men could carry? There were books piled up on tables, book upon book" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 105).

The Mormon writer Edward Stevenson made these interesting statements about the cave:

It was likewise stated to me by David Whitmer in the year 1877 that Oliver Cowdery told him that the Prophet Joseph and himself had seen this room and that it was filled with **treasure**, ... as well as the portion of **gold plates** not yet translated, ... no Rochester adventurers shall ever see them or the treasures, although science and mineral rods testify that they are there. At the proper time when greed, selfishness and corruption shall cease to reign in the hearts of the people, these vast hoards of hidden **treasure** shall be brought forth to be used for the cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ. (*Reminiscences of Joseph the Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1893, pp. 14-15)

The Book of Mormon makes these statements concerning hidden treasures:

And behold, if a man hide up a **treasure** in the earth, and the Lord shall say—Let it be accursed, because of



the iniquity of him who hath hid it up—behold, it shall be accursed.

And if the Lord shall say—Be thou accursed, that no man shall find thee from this time henceforth and forever—behold, no man getteth it henceforth and forever. (Book of Mormon, Helaman 12:18-19)

... whoso shall hide up **treasures** in the earth shall find them again no more, because of the great curse of the land, save he be a righteous man and shall hide it up unto the Lord.

For I will, saith the Lord, that they shall hide up their treasures unto me; and cursed be they who hide not up their treasures unto me; for none hideth up their treasures unto me save it be the righteous; and he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land. (Book of Mormon, Helaman 13:18-19)

The reader will remember that Brigham Young told of a “chest of money” that moved by itself “into the bank,” and that Martin Harris told of a “stone box” which “slipped back into the hill.” In Joseph Smith’s 1826 trial, Jonathan Thompson testified that “on account of an enchantment the trunk kept settling away from under them when digging; . . .” This idea of treasures slipping into the earth seems to be reflected in the Book of Mormon:

Behold, we lay a tool here and on the morrow it is gone; and behold, our swords are taken from us in the day we have sought them for battle.

Yea, we have hid up our treasures and they have **slipped** away from us, because of the curse of the land.

O that we had repented in the day that the word of the Lord came unto us; for behold the land is cursed, and all things are become **slippery**, and we cannot hold them. (Book of Mormon, Helaman 13:34-36)

In Mormon 1:18 we read that the people “began to hide up their treasures in the earth; and they became **slippery**, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them again.”

From the evidence we have presented it becomes clear that the Book of Mormon had its origin among a people who believed in “seer stones” and money-digging.

### Working with the Rod

One of the most important changes Joseph Smith made in his revelations was an obvious attempt to cover up the fact that he had endorsed the idea that Oliver Cowdery had a gift from God to work with a divining rod. Below is a comparison of the way this revelation was first published in the *Book of Commandments* and the way it has been changed to read in recent editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* (see photograph on p. 19, Change F).

**Book of Commandments:** “Now this is not all, for you have another gift, which is the gift of **working with the rod**: behold it has told you things: behold there is no other power save God, that can cause this **rod of nature**, to work in your hands, . . .” (Chapter 7:3)

**Doctrine and Covenants:** “Now this is not all thy gift, for you have another gift, which is the **gift of Aaron**; behold, it has told you many things;

“Behold, there is no other power, save the power of God, that can cause this **gift of Aaron** to be with you.” (Section 8:6-7)

The reader will notice that the words “*working with the rod*” and “*rod of nature*” have been entirely deleted from this revelation.

In the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* we find some information that would seem to show that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery derived their interest in working with the rod from their parents:

About 1800, occurred the “Wood scrape.” . . . It was a religious delusion, . . . the cause of great excitement here, and of a good deal of notoriety in this part of the State. . . .

Before 1860, I had conversed with more than 30 old men and women who were living here in 1800, . . . the substance of which was that the Woods **dug for money** . . . they used **hazel-rods** which they pretended would lead them to places where money, had been buried, . . . His [Nathaniel Wood’s] peculiar religious doctrines will appear as we proceed. . . . he regarded himself and his followers as modern Israelites or Jews, under the special care of Providence; . . .

A man by the name of Winchell, as he called himself when he came here, was the first man who used the **hazel-rod**. . . . He was a fugitive from justice from Orange county, Vermont, where he had been engaged in counterfeiting. He first went to a Mr. Cowdry’s, in Wells, who then lived in that town, near the line between Wells and Middletown, . . . Cowdry was the father of **Oliver Cowdery**, the noted Mormon, who claimed to have . . . written the book of Mormon, as it was deciphered by Smith from the golden plates. . . . Winchell staid at Cowdry’s some little time, keeping himself concealed, . . .

Winchell next turns up in Middletown, . . . and here he began to use the **hazel-rod** (whether he had before used it at Cowdry’s, in wells, I cannot say). . . .

Before we proceed further, we should, perhaps, say a word about this **rod**, . . . The best description we can give of it is this: It was a **stick** of what has been known as **witch-hazel**—a small bush or shrub very common in this vicinity. It was cut with two prongs, in the form of a fork, and the person using it would take the two prongs, **one in each hand**, and the other end from the body. From the use of this stick Winchell an[d] [t]he Woods pretended to **divine** all sorts of things to suit their purpose. . . . The men, under Winchell, . . . commenced digging . . . becoming weary, their enthusiasm began to cool, . . . Winchell held up his rod, got some motion from it, and told them the money was in an iron chest and covered with a large stone, and that they would soon come to it. . . . He impressed it upon them, that the occasion was one of “awful moment,” that there was a “**divinity**” **guarding** the treasure, and that if there was any lack of faith in any one of the party, or any should utter a word while removing the stone and taking out the chest, that this divinity would put the money forever beyond their reach, . . . Some one of the party stepped on the foot of another, the latter crying out in pain. “Get off from my toes.” Winchell exclaimed with a loud voice, “The money is gone, flee for your lives!” Every man of the party dropped his bar or lever, and ran as though it was for life. . . .

The Woods then commenced using the **hazel rod** and **digging for money**, which was in the Spring or early summer of 1800, and continued in this until late in the Fall, . . . Jacob Wood, known as Capt. Wood, one of the sons of Nathaniel, was the leader in the use of the **rod**. “Priest Wood” his father, seemed to throw his whole soul into the rod delusion, but his use of the rod was mostly as a medium of revelation. It was “St. John’s rod” he said, and undoubtedly was very convenient for him, as he was much more fruitful in his prophecies than before— . . . all the Woods and their followers, had each a rod, which was used whenever they desired any information. If any one was sick, they sought the rod to know whether they would live or die, and to know what medicine to administer to them. In all their business matters, they followed, as they said, the direction of the rod, . . . Many of the old people have told me, that almost every day during that season, Capt. Wood, or some other one, could be seen with the two prongs of the rod twisted around his hands, in search for **buried treasures**. . . .

Mr. Clark in his letter says: “By what I have heard of them (the Woods,) I have no doubt that the movement gave origin to the Mormons.” . . .

That the system of religion promulgated by Nathaniel Wood, and adopted by his followers in 1800, was the same, or “much the same,” as the Mormons adopted on the start, is beyond question. . . . The Woods were very fruitful in prophecies, especially after the **hazel rod** came to their use, so were the Mormons in the beginning of their creed,



and both the Woods and the Mormons claimed to have revelations, . . . I have been told that Joe Smith's father resided in Poutney at the time of the Wood movement here, and that he was in it, and one of the leading rodsmen. Of this I cannot speak positively, for the want of satisfactory evidence, . . . I have before said that Oliver Cowdery's father was in the 'Wood scrape.' He then lived in Wells, afterwards in Middletown, after that went to Palmyra, and there we find these men with the counterfeiter, Winchell, searching for money over the hills and mountains with the hazel-rod, and their sons Joe and Oliver, as soon as they were old enough, were in the same business, . . .

Gov. Ford of Illinois, in his history of the Mormons, says of Joe Smith.

That his extreme youth was spent in idle, vagabond life, roaming in the woods, dreaming of buried treasures, and exerting the art of finding them by twisting a forked **stick** in his hands, or by looking through enchanted **stones**. He and his father before him, were what are called "**water-witches**," always ready to point out the ground where wells might be dug and water found.

. . . They used the **rod**, that is, the elder Smith and Cowdery, and pretended by that to obtain **revelations**, . . . and their sons Joe jr. and Oliver, . . . commenced their education with the use of the **hazel-rod** or forked stick, in searching for **hidden treasures**—though afterwards they used what they called enchanted **stones**. (*The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Edited by Abby Maria Hemenway, Claremont, N.H., 1877, vol. 3, pp. 810-819)

Although the material above was not printed until many years after the events were supposed to have occurred, the "Rodmen" were mentioned in the *Vermont American* as early as 1828:

About the year 1800, one or two families in Rutland county, . . . pretended to have been informed by the Almighty, that they were descendants of the ancient Jews, . . . They claimed, also, inspired power with which to cure all sorts of diseases-intuitive knowledge of lost or stolen goods, and ability to **discover hidden treasures of the earth**, . . . most of the connexions of its originators were drawn in, . . . numbering nearly forty persons. The instrument of their miraculous powers, was a cleft **stick**, or **rod**, something of the form of an inverted Y; . . . excavations were made in the mountains, some to a great depth; . . . From the bowels of the mountain valuable ore was to be taken; the building was to be erected into a furnace for smelting and refining it; and the horses' bones were to be converted into crucibles! (*Vermont American*, Middlebury, Vermont, May 7, 1828)

Joseph Smith's father was undoubtedly a believer in the practice of working with the rod. In an affidavit, dated December 2, 1833, Peter Ingersoll stated:

I, Peter Ingersoll, first became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. in the year of our Lord, 1822. . . .

The general employment of the family, was **digging for money**. . . . I was once ploughing near the house of Joseph Smith, Sen. about noon, he requested me to walk with him a short distance from his house, for the purpose of seeing whether a **mineral rod** would **work in my hand**, saying at the same time he was confident it would. . . . he cut a small witch hazel bush and gave me direction how to hold it. He then went off some rods, and told me to say to the rod, "work to the money," which I did, in an audible voice. He rebuked me severely for speaking it loud, and said it must be spoken in a whisper. This was rare sport for me. While the old man was standing off some rods, throwing himself into various shapes, I told him the rod did not work. He seemed much surprized at this, and said he thought he saw it move in my hand. It was now time for me to return to my labor. (Affidavit of Peter Ingersoll, as found in *Mormonism Unveiled*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, p. 232)

A. B. Deming gathered some evidence showing that Joseph Smith himself used a rod when he was young. In her statement Mrs. S. F. Anderick stated:

In 1812 my parents moved to a farm two miles from the village, and in the township of Palmyra, New York. . . . He [Joseph Smith]

claimed, when a young man, he could tell where lost or hidden things and **treasures** were buried or located with a forked **witch hazel**. He deceived many farmers, and induced them to dig nights for chests of gold, when the pick struck the chest, someone usually spoke, and Jo would say the enchantment was broken, and the chest would **leave**.

Willard Chase, a Methodist who lived about two miles from uncle's, while digging a well, found a gray smooth stone about the size and shape of an egg. Sallie, Willard's sister, also a Methodist, told me several times that young Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, often came to inquire of her where to dig for treasures. She told me she would place the **stone in a hat** and hold it to her face, and claimed things would be brought to her view. . . . I heard that Jo obtained it and called it a **peep-stone**, which he used in the place of the witch hazel. (*Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Oakland, California, January, 1888, p. 2)

Isaac Butts made these statements in his testimony:

I was born in Palmyra, N.Y. . . . I attended school with Prophet Jo. . . . Young Jo had a forked **witch-hazel rod** with which he claimed he could locate buried money or hidden things. Later he had a **peep-stone** which he put into his **hat** and looked into it. I have seen both. . . . Jo and others dug much about Palmyra and Manchester. (*Ibid.*, p. 2)

C. M. Stafford stated:

Jo claimed he could tell where money was buried, with a **witch hazel** consisting of a forked stick of hazel. He held it one fork in each hand and claimed the upper end was attracted by the money. . . . My mother-in-law, Mrs. Rockwell, said that Prophet Jo Smith told her there was money buried in the ground and she spent considerable time digging in various places for it. . . . Jo Smith told me there was a **peep-stone** for me and many others if we could only find them. Jo claimed to have revelations and tell fortunes. . . . Jo had men dig on a tunnel forty or fifty feet long in a hill about two miles north of where he claimed to find the plates. I have been in it. (*Ibid.*, April, 1888, p. 1)

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith learned about "**working with the rod**" from his father. He participated in this practice in his youth, and claimed to have a revelation from God which approved of Oliver Cowdery's "gift of working with the rod." Later, however, he became embarrassed about his money-digging activities and changed the revelation to remove all reference to the rod.

Although the Utah Mormon leaders appear to want their people to remain in the dark concerning the changes in the revelations, the Reorganized LDS Church leaders have made some real progress toward facing this problem. Richard P. Howard, RLDS Church Historian, makes these startling admissions in a book recently published by his church:

Several writers have established that both in Vermont and in western New York in the early 1800's, one of the many forms which enthusiastic religion took was the adaption of the **witch hazel stick**. . . . For example, the "divining rod" was used effectively by one Nathaniel Wood in Rutland County, Vermont, in 1801. Wood, Winchell, **William Cowdery, Jr.**, and his son, **Oliver Cowdery**, all had some knowledge of and associations with the various uses, both secular and sacred, of the forked **witch hazel rod**. Winchell and others used such a rod in seeking buried treasure; . . . when Joseph Smith met Oliver Cowdery in April, 1829, he found a man peculiarly adept in the use of the **forked rod**. . . . and against the background of his own experiments with and uses of oracular media, Joseph Smith's April, 1829, affirmations about Cowdery's unnatural powers related to working with the rod are quite understandable. . . .

By the time that Joseph Smith approached the reinterpretation and **rewording** of this document for the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, he had had time and experience necessary to place his 1829 assessment of the meaning of Cowdery's gift of working with the rod in a somewhat more **accurate** perspective. Both he

and Cowdery had developed away from an emphasis on the religious or mystical meanings in such mechanical objects as the water witching rod. Joseph's 1835 wording of this document expressed in more general and symbolic terms the significance and promise of the relationship of trust still existing between Cowdery and himself. It **left behind** the apparent 1829 reliance upon external media, which by 1835 had assumed in Joseph's mind overtones of **superstition** and speculative experimentation. (*Restoration Scriptures*, Independence, Mo., 1969, pp. 211-214)

## Affidavits and Statements

As we indicated earlier, in 1834 E. D. Howe published a number of affidavits and statements by people who were familiar with Joseph Smith's money-digging activities. Mormon writers have always dismissed these statements as being of little value. The Mormon writer F. L. Stewart stated: "**All** apparently were heavily edited by Hurlburt or dictated by him, as they bear a remarkable similarity in language and style" (*Exploding The Myth About Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 25). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe said: "The famous affidavits in Howe's book are remarkably alike in composition. One hand must have written them" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 80).

In the light of Richard L. Anderson's recent discovery this argument can no longer be maintained. The reader will remember that Dr. Anderson discovered that the statements from "Joseph Smith's in-laws and their Pennsylvania friends" were "apparently procured by Howe's direct correspondence **independent** of Hurlburt" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, p. 25). These statements were first published in the *Susquehanna Register* and then reprinted in the *New York Baptist Register*. Now that Howe's printing of these statements from Pennsylvania has been shown to be accurate, we must take a more serious look at the affidavits from the Palmyra-Manchester area. This is especially true now that the 1826 court record has been proven authentic. In the past Mormon writers have claimed that Joseph Smith's neighbors made up the stories of his use of the stone for money-digging. The court record, however, shows that Joseph Smith himself admitted that "he had a certain stone which he had occasionally looked at to determine where hidden treasures in the bowels of the earth were; . . . That at Palmyra he pretended to tell by looking at this stone where coined money was buried in Pennsylvania, and while at Palmyra had **frequently** ascertained in that way where lost property was of various kinds; that he had occasionally been in the habit of looking through this stone to find lost property for **three years**, . . ."

Now, in light of this confession by Joseph Smith himself, the statements by his neighbors must be seriously considered.

Peter Ingersoll made these statements in his affidavit:

I, Peter Ingersoll, first became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. in the year of our Lord, 1822. . . .

In the month of August, 1827, I was hired by Joseph Smith, Jr. to go to Pennsylvania, to move his wife's household furniture up to Manchester, where his wife then was. When we arrived at Mr. Hale's, in Harmony, Pa. from which place he had taken his wife, a scene presented itself, truly affecting. His father-in-law (Mr. Hale) addressed Joseph, in a flood of tears: "You have stolen my daughter and married her. I had much rather have followed her to her grave. You spend your time in **digging for money**—pretend to see in a **stone**, and thus try to deceive people." Joseph wept, and acknowledged he could not see in a stone, now, nor never could; and his former pretensions in that respect, were all false. He then promised to give up his old habits of **digging for money** and looking into **stones**. . . .

Joseph told me on his return, that he intended to keep the promise which he had made to his father-in-law; but, said he, it will be hard for me, for they will all oppose, as they want me to look in the stone for them to dig money: and in fact it was as he predicted. They urged him, day after day, to resume his old practice of looking in the stone. (Affidavit of Peter Ingersoll, as printed in *Mormonism Unveiled*, pp. 232, 234 and 235; reprinted in *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*)

William Stafford gave the following information in his affidavit:

Joseph Smith, Sen., came to me one night, and told me, that Joseph Jr. had been **looking in his glass**, and had seen, not many rods from his house, two or three kegs of gold and silver, some feet under the surface of the earth; and that none others but the elder Joseph and myself could get them. I accordingly consented to go, and early in the evening repaired to the place of deposit. Joseph, Sen. first made a circle, twelve or fourteen feet in diameter. This circle, said he, contains the treasure. He then stuck in the ground a **row of witch hazel sticks**, around the said circle, for the purpose of keeping off the evil spirits. Within this circle he made another, of about eight or ten feet in diameter. He walked around three times on the periphery of this last circle, muttering to himself something which I could not understand. He next stuck a steel rod in the centre of the circles, and then enjoined profound silence upon us, lest we should arouse the evil spirit who had the charge of these treasures. After we had dug a trench about five feet in depth around the rod, the old man by signs and motions, asked leave of absence, and went to the house to inquire of young Joseph the cause of our disappointment. He soon returned and said, that Joseph had remained all this time in the house, **looking in his stone** and watching the motions of the evil spirit—that he saw the spirit come up to the ring and as soon as it beheld the cone which we had formed around the rod, it caused the **money to sink**. We then went into the house, and the old man observed, that we had made a mistake in the commencement of the operation; if it had not been for that, said he, we should have got the money. . . . Old Joseph and one of the boys came to me one day, and said that Joseph Jr. had discovered some very remarkable and valuable treasures, which could be procured only in one way. That way, was as follows:—That a **black sheep** should be taken on to the ground where the treasures were concealed—that after **cutting its throat**, it should be led around a circle while bleeding. This being done, the wrath of the evil spirit would be appeased: the treasures could then be obtained, and my share of them was to be four fold. To gratify my curiosity, I let them have a large fat sheep. They afterwards informed me, that the sheep was killed pursuant to commandment; but as there was some mistake in the process, it did not have the desired effect. This, I believe, is the only time they ever made money-digging a profitable business. . . . When they found that the people of this vicinity would no longer put any faith in their schemes for **digging money**; they then pretended to **find a gold bible**, . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 238- 239)

Joshua Stafford gives the following information in his statement:

I, Joshua Stafford, became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. about the year 1819 or 20. They then were laboring people, in low circumstances. A short time after this, they commenced **digging for hidden treasures**, and soon after they became indolent, and told marvelous stories about ghosts, hob-goblins, caverns, and various other mysterious matters. Joseph once showed me a piece of wood which he said he took from a box of money, and the reason he gave for not obtaining the box, was, that it **moved**. At another time, he, (Joseph Jr.) at a husking, called on me to become security for a horse, and said he would reward me handsomely, for he had found a box of watches, and they were as large as his fist, and he put one of them to his ear, and he could hear it "tick forty rods." (*Ibid.*, p. 258)

Joseph Capron made these statements:

I, Joseph Capron, became acquainted with Joseph

Smith, Sen. in the year of our Lord, 1827. . . . The family of Smiths held Joseph Jr. in high estimation on account of some supernatural power which he was supposed to possess. This power he pretended to have received through the medium of a **stone** of peculiar quality. The **stone** was placed **in a hat**, in such a manner as to exclude all light, except that which emanated from the stone itself. This light of the stone, he pretended, enabled him to see any thing he wished. Accordingly he discovered ghosts, infernal spirits, mountains of gold and silver, and many other invaluable treasures deposited in the earth. He would often tell his neighbors of his wonderful discoveries, and urge them to embark in the **money digging business**. Luxury and wealth were to be given to all who would adhere to his counsel. . . . The sapient Joseph discovered, north west of my house, a chest of gold watches; but, as they were in the possession of the **evil spirit**, it required skill and stratagem to obtain them. Accordingly, orders were given to stick a parcel of large stakes in the ground, several rods around, in a circular form. This was to be done directly over the spot where the treasures were deposited. A messenger was then sent to Palmyra to procure a polished sword: after which, Samuel F. Lawrence, with a drawn sword in his hand, marched around to guard any assault which his Satanic majesty might be disposed to make. Meantime, the rest of the company were busily employed in digging for the watches. They worked as usual till quite exhausted. But, in spite of their brave defender, Lawrence, and their bulwark of stakes, the devil came off victorious, and **carried away** the watches. . . . At length, Joseph pretended to find the **Gold plates**. This scheme, he believed, would relieve the family from all pecuniary embarrassment. His father told me, that when the book was published, they would be enabled, from the profits of the work, to carry into successful operation the money digging business. (*Ibid.*, pp. 258-260)

We do not have room here to include all of the affidavits published in Howe's book, but they are found in their entirety in our book *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*, Part 3.

### The Treasure Hunt Revelation

Ebenezer Robinson, who was at one time the editor of the Mormon Church paper, *Times and Seasons*, gave the following information in *The Return*:

A brother in the church, by the name of Burgess, had come to Kirtland and stated that a large amount of **money** had been secreted in a cellar of a certain house in **Salem**, Massachusetts, which had belonged to a widow, and he thought he was the only person now living who had knowledge of it, or to the location of the house. We saw the brother Burgess, but Don Carlos Smith told us with regard to the **hidden treasure**. His statement was credited by the brethren, and steps were taken to try and secure the treasure, of which we will speak more fully in another place. (*The Return*, vol. 1, 1889, p. 105)

We soon learned that four of the leading men of the church had been to **Salem**, Massachusetts, in search of the **hidden treasure** spoken of by Brother Burgess, viz: Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery. They left home on the 25th of July, and returned in September. (*Ibid.*, p. 106)

Joseph Smith's *History* tells of this trip:

On Monday afternoon, July 25th, in company with Sidney Rigdon, Brother Hyrum Smith, and Oliver Cowdery, I left Kirtland, . . .

From New York we continued our journey to Providence, on board a steamer; from thence to Boston, by steam cars, and arrived in **Salem**, Massachusetts, early in August, where we hired a house, and occupied the same during the month. . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 464)

Joseph Smith received a revelation concerning the treasure hunt, which is still published in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In this revelation we read the following:

I, the Lord your God, am not displeased with your coming this journey, notwithstanding your follies.

I have **much treasure** in this city for you, . . . and its wealth pertaining to **gold and silver shall be yours**.

Concern not yourselves about your debts, for I will give **power to pay them**.

. . . And inquire diligently concerning the more ancient inhabitants and founders of this city;

For there are **more treasure than one** for you in this city. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 111, verses 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10)

Mr. Robinson informs us that the treasure was never found, and Joseph Smith was unable to pay his debts as the revelation had promised:

We were informed that Brother Burgess met them in Salem, evidently according to appointment, but time had wrought such a change that he could not, for a certainty point out the house, and soon left. They however, found a house which they felt was the right one, and hired it. It is needless to say they failed to find that treasure, or the other gold and silver spoken of in the revelation.

We speak of these things with regret, but inasmuch as they occurred we feel it our duty to relate them, as also some of those things which transpired under our personal observation, soon after. (*The Return*, vol. 1, p. 106)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

While the Prophet gives a somewhat circumstantial account of this journey to Salem and his return to Kirtland in September, he nowhere assigns an **adequate** cause for himself and company making it—the object of it is not stated. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 411)

B. H. Roberts admitted that the Mormon leaders went to Salem seeking “an earthly treasure,” but claims that the other treasures spoken of in the revelation were of a spiritual nature:

Here we have an opportunity of discerning the difference between the ways of God and the ways of men. Whereas these brethren had **come seeking an earthly treasure**, God directs their attention to spiritual things, telling them there are more treasures than one for them in that city; and instructs them to inquire diligently concerning the ancient inhabitants and founders of that city, doubtless having in view the securing of their genealogies and the redemption of the past generations of men who had lived there; so that if for a moment **the weakness of men was manifested in this journey**, we see that fault reproved and the strength and wisdom of God made manifest by directing the attention of his servants to the real and true treasures that he would have them seek, even the salvation of men, both the living and the dead. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 412)

While it is interesting to note that B. H. Roberts admitted that the Mormon leaders went to Salem seeking “an earthly treasure,” his explanation of the revelation seems to be an attempt to keep from facing reality.





## Mormon Scholars Concede Authenticity of 1826 Trial Documents

On page 36 of this book we quote an attack upon the authenticity of Joseph Smith's 1826 trial which appeared in Dr. Hugh Nibley's book, *The Myth Makers*—a book containing a fictitious account of “the case of the World versus Joseph Smith.” The Chairman, who defends the Mormon position, maintained that “if this court record is authentic it is the most damning evidence in existence against Joseph Smith.” He also states that it would be “the most devastating blow to Smith ever delivered, . . .” Since Wesley P. Walters discovered the original bills of Constable DeZeng and Justice Albert Neely, Dr. Nibley has kept silent about the matter. The first Mormon scholar to attempt to deal with this issue since Walters' discovery was Marvin S. Hill, who was serving as Assistant Professor of History at Brigham Young University. While Mormon writers like Nibley and Kirkham had claimed it would be all over for Joseph Smith if the court record was proven authentic, Dr. Hill maintained that even if Joseph Smith was guilty of “Glass Looking,” this does not prove that he was a religious fraud:

. . . Reverend Wesley P. Walters of the United Presbyterian church in Marissa, Illinois, discovered some records in the basement of the sheriff's office in Norwich, New York, which he maintains demonstrate the actuality of the 1826 trial and go far to substantiate that Joseph Smith spent part of his early career in southern New York as a money digger and seer of hidden treasures. A periodical in Salt Lake City [*The Salt Lake City Messenger*] which heralded Walters's findings said they “undermine Mormonism” and repeated a statement by Hugh Nibley in *The Myth Makers*, “if this court record is authentic it is the most damning evidence in existence against Joseph Smith.” . . .

A preliminary investigation by the writer at the sheriff's office in Norwich, New York, confirmed that Walters had searched thoroughly the bills of local officials dated in the 1820s, many of which were similar to the two bills in question. The originals, however, were not at the sheriff's office but in Walters's possession. Presumably they will be available for study at a later date. Until then, the final question of their authenticity must remain open. If a study of the handwriting and paper of the originals demonstrates their authenticity, it will confirm that there was a trial in 1826 and that glass looking was an issue at the trial. . . . if the bills should prove authentic and demonstrate that Joseph Smith was tried as a “Glass Looker,” what shall we make of him? Nearly everybody seems to have conceded that if Joseph Smith was indeed a gold digger that he was also a religious fraud. This is a view, however, of our own generation, not Joseph Smith's. Joseph himself never denied that he searched for buried treasure. . . .

If there was an element of mysticism in Joseph Smith and the other early Mormons which led them to search for treasures in the earth, it does not disprove the genuineness of their religious convictions. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1972, pp. 224, 225, 231, 232)

Writing in the Winter 1972 issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, pages 77-78, Dr. Hill conceded:

There may be little doubt now, as I have indicated elsewhere, that Joseph Smith was brought to trial in 1826 on a charge, not exactly clear, associated with money digging. . . . Brodie's . . . thesis that the prophet grew from necromancer to prophet assumes that the two were mutually exclusive, that if Smith were a money digger he could not have been religiously sincere. This does not necessarily follow. Many believers, active in their churches, were money diggers in New England and western New York in this period. Few contemporaries regard these money diggers as irreligious, only implying so if their religious views seemed too radical. . . . For the historian interested in

Joseph Smith the man, it does not seem incongruous for him to have hunted for treasure with a seer stone and then to use it with full faith to receive revelations from the Lord.

In a new book entitled, *The Mormon Experience*, pages 10-11, Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington and his assistant Davis Bitton have now admitted that Joseph Smith was tried as a “glass looker”:

Smith's self-admitted employment by Josiah Stool resulted in the youth's being brought to trial in 1826, charged with either vagrancy or disorderly conduct. Bills drawn up by the local judge and constable refer to Smith as a ‘glass looker’ (one who, by peering through a glass stone, could see things not discernible by the natural eye). The bills class the offense as a misdemeanor and indicate that at least twelve witnesses were served with subpoenas.

The anonymous Mormon historian, whom we refer to as “Dr. Clandestine,” accepts the reality of the recently discovered bills but refuses to face the serious implications of the discovery:

In drawing conclusions from the evidence they do present, the Tanners are often guilty of the non sequitur: in other words, the conclusions arrived at are not supported by the evidence. For example, they state (on page 33) that the recently discovered bill of charges from the 1826 trial of Joseph Smith “proves that the published court record is authentic.” The published “court record” appeared in contradictory versions in 1831, 1873, 1877, and 1883, several of which allegedly quote detailed testimony from this trial. The Tanners' statement would lead the reader to believe that the bill of charges substantiates the entire published versions of the trial (including all alleged testimony—p. 34), whereas these recent discoveries verify quite limited facts: there was a trial in 1826 in which Joseph Smith was described as “The Glass Looker” and charged with a misdemeanor, twelve witnesses were subpoenaed, a mittimus was issued, and the total court costs were \$2.68. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, p. 18)

Dr. Clandestine has certainly not done his homework regarding this matter, and therefore he has reached an erroneous conclusion. He states that “**The published ‘court record’ appeared in contradictory versions in 1831, 1873, 1877, and 1883, several of which allegedly quote detailed testimony from this trial.**” Dr. Clandestine could never have made this statement if he had even briefly examined the original publications to which he refers. To begin with, the 1831 account which he speaks of is not a printing of the “court record” at all; it is merely a statement about the trial by A. W. Benton of Bainbridge, N. Y. Dr. Clandestine is also in error when he refers to the publication of the “court record” in 1877. This is a newspaper account of the trial which appeared in the *Chenango Union* under the date of May 3, 1877. It is not a printing of the “court record” as Dr. Clandestine would have the reader believe, but only the reminiscences of Dr. W. P. Purple who was present at the trial. It is a valuable piece of historical writing, but it does not purport to be a reproduction of any part of the written “court record.”

While Dr. Clandestine has struck out twice with regard to the documents, he is right in referring to the 1873 version as a printing of the “court record.” It appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, February 1873. The 1883 printing is also a copy of the “court record” and is found in *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 1883, vol. 2. Now, while Dr. Clandestine mistakenly claims that the accounts of the trial printed in 1831 and 1877 are reproductions of the “court record,” he overlooks the fact that the “court record” was also printed in the *Utah Christian Advocate* in January 1886.

When we compare the three printings of the “court record”

we find that they **are essentially the same**. One short paragraph (40 words) appears to have been accidentally omitted in *Fraser's Magazine*, but it certainly does not make any substantial difference in the trial and is found in both of the other printings. All three of the printings were copied from the original pages of the document. We feel that the Mormon Church would give almost anything to have the three accounts of the First Vision by Joseph Smith in such harmony.

In the book, *Answering Dr. Clandestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*, page 13, we demonstrate that the printed versions read the same by comparing a portion of the 1873 printing with that which appeared in 1886. We then ask Dr. Clandestine where he finds any important difference between these two printings of the “court record”? We feel that it is a misrepresentation to say that they are contradictory. A number of Mormon writers have made this claim, and Dr. Clandestine, who has apparently never taken the time to examine the documents, has followed them into a serious error.

Dr. Clandestine accuses us of using too much repetition, but when we see how he skips over things, we are even more convinced that some repetition is necessary. If Dr. Clandestine will re-examine *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* he will see his idea that he can accept the authenticity of Justice Albert Neely's bill and yet reject the printed “court record” is untenable.

### Another Discovery Concerning 1826 Trial

In 1977 Wesley P. Walters reported another discovery which throws even more light on the 1826 trial:

Joseph Smith, Jr., before he became the founder and prophet of Mormonism, had made part of his living as a “glass looker.” . . . This money digging activity and the court trials that grew out of that illegal practice have received new clarification through a recently discovered letter from a judge who, in 1830, tried Joseph Smith in Colesville, south central New York. The letter was written in 1842 by Joel King Noble, a justice of the peace in Colesville, Broome County . . .

Our knowledge of Joseph Smith's activities in the Bainbridge area had previously, to a large extent, depended on the printed record of a trial at South Bainbridge in 1826, in which Joseph had admitted to his “glass looking” practices and was accordingly found guilty of breaking the law, though no sentence is recorded. . . . the discovery in 1971 of the bills of cost handed in to the county by Constable Philip DeZeng and Justice Neely for their services during the arrest and trial of Joseph Smith in 1826 have now established beyond doubt that the young “Glass looker” (as Mr. Neely's bill calls him) was indeed involved in glass looking for hidden treasure and lost objects, and that he was brought to trial for that crime. . . . Mormons have recently been inclined to grant that Joseph Smith, Jr., was tried in 1826, but they do not believe he was found guilty, and they therefore tend to regard the printed record as a falsification. Mr. Noble's letter, however, now fills in the missing details and confirms the entire incident, so that there is no longer any reason to doubt the authenticity of the printed docket.

Judge Noble says quite unequivocally that “Jo. was condemned” in what he calls Joseph's “first trial.” Then he adds a detail that provides the clue to why no sentencing appears in the docket record even though Joseph was found guilty. Mr. Noble succinctly states that the “whisper came to Jo., ‘Off, Off!’ ” and so Joseph “took Leg Bail,” an early slang expression meaning “to escape from custody.” What is obviously happening is that the justices are privately suggesting to this first offender to “get out of town and don't come back,” and in exchange they will not impose sentence. This is why no sentence was recorded in the docket record of Mr. Neeley.

In reporting the court's method of clemency, Judge Noble's statement agrees precisely with an early account of this 1826 trial

published just five years after the trial had taken place. It was written by . . . Dr. Abram Willard Benton, who like Mr. Noble mentions that Joseph had been involved in glass looking, and that he had been “tried and condemned.” Dr. Benton adds that because Joseph was a minor at the time, being 20 years old, “and thinking he might reform his conduct, he was designedly allowed to escape.” Therefore, the court, though it found him guilty of being in violation of the law, had intentionally not imposed sentence as a way of showing mercy on this youthful offender. . . . Thus it is quite clear from all sides that Joseph wove occult religious material into his money digging practices, and this led the communities where he dug for treasure to associate him with divination, necromancy, and wizardry. . . . once he had determined to give up money digging after his close brush with the law in 1826, this occult religious interest made it easy for him to think in terms of producing a religious book from the gold plates he claimed to have discovered through the same stone he had used for his treasure hunting. (*The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, Summer 1977, pp. 121-123, 127-128)

Wesley P. Walters has photographically reproduced Justice Noble's letter, and we have now included it in the pamphlet *Joseph Smith's Bainbridge, N.Y., Court Trials*. According to Justice Noble, when Joseph Smith was tried in his court in 1830 there was a discussion of his money-digging and use of magical practices. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, pages 91-93, Joseph Smith himself admitted that money digging was discussed during the trial:

Next day I was brought before the magistrate's court at Colesville, Broome county, and put upon trial. . . .

Mr. Seymour . . . brought up the story of my having been a money-digger; and in this manner proceeded, hoping evidently to influence the court and the people against me.

### Reprinted from the Orleans Advocate

On page 39 of this book we quoted from an article published in the *Wayne Sentinel* on December 27, 1825. We should have indicated that this article was reprinted from the *Orleans Advocate*.

### More on Rod of Nature

On pages 46-47 we deal with the changes in Joseph Smith's revelation dealing with the practice of “working with the rod.” Marvin S. Hill, of the Church's Brigham Young University, has admitted that “when Oliver Cowdery took up his duties as a scribe for Joseph Smith in 1829 he had a rod in his possession which Joseph Smith sanctioned . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1972, p. 78). Marvin Hill goes on to state: “Some of the rodsmen or money diggers who moved into Mormonism were Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, Orrin P. Rockwell, Joseph and Newel Knight, and Josiah Stowell.” It is interesting to note that Marvin Hill includes two of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon in his list of “rodsmen or money diggers.”

Recently the Mormon writer D. Michael Quinn has admitted that “Oliver Cowdery was by revelation given the gift of working with a ‘rod of nature . . .’” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Fall 1978, p. 82). Dr. Quinn further informs that “during the Nauvoo period Apostle Heber C. Kimball ‘inquired by the rod’ in prayer.” In a footnote in the same article the following is cited from the *Anthony H. Lund Journal* for July 5, 1901:

In the revelation to Oliver Cowdery in May 1829, Bro [B. H.] Roberts said that the gift which the Lord says he has in his hand meant a stick which was like Aaron's Rod. It is said Bro. Phineas Young [brother-in-law of Oliver Cowdery and brother of Brigham Young] got it from him [Cowdery] and gave it to President Young who had it with him when he arrived in this [Salt Lake] valley and that it was with



that stick that he pointed out where the Temple should be built.

In his book on Heber C. Kimball, the Mormon scholar Stanley B. Kimball provides this information:

Heber also told of an unusual rod he had received from Joseph Smith. En route to his first mission to England in 1837, he had dreamed “that the Prophet Joseph came to me while I was standing upon the forecastle of the ship, and said, ‘Brother Heber, here is a rod (putting it into my hands), with which you are to guide the ship. While you hold this rod you shall prosper, and there shall be no obstacles thrown before you but what you shall have power to overcome, and the hand of God shall be with you. . . .’ This rod which Joseph gave me was about three and a half feet in length.”

Later Joseph did give him and Brigham Young real rods, because “they were the only ones of the original twelve who had not lifted up their hearts against the Prophet.” When Heber wanted to find out anything that was his right to know, “all he had to do was to kneel down with the rod in his hand, and . . . sometimes the Lord would answer his questions before he had time to ask them.” At least twice in Nauvoo, for example, he had used this special rod. In September, 1844, he “went home and used the rod” to find out if Willard Richards would recover from an illness and if the church would overcome its enemies. In January, 1845, he inquired of the Lord “by the rod” whether the Nauvoo temple would be finished and if his sins were forgiven. All the answers were affirmative. (*Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer*, University of Illinois Press, 1981, p. 248)

### Joseph Smith’s Magic Talisman

In 1974 Dr. Reed Durham, who was director of the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah and president of the Mormon History Association, made a discovery that was so startling that it caused great consternation among Mormon scholars and officials. Dr. Durham found that what had previously been identified as the “Masonic jewel of the Prophet Joseph Smith” was in reality a “Jupiter talisman.” This is a medallion which contains material relating to astrology and magic. Dr. Durham, apparently not realizing the devastating implications of his discovery, announced this important find in his presidential address before the Mormon History Association on April 20, 1974:

. . . I should like to initiate all of you into what is perhaps the strangest, the most mysterious, occult-like esoteric, and yet Masonically oriented practice ever adopted by Joseph Smith. . . . All available evidence suggests that Joseph Smith the Prophet possessed a magical Masonic medallion, or talisman, which he worked during his lifetime and which was evidently on his person when he was martyred. His talisman is in the shape of a silver dollar and is probably made of silver or tin. It is exactly one and nine-sixteenths in diameter, . . . the talisman, . . . originally purchased from the Emma Smith Bidamon family, fully notarized by that family to be authentic and to have belonged to Joseph Smith, can now be identified as a Jupiter talisman. It carries the sign and image of Jupiter and should more appropriately be referred to as the Table of Jupiter. And in some very real and quite mysterious sense, this particular Table of Jupiter was the most appropriate talisman for Joseph Smith to possess. Indeed, it seemed meant for him, because on all levels of interpretation: planetary, mythological, numerological, astrological, mystical cabalism, and talismatic magic, the Prophet was, in every case, appropriately described.

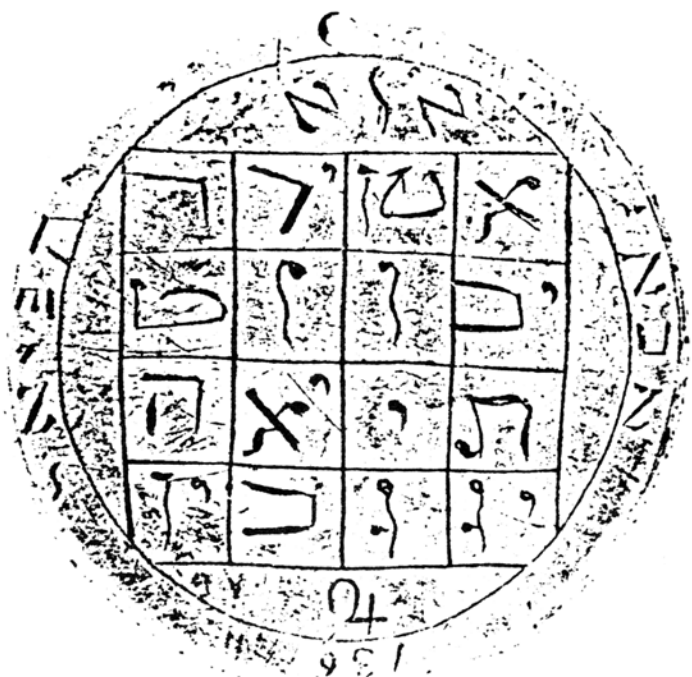
The characters on the talisman are primarily in Hebrew, but there is one inscription in Latin. Every letter in the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical equivalent and those numerical equivalent make up a magic square. By adding the numbers in this Jupiter Table in any direction . . . the total will be the same. In this case, on the Jupiter Table, 34. . .

There is the one side of the talisman belonging to the Prophet Joseph Smith. You can see the Hebrew characters . . . you see on the

margins, at the bottom is the Jupiter sign. . . . The cross at the top represents the spirit of Jupiter, and you will see the path of Jupiter in the orbit of the heavens, and then again the Jupiter sign.

I wasn’t able to find what this was, for—as I said—two months; and finally, in a magic book printed in England in 1801, published in America in 1804, and I traced it to Manchester, and to New York. It was a magic book by Francis Barrett and, lo and behold, how thrilled I was when I saw in his list of magic seals the very talisman which Joseph Smith had in his possession at the time of his martyrdom. . . . To the

### BOTH SIDES OF JOSEPH SMITH’S TALISMAN





Egyptians, Jupiter was known as Ammon, but to the Greeks he was Zeus: the ancient sky Father, or Father of the Gods. . . .

In astrology, Jupiter is always associated with high positions, getting one's own way, and all forms of status. And I quote:

Typically a person born under Jupiter will have the dignity of a natural ruler. . . . He will probably have an impressive manner. . . . In physical appearance, the highly developed Jupiterian is strong, personable, and often handsome. . . . the Jupiterian influence produces a cheerful winning personality, capable of great development. . . .

So closely is magic bound up with the stars and astrology that the term astrologer and magician were in ancient times almost synonymous. The purpose of the Table of Jupiter in talismanic magis [magic?] was to be able to call upon the celestial intelligences, assigned to the particular talisman, to assist one in all endeavors. The names of the deities which we gave to you, who could be invoked by the Table were always written on the talisman or represented by various numbers. Three such names were written on Joseph Smith's talisman: Abbah, Father; El Ob, Father is God or God the Father; and Josiphiel, Jehovah speaks for God, the Intelligence of Jupiter.

When properly invoked with Jupiter being very powerful and ruling in the heavens, these intelligences—by the power of ancient magic—guaranteed to the possessor of this talisman the gain of riches, and favor, and power, and love and peace; and to confirm honors, and dignities, and councils. Talismatic magic further declared that any one who worked skillfully with this Jupiter Table would obtain the power of stimulating anyone to offer his love to the possessor of the talisman, whether from a friend, brother, relative, or even any female. (*Mormon Miscellaneous*, published by David C. Martin, vol. 1, no. 1, October 1975, pp. 14-15)

In this same speech Reed Durham told of the close relationship of Mormonism to Masonry. Because of his frank method of dealing with these matters he was severely criticized by Mormon scholars and officials. He was even called in by Mormon President Spencer W. Kimball, and finally found it necessary to issue a letter in which he reaffirmed his faith in Joseph Smith and said that he was sorry for the “concerns, and misunderstandings” that the speech had caused. We feel that Dr. Durham's identification of Joseph Smith's talisman is one of the most significant discoveries in Mormon history and that he should be commended for his research.

That Joseph Smith would own such a magic talisman fits very well with the evidence from his 1826 trial. W. D. Purple, who

was an eyewitness to the trial, claimed it was reported that Smith said certain talismanic influences were needed to recover a box of treasure:

Mr. Thompson, an employee of Mr. Stowel, was the next witness. . . . Smith had told the Deacon that very many years before a band of robbers had buried on his flat a box of treasure, and as it was very valuable they had by a sacrifice placed a charm over it to protect it, so that it could not be obtained except by faith, accompanied by certain talismanic influences. . . . the box of treasure was struck by the shovel, on which they redoubled their energies, but it gradually receded from their grasp. One of the men placed his hand upon the box, but it gradually sunk from his reach. . . . Mr. Stowell went to his flock and selected a fine vigorous lamb, and resolved to sacrifice it to the demon spirit who guarded the coveted treasure . . . but the treasure still receded from their grasp, and it was never obtained. (*The Chenango Union*, Norwich, N.Y., May 3, 1877, as cited in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, pp. 366-67)

Dr. Durham was unable to determine just when Joseph Smith obtained his talisman, but the fact that he was recommending “certain talismanic influences” around the time of the 1826 trial is certainly interesting. The Jupiter talisman is probably the type of talisman a money digger would be interested in because it was supposed to bring its possessor “the gain of riches, and favor, and power.” Regardless of when Joseph Smith obtained his talisman, we do know that he possessed it up to the time of his death. He must have felt that it was very important because the Mormon scholar LaMar C. Berrett reveals that “This piece was in Joseph Smith's pocket when he was martyred at Carthage Jail” (*The Wilford C. Wood Collection*, 1972, vol. 1, p. 173). Wesley P. Walters says that

Charles E. Bidamon, who sold the talisman to the Wood collection, stated in his accompanying affidavit: “Emma Smith Bidamon the prophet's widow was my foster mother. She prized this piece very highly on account of its being one of the prophet's intimate possessions.” (Charles E. Bidamon Affidavit. Wood Coll. #7-J-b-21)

The discovery of evidence to prove Joseph Smith's 1826 trial was certainly a devastating blow to Mormonism, for it proved that Joseph Smith was a believer in magical practices. Reed Durham's new find that Joseph Smith possessed a magic talisman is also very significant because it shows that Smith continued to hold these ideas until the time of his death.



## 5. The Book of Mormon

As we have already shown, Joseph Smith claimed that on the night of September 21, 1823, when he was seventeen years old, an angel appeared to him and stated that gold plates were buried in the Hill Cumorah. The angel stated that the plates contained “an account of the former inhabitants of this continent,” and that they also contained “the fullness of the everlasting Gospel.” Four years later, on September 22, 1827, he received the plates, and sometime later he began to translate them. The translation was published in 1830 under the title of *The Book of Mormon*.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

The Book of Mormon claims to be a divinely inspired record, . . . It professes to be revealed to the present generation for the salvation of all who will receive it, and for the overthrow and damnation of all nations who reject it.

This book must be either **true or false**. If true, it is one of the most important messages ever sent from God . . . If false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions . . .

The nature of the message in the Book of Mormon is such, that **if true, no one can possibly be saved and reject it; if false, no one can possibly be saved and receive it** . . .

If, after a rigid examination, it be found an **imposition**, it should be **extensively published** to the world as such; **the evidences and arguments on which the imposture was detected, should be clearly and logically stated**, that those who have been sincerely yet unfortunately deceived, may perceive the nature of the deception, and be reclaimed, and that those who continue to publish the delusion, may be exposed and silenced, not by physical force, neither by persecutions, bare assertions, nor ridicule, but by strong and powerful arguments—by **evidences** adduced from scripture and reason. . . .

But on the other hand, if investigation should prove the Book of Mormon true . . . the American and English nations . . . should utterly reject both the Popish and Protestant ministry, together with all the churches which have been built up by them or that have sprung from them, as being entirely destitute of authority: . . . (*Orson Pratt's Works*, “Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon,” Liverpool, 1851, pp. 1-2)

Our study has led us to the conclusion that the Book of Mormon is not an ancient or divinely inspired record, but rather a product of the 19th century. In this chapter we hope to state “clearly and logically” the “evidences and arguments on which the imposture was detected.”

### The Witnesses

Joseph Smith claimed that after the Book of Mormon was translated he returned the gold plates to the angel. Therefore, there is no way for us to know if there really were any gold plates or whether the translation was correct.

Joseph Smith did, however, have eleven men sign statements in which they claimed that they had seen the plates. The testimonies of these eleven men are recorded in the forepart of the Book of

Mormon in two separate statements. In the first statement Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris claimed that an angel of God showed the plates to them.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY  
DAVID WHITMER  
MARTIN HARRIS

The second statement is signed by eight men who claimed to see the plates, although they did not claim that an angel showed the plates to them.

#### AND ALSO

#### THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER	HIRAM PAGE
JACOB WHITMER	JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.
PETER WHITMER, JUN.	HYRUM SMITH
JOHN WHITMER	SAMUEL H. SMITH

The Mormon Church claims that the witnesses to the Book of Mormon never denied their testimony. There are, however, at least two statements in Mormon publications which would seem to indicate that the witnesses had some doubts. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, stated:

Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who **handled the plates** and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards **left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 164)

There is some evidence to indicate that Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses, may have had doubts about his

## POETRY.

For the Times and Seasons.

BY J. H. JOHNSONS.

"The wise shall understand."—Daniel.

Amazed with wonder! I look round  
 To see most people of our day,  
 Reject the glorious gospel sound,  
 Because the simple turn away.  
 Or does it prove there is no time,  
 Because some watches will not go?  
 But does it prove there is no crime  
 Because not punished here below?  
 Or can it prove no gems remain,  
 Because some fools, throw their's away?  
 Or can it prove no king can reign  
 Because some subjects wont obey?  
 Or prove the gospel was not true  
 Because old Paul the Saints could kill?  
 Because the Jews its author slew,  
 And now reject their Saviour still?  
 Or prove that Christ was not the Lord  
 Because that Peter cursed and swore?  
 Or Book of Mormon not his word  
 Because denied, by Oliver?  
 Or prove, that Joseph Smith is false  
 Because apostates say tis so?  
 Or prove that God, no man exalts  
 Because from priests such doctrines flow?  
 O, no! the wise will surely say;  
 No proof unto the man that's wise,  
 Then O! dig deep ye wise to-day;  
 And soon the truth will be your prize.  
 Not like the fool who chane'd to see,  
 The Saint forsake his heavenly course,  
 And turn to sin and vanity—  
 Then cries your "scheme is all a farce."

For the Times and Seasons.

P S A L M.

BY

MISS E. R. SNOW.

Praise the Lord O my soul: Praise him all  
 ye sons and daughters of Zion.

Let us sing unto him a new song: let us  
 sing of his marvellous doings in the last days.

He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever;  
 therefore I will praise him for what my eyes  
 have seen, and my ears have heard.

He hath opened the fountain of knowledge:  
 he hath unlock'd the treasures of wisdom and  
 understanding.

He hath brought to pass that which he spake  
 by the mouth of his ancient prophets: yea, he  
 hath caused truth to "spring up out of the  
 earth, and righteousness to look down from  
 heaven."

In ancient time he call'd his servant David  
 from the sheep-fold to preside over the nation of

Israel; yea, from a tender of flocks did he raise  
 him to the sovereignty of his covenant people.

He call'd Elijah from the occupation of hus-  
 bandry, even when "ploughing in the field with  
 twelve yoke of oxen;" to be a prophet in Israel:

Yea by the hand of Elijah, was he anointed  
 to the office of his calling, even to proclaim the  
 word of the Lord—to declare the counsels of the  
 Most High to the people.

In these last days the Lord hath call'd his  
 servant Joseph—the son of an husbandman; to  
 be a prophet and a teacher: yea, to be a mighty  
 instrument in rolling forward and establishing  
 that kingdom which "shall fill the whole earth."

The Lord hath spoken to him from the heav-  
 ens—he hath instructed him thro' the ministra-  
 tion of angels—he hath taught him by the pow-  
 er of the holy spirit.

He hath opened the heavens, he hath rent  
 the veil thereof, before his face—he hath spread  
 the visions of eternity in his presence—he hath  
 drawn aside the curtain of futurity and showed  
 unto his servant things to come.

He hath anointed him with the oil of under-  
 standing, and instructed him in the great mys-  
 teries of the kingdom of heaven; even those  
 "mysteries which have been hid from ages and  
 from generations."

Rejoice all ye Saints of the Lord and listen  
 to the instructions of his prophet—be careful to  
 depart from evil—let your hearts be pure for  
 the great day of the Lord approaches.

He will perform a speedy work upon the  
 earth—he will cut it short in righteousness—he  
 will not suffer his word to perish.

Therefore, let the nations be wise—let the  
 great ones of the earth receive counsel; let the  
 honest in heart prepare and gather even unto  
 Zion:

For "the earth shall reel to and fro like a  
 drunken man," yea, she shall groan because of  
 iniquity which is already increasing heavily  
 upon her.

But "Zion shall be redeem'd with judgment,  
 and her converts with righteousness"—the na-  
 tions of the earth will honor her—the glory of  
 the Lord will encompass her round about; and  
 his praises will be heard in her midst.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

Manchester, April 17th 1841.

DEAR BRO. JOSEPH:—

Once more I take my pen  
 to write a few lines to you; most gladly  
 would I embrace the opportunity of a per-  
 sonal interview with you, did it offer; but  
 vain is the indulgence of such thoughts  
 at present.

A photograph of the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, page 482. The *Times and Seasons* was a Mormon publication. In the poem that appears on this page it is stated that Oliver denied the Book of Mormon.



between the two, liable continually to be operated upon by the power of the enemy; and it is through that power that the children of men are made to doubt the evidences of their own senses, when, at the same time, if they would reflect for a moment and listen to the intelligence which God has placed within them, they would know, when they saw what is termed a miracle, the power by which it is wrought: they would know when they have seen with their eyes and felt with their hands, or when they have had a heavenly vision.

Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who handled the plates and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel. One of the Quorum of the Twelve—a young man full of faith and good works, prayed, and the vision of his mind was opened, and the angel of God came and laid the plates before him, and he saw and handled them, and saw the angel, and conversed with him as he would with one of his friends; but after all this, he was left to doubt, and plunged into apostacy, and has continued to contend against this work. There are hundreds in a similar condition.

In comparison, there is but a hair's breadth between the depths of infidelity and the heights of the faith of the Saints; and the organization of man is perfectly independent in its sphere. Life and death, truth and falsehood, light and darkness, good and evil, the power of the Devil and the influence of God, the things of God and the things of the Devil, all these inducements and powers are interspersed among the children of men; and they of necessity must undergo this ordeal to prove themselves; and in the absence of the Spirit of revelation, let their sound judgments arise and declare, "Though he slay me, I will not forsake him."

Some of the brethren come to me and say, "Brother Brigham, is it my duty to pray when I have not one particle of the spirit of prayer in me?" True, at times men are perplexed and full of care and trouble, their ploughs and other implements are out of order, their animals have strayed, and a thousand things perplex them; yet our judgment teaches us that it is our duty to pray, whether we are particularly in the spirit of praying or not. My doctrine is, it is duty to pray; and when the time for prayer comes, John should say, "This is the place and this is the time to pray: knees bend down upon that floor, and do so at once." But John says, "I do not want to pray; I do not feel like it." Knees, get down, I say; and down bend the knees, and he begins to think and reflect. Can you say anything? Can you not say, God have mercy on me a sinner? Yes, he can do this, if he can rise up and curse his neighbour for some ill deeds. Now, John, open your mouth and say, Lord, have mercy upon me. "But I do not feel the spirit of prayer." That does not excuse you, for you know what your duty is. You have a passion, a will, a temper to overcome. You are subject to temptation as other men; and when you are tempted, let the judgment which God has placed within you and the intelligence he has given you by the light of the Spirit be the master in this case.

If I could not master my mouth; I would my knees, and make them bend until my mouth would speak. "But the cattle are in the corn." Let them eat; you can attend to them when you have finished praying. Let the will of the man be brought into subjection to the law of Christ—to all the ordinances of the house of God. What, in his darkness and depression? Yes; for that is the time to prove whether one is a

A photograph of the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, page 164. In this sermon Brigham Young claims that some of the witnesses were left to disbelieve that they had seen an angel.

testimony. The following appeared in a poem which was published in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* in 1841:

Amazed with wonder! I look around  
To see most people of our day,  
Reject the glorious gospel sound,  
Because the simple turn away,  
Or does it prove there is no time,  
Because some watches will not go?

...  
Or prove that Christ was not the Lord  
Because that Peter cursed and swore?

**Or Book of Mormon not his word  
Because denied, by Oliver?**

(*Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, p. 482)

This poem is speaking of Oliver Cowdery who had apostatized from the Mormon Church.

## Character of Witnesses

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon witnesses:

The Book of Mormon plates were seen and handled, at different times, by eleven competent men, of independent minds and **spotless reputations**, who published a formal statement of their experience.

Oliver Cowdery, **whose reputation for honesty has never been questioned**, was with Joseph Smith when John the Baptist came to restore the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. . . .

All these witnesses, **of unchallenged honesty** in the affairs of life, remained true to their testimonies throughout their lives without deviation or variation. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, by John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake City, 1951, pp. 338-339)

Non-Mormons, on the other hand, have made many charges against the witnesses (see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 2-4). Some of the most damaging statements against the Book of Mormon witnesses, however, came from the pen of Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders. In fact, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in July of 1828 in which Martin Harris (one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon) was called a wicked man:

And when thou deliveredst up that which God had given thee sight and power to translate, thou deliveredst up that which was sacred into the hands of a **wicked man**.

Who has set at naught the counsels of God, and has broken the most sacred promises which were made before God, and has depended upon his own judgment and boasted in his own wisdom. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 3:12-13)

In another revelation given sometime later, Harris is again called a “wicked man”:

Behold, they have sought to destroy you; yea, even the man in whom you have trusted has sought to destroy you.

And for this cause I said that he is a **wicked man**, for he has sought to take away the things wherewith you have been entrusted; and he has also sought to destroy your gift. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 10:6-7)

There is little doubt that the Book of Mormon witnesses were very credulous. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning Hiram Page, one of the eight witnesses:

Hiram Page (1800-1852), appears to have been somewhat fanatical. He found a **stone** through which he claimed to receive revelations, often contrary to those received by Joseph Smith. For this he was reprimanded. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 58)

George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement:

In the early days there was a man that was a witness to the Book of Mormon, who had been selected by the Lord to handle the plates, to heft them, and then to write his testimony concerning that which he had seen and felt. He obtained possession of a **seer stone**—or as it is called sometimes, a peep-stone. Through this peep-stone he professed to obtain revelations, which he wrote. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 24, p. 364)

Joseph Smith himself admitted that Hiram Page gave false revelations through his stone and that the other witnesses were influenced by his revelations:

To our great grief, however, we soon found that Satan had been lying in wait to deceive, and seeking whom he might devour. Brother Hiram Page had in his possession a certain **stone**, by which he had obtained certain “revelations” concerning the upbuilding of Zion, the order of the Church, etc., all of which were entirely at variance with the order of God’s house, . . . the **Whitmer** family and **Oliver Cowdery**, were **believing** much in the things set forth by this **stone**, we thought best to inquire of the Lord concerning so important a matter; . . . (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 1, pp. 109-110)

The revelation that Joseph Smith received concerning this matter is found in Section 28 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In verse 11 we read:

And again, thou shalt take thy brother, Hiram Page, between him and thee alone, and tell him that those things which he hath written from that stone are not of me, and that Satan deceiveth him;

For additional information concerning Hiram Page’s stone see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 2, pages 5-6.

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, constantly found himself in trouble with the church. On one occasion Joseph Smith wrote:

The council proceeded to investigate certain charges presented by Elder Rigdon against Martin Harris; one was, that he told A. C. Russell, Esq., that Joseph drank too much liquor when he was translating the Book of Mormon; and that he wrestled with many men and threw them; and that he (Harris) exalted himself above Joseph, in that he said, “Brother Joseph knew not the contents of the Book of Mormon, until it was translated, but that he himself knew all about it before it was translated.”

Brother Harris did not tell Esq. Russell that Brother Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the Book of Mormon, but this thing occurred previous to the translating of the Book; he confessed that his mind was darkened, and that he had said many things inadvertently, calculated to wound the feelings of his brethren, and promised to do better. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 26)

Under the date of June 16, 1834, this statement is recorded in the *History of the Church*:

Martin Harris having boasted to the brethren that he could handle snakes with perfect safety, while fooling with a black snake with his bare feet, he received a bite on his left foot. The fact was communicated to me, and I took occasion to reprove him, and exhort the brethren never to trifle with the promises of God. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 95)

Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses, also found himself in trouble with the church on many occasions. Joseph Smith made this statement concerning an incident which occurred in 1830:

. . . I received a letter from Oliver Cowdery, . . . He wrote to inform me that he had discovered an error in one of the commandments . . .

The above quotation, he said, was erroneous, and added: “I command you in the name of God to erase those words, that no priestcraft be amongst us!”

I immediately wrote to him in reply, in which I asked him by what authority he took upon him to command me to alter or erase, to add to or diminish from, a revelation or commandment from Almighty God.

A few days afterwards I visited him and Mr. Whitmer’s family, when I found the family in general of his opinion concerning the words above quoted, and it was not without both labor and perseverance that I could prevail with any of them to reason calmly on the subject. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 104- 105)

## Apostasy

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith related the following:

After the organization of the Twelve Apostles, and the so far finishing of the Kirtland Temple as to hold a



solemn assembly and confer the Kirtland endowment therein, the spirit of apostacy became more general, and the shock that was given to the Church became more severe than on any previous occasion. . . . One of the First Presidency, several of the Twelve Apostles, High Council, Presidents of Seventies, the **witnesses of the Book of Mormon**, Presidents of Far West, and a number of others standing high in the Church were all carried away in this apostacy; and they thought there was enough of them to establish a pure religion that would become universal.

This attempted organization was under the direction of Warren Parrish, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 114-115)

The three witnesses were finally excommunicated from the Church. Martin Harris accused Joseph Smith of “lying and licentiousness.” The Mormon leaders in turn published an attack on the character of Martin Harris. The following appeared in the *Elders’ Journal*—a Mormon publication which was edited by Joseph Smith:

One thing we have learned, that there are negroes who were [sic] white skins, as well as those who wear black ones.

Granny [Warren] Parrish had a few others who acted as lackies, such as **Martin Harris**, Joseph Coe, Cyrus P Smalling, etc. but they are so far beneath contempt that a notice of them would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make.

Having said so much, we leave this hopefull company, in the new bond of union which they have formed with the priests. While they were held under restraints by the church, and had to behave with a degree of propriety, at least, the priests manifested the greatest opposition to them. But no sooner were they excluded from the fellowship of the church and gave loose, to all kinds of abominations, swearing, lying, cheating, swindling, drinking, with every species of debauchery, . . . (*Elders’ Journal*, August, 1838, p. 59)

In 1838 Oliver Cowdery had serious trouble with Joseph Smith. Cowdery accused Smith of adultery, lying and teaching false doctrines.

Finally, in Far West the division became so great that the Mormons drove out the dissenters. John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses, related the following:

Joseph Smith, Jr., S. Rigdon, and Hyrum Smith moved their families to this place, Far West in the spring of 1838. As soon as they came here, they began to enforce their new organized plan, which caused dissensions and difficulties, threatenings and even murders. Smith called a council of the leaders together, in which council he stated that any person who said a word against the heads of the Church, should be driven over these prairies as a chased deer by a pack of hounds, having illusion to the Gideonites, as they were termed, to justify themselves in their wicked designs. Thus on the 19th of June, 1838, they preached a sermon called the **Salt Sermon**, in which these Gideonites understood that they should **drive the dissenters**, as they termed those who believed not in their secret bands, in fornication, adultery or midnight machinations. . . . They had threatened us, **to kill us**, if we did not make restitution to them, by upholding them in their wicked purposes and designs. . . .

But to our great astonishment, when we were on our way home from Liberty, Clay County, we met the families of **Oliver Cowdery** and L. E. Johnson, whom **they had driven from their homes**, and **robbed** them of all their goods, save clothing, bedding, etc.

While we were gone Jo. and Rigdon and their band of Gadiatons kept up a guard, and watched our houses, and abused our families, and threatened them, if they were not gone by morning, they would be **drove out**, and threatened our lives, if they ever saw us in Far West. (*John Whitmer’s History*, p. 22)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you

that in June, 1838, **God spake to me** again by his **own voice** from the heavens, and **told me to “separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints**, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them.” In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into **error and blindness**. . . . About the same time that I came out, the Spirit of God moved upon quite a number of the brethren who came out, with their families, **all of the eight witnesses who were then living** (except the three Smiths) **came out**; Peter and Christian Whitmer were dead. **Oliver Cowdery came out also**. Martin Harris was then in Ohio. The church went deeper and deeper into **wickedness**. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, 1887, pp. 27-28)

In a letter dated December 16, 1838, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning some of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon:

Such characters as McLellin, **John Whitmer, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris are too mean to mention**; and we had liked to have forgotten them. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 232)

Joseph Smith became very upset with David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses:

God suffered such kind of beings to afflict Job—but it never entered into their hearts that Job would get out of it all. This poor man who professes to be much of a prophet, has no other **dumb ass** to ride but **David Whitmer**, to forbid his madness when he goes up to curse Israel; and this ass not being of the same kind as Balaam’s, therefore, the angel notwithstanding appeared unto him, yet he could not penetrate his understanding sufficiently, but that he brays out cursings instead of blessings. Poor ass! Whoever lives to see it, will see him and his rider perish like those who perished in the gainsaying of Korah, or after the same condemnation. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 228)

Before driving the dissenters from Far West, the Mormons wrote them a very threatening letter in which they accused them of stealing, lying and counterfeiting:

“Far West, June, 1838.

“To Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, William W. Phelps, and Lyman E. Johnson, greeting:

“Whereas the citizens of Caldwell county have borne with the abuse received from you at different times, and on different occasions, until it is no longer to be endured; . . . out of the county you shall go, and no power shall save you. . . . there is but one decree for you, which is depart, depart, or a more fatal calamity shall befall you.

“After **Oliver Cowdery** had been taken by a State warrant for **stealing**, and the stolen property found in the house of William W. Phelps; in which nefarious transaction **John Whitmer** had also participated. Oliver Cowdery stole the property, conveyed it to John Whitmer, . . . As we design this paper to be published to the world, we will give an epitome of your scandalous conduct and treachery for the last two years. We wish to remind you that Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer were among the principal of those who were the means of gathering us to this place by their testimony which they gave concerning the plates of the Book of Mormon; that they were shown to them by an angel; which testimony we believe now, as much as before you had so **scandalously disgraced it**. . . . **Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer**, and Lyman E. Johnson, united with a gang of **counterfeiters**, thieves, liars, and blacklegs of the deepest dye, to deceive, cheat, and defraud the saints out of their property, . . . During the full career of Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer’s **bogus money business**, it got abroad into the world that they were engaged in it, and several gentlemen were preparing to commence a prosecution against Cowdery; he finding it out, took with him Lyman E. Johnson, and fled to Far West with their families; Cowdery **stealing property**, . . . he was saved from the penitentiary



by the influence of two influential men of the place. . . . you kept up continual correspondence with your gang of marauders in Kirtland, encouraging them to go on with their iniquity; which they did to perfection, by swearing falsely to injure the characters and property of innocent men, stealing, cheating, lying, instituting vexatious lawsuits, selling bogus money, and also stones and sand for bogus; in which nefarious business Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson were engaged. . . . We have evidence of a very strong character that you are at this very time engaged with a gang of counterfeiters, coiners, and blacklegs, . . . we will put you from the county of Caldwell: so help us God.” (Letter quoted in *Senate Document 189*, February 15, 1841, pp. 6-9)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning this letter:

This unfortunately, was followed shortly afterwards by a communication drawn up by Elder Rigdon, it is said, and addressed to the leading dissenters, . . . commanding them to leave Caldwell county within three days under penalty of a “more fatal calamity” befalling them if they refused to depart. The document was signed by eighty-four men, more or less prominent in the church, but neither the Prophet’s nor Sidney Rigdon’s name is included among the signatures. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 438-439)

According to Ebenezer Robinson, Joseph Smith’s own brother, Hyrum Smith, who was a member of the First Presidency also signed the letter.

The “Far West Record” contains some very important information concerning Oliver Cowdery and the bogus money business. The “Far West Record” is an unpublished “record book containing minutes of meetings in Kirtland and Far West, Missouri.” The original is in the L.D.S. Church Historian’s Office. For years the Mormon leaders have suppressed this record. (This is one of the documents that they would not copy for us.) Recently, however, Leland Gentry, a Mormon who was working on his thesis at the Brigham Young University, was permitted access to it. On page 117 of the “Far West Record,” Leland Gentry found testimony given by Joseph Smith and Fredrick G. Williams that tended to link Oliver Cowdery with the bogus money business. Leland Gentry states:

[Fredrick G.] Williams, . . . testified that **Oliver had personally informed him of a man in the church by the name of Davis who would compound metal and make dies which could print money that could not be detected from the real thing.** Oliver allegedly told Williams that there was **no harm** in accepting and passing around such money, provided it could not be determined to be unsound.

**Joseph Smith’s testimony was similar.** He claimed that a non-member of the Church by the name of Sapham had told him in Kirtland that a **warrant** had been issued **against Oliver** “for being engaged in making a purchase of **bogus money and dies** to make counterfeit money with.” According to the Prophet, he and Sidney Rigdon went to visit Oliver concerning the matter and told him that if he were **guilty, he had better leave town**; but if he was innocent, he should stand trial and thus be acquitted. “That night or next,” the Prophet said, **Oliver “left the country.”** (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 146)

From this information it would appear that Joseph Smith was almost an accessory after the fact, since he warned Oliver Cowdery to flee from the law if he was guilty.

Joseph Smith’s testimony was given at the time Oliver Cowdery was being tried for his membership in the church. The 8th charge against Oliver Cowdery read as follows: “Eighth—For disgracing the Church by being connected in the **bogus business**, as common report says” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 16). According to Joseph Smith, the eighth charge against Cowdery was “sustained” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 17).

The ninth charge against Cowdery read as follows: “Ninth—For dishonestly retaining notes after they had been paid; and finally, for leaving and forsaking the cause of God, and returning to the beggarly elements of the world, and neglecting his high and holy calling, according to his profession” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 16). According to Leland Gentry, Joseph Smith testified against Oliver Cowdery on this charge:

Evidence to support the final charge, namely, that Oliver was guilty of retaining bank notes after they had been paid and had forsaken the cause of God to seek after “the beggarly elements of the world,” was also abundant. Joseph Smith, for example, testified that Cowdery had informed him that he had “come to the conclusion to get property, and that if he could not get it one way, he would get it another, **God or no God**, Devil or no Devil, property he must and would have.” Joseph Smith also claimed that Oliver told him that since he had been dishonestly dealt with by others, it was his intention in the future to **deal dishonestly.**

Sidney Rigdon gave similar testimony. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 147)

The ninth charge was also “sustained,” and since six of the nine charges were sustained, Cowdery was “considered no longer a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 17). David Whitmer was also excommunicated from the church.

After separating himself from the Mormons, Oliver Cowdery became a member of the “Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio.” G. J. Keen gave this affidavit in 1885:

State of Ohio,  
County of Seneca.

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public within and for said county, G. J. Keen, a resident of said county, to me well known, and being sworn according to law makes oath and says:

I was well acquainted with Oliver Cowdery . . . Some time after Mr. Cowdery’s arrival in Tiffin, we became acquainted with his (Cowdery’s) connection with Mormonism. . . .

Mr. Cowdery opened a law office in Tiffin, and soon effected a partnership with Joel W. Wilson.

In a few years Mr. Cowdery expressed a desire to **associate himself with a Methodist Protestant Church** of this city.

Rev. John Souder and myself were appointed a committee to wait on Mr. Cowdery and confer with him respecting his connection with Mormonism and the Book of Mormon.

We accordingly waited on Mr. Cowdery at his residence in Tiffin, and there learned his connection, from him, with that order, and **his full and final renunciation thereof.**

We then inquired of him if he had any objection to making a public recantation.

He replied that he had objections; that, in the first place, it could do no good; that he had known several to do so and they always regretted it. And, in the second place, it would have a tendency to draw public attention, invite criticism, and bring him into contempt.

“But,” said he, “nevertheless, if the church require it, I will submit to it, but I authorize and desire you and the church to publish and make known my recantation.”

We did not demand it, but submitted his name to the church, and he was unanimously admitted a member thereof.

At that time he arose and addressed the audience present, admitted his error and implored forgiveness, and said he was sorry and **ashamed of his connection with Mormonism.**

He continued his membership while he resided in Tiffin, and became **Superintendent of the Sabbath School**, and led an exemplary life while he resided with us.

I have lived in this city upwards of fifty-three years, was auditor of this county, was elected to that office in 1840.

I am now in my eighty-third year, and well remember the facts above related.

(Signed) G. J. Keen.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 14th day of April, A.D. 1885.

Frank L. Emich,

Notary Public in Seneca, O.

(Affidavit quoted in *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, by Charles A. Shook, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1914, pp. 58-59)

In our *Case*, vol. 2, page 16, we give photographic proof that Oliver Cowdery did join the Methodists. The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson admits that Cowdery joined the Methodists, but he claims that he did not deny his testimony to the Book of Mormon:

The cessation of his activity in the Church meant a suspension of his role as a witness of the Book of Mormon. Not that his conviction ceased, but he discontinued public testimony as he worked out a successful legal and political career in non-Mormon society and avoided its prejudiced antagonism by creating as little conflict as possible. Since faith in Jesus Christ was the foundation of his religion, he logically affiliated himself with a Christian congregation for a time, the Methodist Protestant Church at Tiffin, Ohio. There is no more inconsistency in this than Paul, worshiping in the Jewish synagogue, or Joseph Smith, becoming a Mason in order to stem prejudice. A late recollection of Oliver's Methodist affiliation alleged that he was willing to renounce Mormonism, but what this meant to him is much too vague to imply a denial of his testimony . . . (*Improvement Era*, January 1969, p. 56)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed that Oliver Cowdery never denied his testimony to the Book of Mormon, yet he admits that even some of the Mormons believed that he did:

It is evident that the reports about Oliver Cowdery denying his testimony obtained some credence even among the Saints at Nauvoo; for in the "Times and Seasons," published by the Church at Nauvoo, one J. H. Johnson in some verses written by him maintaining the fact that the truth stands fast though men may be untrue to it, says:

Or prove that Christ was not the Lord  
Because that Peter cursed and swore,  
Or Book of Mormon not His word  
Because denied by Oliver.

(As quoted in *Oliver Cowdery—The Man Outstanding*, by Joseph Hyrum Greenhalgh, Phoenix, Ariz., 1965, p. 28)

There are a number of things that Oliver Cowdery was supposed to have written or said which seem to be spurious (see our *Case*, vol. 2, p. 17, and our pamphlet *A Critical Look—A Study of the Overstreet "Confession" and the Cowdery "Defence"*). Cowdery's "Defence" was accepted by both Mormon and anti-Mormon writers until a few years ago. A careful examination of the evidence, however, has led us to the conclusion that "the 'Defence' is probably a spurious work, written sometime after 1887—i.e., after David Whitmer's pamphlet appeared" (*A Critical Look*, p. 31).

## Strang and McLellin

James Jesse Strang, like Joseph Smith, claimed that he found some plates which he translated with the Urim and Thummim. He had witnesses who claimed they saw the plates, and their testimony is recorded in almost the same way that the testimony of the eleven witnesses is recorded in the Book of Mormon.

In the *Gospel Herald*—a Strangite publication—for May 4th, 1848, James J. Strang published a revelation which was supposed to have been given to him in September, 1845:

### Revelation Given September, 1845:

The Angel of the Lord came unto me James, on the first day of September, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-five, and the light shined about him above the brightness of the sun, and he shewed unto me the plates of the sealed record and he gave into my hands the Urim and Thummim. And out of the light came the voice of the Lord saying: My Servant James, in blessing I will bless thee, . . . Behold the record which was sealed from my servant Joseph. Unto thee it is reserved. . . . Yea as my servants serve me, so shalt thou translate unto them. . . . Go to the place which the Angel of the presence shall show thee and dig for the record of my people . . . Take with thee faithful witnesses, . . . And while I was yet in the Spirit the Angel of the Lord took me away to the hill in the East of Walworth against White River in Voree, and there he shewed unto me the record buried under an oak tree as large as the body of a large man, it was inclosed in an earthen casement and buried in the ground as deep as to a man's waist, and I beheld it as a man can see a light stone in clear water, for I saw it by Urim and Thummim, and I returned the Urim and Thummim to the Angel of the Lord and he departed out of sight. (*The Gospel Herald*, May 4, 1848, p. 27)

The Mormons felt that Strang was a very wicked man. Nevertheless, some of the Book of Mormon witnesses were so credulous that they were influenced by Strang. On January 20th, 1848, James J. Strang wrote the following:

. . . early in 1846 the tract reprint of the first number of the *Voree Herald*, containing the evidence of my calling and authority, strayed into upper Missouri. Immediately I received a letter from Hiram Page, one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and a neighbor and friend to the Whitmers' who lived near him, and that they rejoiced with exceeding joy that **God had raised up one to stand in place of Joseph**, and was so much overjoyed that they could not rest till they had gone and communicated the glad news to their brother who lived at some distance. He goes on to say that all the witnesses of the Book of Mormon living in that region **received** the news with **gladness**, and finally that they held a council in which David and John Whitmer and this Hiram Page were the principle actors; and being at a loss what they ought to do about coming to **Voree**, sent up to me **as a prophet of God** to tell them what to do. This letter I answered shortly after receiving it, and last April (1847) I received another letter from the same Hiram Page, acknowledging the receipt of mine and of many papers from me, and giving me the acts of another council of himself at the Whitmers', in which, among other things, they invite me to come to their residence in Missouri and receive from them, David and John Whitmer, church records, and manuscript revelations, which they had kept in their possession from the time that they were active members of the church. These documents they speak of as great importance to the church, and offer them to me as the true shepherd who has a right to them, and were anxious that I should come and receive them in person, because they were of too much importance to be trusted in the mails. It is very true that these letters were not written by David Whitmer, but they were written by Hiram Page as the common epistle of himself and the Whitmers'. [I] have just as much reason to believe Hiram Page is an honorable and an honest man as that Whitmer is, and do not think he would write those things unless they are true; and if they are true how can I believe that Whitmer professes to be prophet instead [of] Joseph? No, I think him too honest for that. (*Gospel Herald*, January 20, 1848)

In a letter to David Whitmer, dated December 2nd, 1846, William E. McLellin stated:

I was visited by James J. Strang of Voree, Wisconsin. He laid siege to me in order to have me unite with him in his organization. . . . The brethren here generally received him as the Successor of Jos. Smith, according to his profession—He told me that all the witnesses to the book of Mormon yet alive were with him, except Oliver. I think he told me he had a letter from Hiram Page. He said he expected you all at Voree soon . . .

I received a letter from Oliver a few weeks since. They were all well. He thinks Strang is a wicked man. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, April, 1847, pp. 17, 19)



Strang was probably telling the truth when he stated that the Book of Mormon witnesses—except Cowdery—believed his claims, for John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses, wrote the following in his history of the church—later, however, it was crossed out:

God knowing all things prepared a man whom he visited by an angel of God and showed him where there were some ancient record hid, and also put in his heart to desire of Smith to grant him power to establish a stake to Zion in Wisconsin Territory, whose name is James J. Strang. Now first Smith was unfavorably disposed to grant him this request but being troubled in spirit and knowing from the things that were staring him in his face that his days must soon be closed therefore he enquired of the Lord and behold the Lord said (three words indecipherable) James J. Strang a Prophet Seer & Revelator to my church, for this stake. Shortly in a meeting they got a letter &c. Shortly after this appointment of Strang the mob gathered and took by Strategy Joseph & Hyrum Smith conveyed them to Carthage the Seat of Justice in & for the Co. of Hancock (“Caldwell” has been stricken out in favor of “Hancock”) as if to try them by the law of the land, but instead of trying them by the law of the land for their crimes they murdered them & thus the Lord’s anointed fell by the brutal hand of man, & they are gone the way of all the earth and Strang Reigns in the place of Smith the author and proprietor of the Book of Mormon. (*John Whitmer’s History*, p. 23)

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, joined the Strangite movement and even went on a mission to England for them. President Joseph Fielding Smith admits that Martin Harris was “out of harmony with the Church” and that he went to England, but he does not tell that he was on a mission for the Strangites (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 226). Andrew Jenson (who was Assistant Church Historian), however, frankly admitted that Martin Harris went on a mission for the Strangites. Under the date of October 1, 1846, he wrote the following in the book *Church Chronology*: “—Martin Harris and others, followers of the apostate James J. Strang preached among the Saints in England, but could get no influence” (*Church Chronology*, Salt Lake City, 1899, p. 31).

The Mormon Church’s own publication *Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star* had a great deal to say about Martin Harris when he arrived in England. (It should be remembered that the *Millennial Star* was published in England at the very time Martin Harris went on his mission for the Strangites.) The following statements appeared in that publication:

One of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, yielded to the spirit and temptation of the devil a number of years ago—turned against Joseph Smith and became his bitter enemy. He was filled with the rage and **madness of a demon**. One day he would be one thing, and another day another thing. He soon became **partially deranged** or shattered, as many believed, flying from one thing to another, as if reason and common sense were thrown off their balance. In one of his fits of **monomania**, he went and joined the “Shakers” or followers of Anne Lee. He tarried with them a year or two, or perhaps longer, having had some flare ups while among them; but since Strang has made his entry into the apostate ranks, and hoisted his standard for the rebellious to flock too, Martin leaves the “Shakers,” whom he knows to be right, and has known it for many years, as he said, and joins Strang in gathering out the tares of the field. We understand that he is appointed a mission to this country, but we do not feel to warn the Saints against him, for his own unbridled tongue will soon show out specimens of folly enough to give any person a true index to the character of the man; but if the Saints wish to know what the Lord hath said of him, they may turn to the 178th page of the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, and the person there called a “**wicked man**” is no other than **Martin Harris**, and he owned to it then, but probably might not now. It is not the first time the Lord chose a wicked man as a witness. Also on page 193, read the whole revelation given

to him, and ask yourselves if the Lord ever talked in that way to a good man. . . . We also learn, from Elder Wheelock’s letter of Birmingham, that Martin Harris and his escort have paid them a visit. He introduced himself to their conference meeting and wished to speak, but on being politely informed by Elder Banks that the season of the year had come when Martins sought a more genial climate than England, he had better follow. On being rejected by the united voice of the conference, he went out into the street, and began to proclaim the corruption of the Twelve; but here the officers of government honoured him with their presence—two policemen came and very gently took hold of each arm and led Martin away to the Lock-up. We would insert brother Wheelock’s letter entire if he had room. Elder Wheelock will remember that **evil men, like Harris**, out of the evil treasure of their hearts bring forth evil things.

Just as our paper was going to press, we learned that **Martin Harris**, about whom we had written in another article, had landed in Liverpool, and being afraid or ashamed of his profession as a Strangite, and we presume both, for we are confident we should be, he tells some of our brethren on whom he called, that he was of the same profession with themselves—that he had just come from America and wished to get acquainted with the Saints. But there was a strangeness about him, and about one or two who came with him, that gave them plainly to see that the frankness and honest simplicity of true hearted brethren were not with them. **A lying deceptive spirit attends them, and has from the beginning.** They said they were of the same profession with our brethren, when they knew they lied. If they were of our profession, why not call at our office and get their papers endorsed? Because they know that they are of **their father, the devil**, who was a liar from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. The very countenance of Harris will show to every spiritual-minded person who sees him, that the **wrath of God is upon him.** (*Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star*, vol. 8, November 15, 1846, pp. 124-128)

Although the Book of Mormon witnesses were attracted to Strang for a short time, they soon became interested in a movement William E. McLellin was trying to start. Five of the Book of Mormon witnesses definitely supported McLellin’s movement and another gave some encouragement to it. According to William E. McLellin, Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, was baptized into his group on February 13th, 1847:

On Saturday 13th, of February, Martin Harris, William E. McLellin, Leonard Rich and Aaron Smith, were immersed, confirmed, and reordained to the same authority which we had held in the Church before Latter Day Saintism was known. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, January, 1848, p. 56)

Martin Harris even joined with Leonard Rich and Calvin Beebe in a “Testimony of Three Witnesses” that Joseph Smith ordained David Whitmer as his “Successor in office”:

#### Testimony of Three Witnesses.

We cheerfully certify, . . . we attended a general conference, . . . in Clay county, Mo., on the 8th day of July, 1834, . . . Joseph Smith . . . arose and said that the time had come when he must appoint his Successor in office. Some have supposed that it would be Oliver Cowdery; but, said he, Oliver has lost that privilege in consequence of transgression. The Lord has made it known to me that David Whitmer is the man. David was then called forward, and Joseph and his counsellors laid hands upon him, and ordained him to his station, to succeed him. Joseph . . . said, now brethren, if any thing should befall me, the work of God will roll on with more power than it has hitherto done. Then, brethren, you will have a man who can lead you as well as I can. He will be Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Translator before God.

Martin Harris,

Leonard Rich,

Calvin Beebe.

(*The Ensign of Liberty*, December, 1847, pp. 43-44)

The Mormons who went to Utah, of course, felt that



Brigham Young was to be the leader of the church.

On July 28, 1847, Oliver Cowdery wrote a letter to David Whitmer in which he gave some support to McLellin's ideas and told Whitmer that "our right gives us the **head**." In a letter dated September 8, 1847, David Whitmer wrote to Oliver Cowdery and told him that it was "the will of God that you be one of my counsellors in the presidency of the church":

Dear brother Oliver: . . . we have established, or commenced to establish the church of Christ again, by laying aside our dead works, and being re-ordained to our former offices of President and Counsellor, as formerly—and it is the **will of God** that you be **one of my counsellors in the Presidency of the Church**. Jacob and Hiram have been ordained High Priests, and W. E. McLellin President, to stand in relation to me as you stood to Joseph, &c. &c. Now you behold that the time has come, to clear away the old rubbish, and build again those principles which constitute the church of Christ. . . .

I am you[r] brother in the new Covenant,

David Whitmer.

(Letter by David Whitmer, printed in *The Ensign of Liberty*, May, 1848, p. 93)

The Mormons were very disturbed by the endorsement the witnesses gave to William E. McLellin's movement. Hosea Stout made this entry in his journal on December 3, 1848:

Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmore & W. E. McLelland were trying to raise up the kingdom again. also William Smith. But the "Sound of their grinding is low." They are all waiting **for the Twelve & Presidency to fall**. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, vol. 2, p. 336)

In the *Ensign of Liberty* for August, 1849, William E. McLellin gave this information concerning a conference held in September, 1847:

When I published the third number . . . I did not deem it wisdom to publish the particulars of the conference held in Far West, on the 7th and 8th days of Sept., with some of the original "witnesses" of the book of Mormon. . . . It will be remembered that in Dec. 1848, I wrote a long letter to President David Whitmer. . . . When I parted with O. Cowdery the last of July, in Wisconsin, he immediately wrote to David and acquainted him with the fact that I was on my way to make him a visit. . . .

On the 6th, David and Jacob Whitmer, and Hiram Page, accompanied me to Far West, to visit their brother John Whitmer. On the 7th, in the morning, we bowed in family prayer—David being mouth. . . . We conversed freely, and particularly about the re-organization of the same church by us in Kirtland, in Feb. 1847. . . . Verily I the Lord say unto those who are now present . . . as you desire to know my will and how you shall go forward . . . it will be pleasing unto me that you should also take upon you mine ordinances of baptism and confirmation, and then re-ordination . . .

And now concerning the authority of my servant David, I would say unto you that no man being directed by my spirit will ever condemn what my spirit now teaches you. . . . amen.

Every part and principle of the above was scanned, and as I supposed well understood by all those present. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, pp. 99-101)

William E. McLellin goes on to relate how David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave revelations supporting his organization and condemning the Mormon Church:

We then agreed to call upon the Lord . . . David [Whitmer] took his seat near me, . . . after a few moments of solemn secret prayer, the following was delivered solely through and by **David Whitmer, as the revelator**, and written by me as scribe, viz:

Verily, verily thus saith the Lord unto my servants **David**, and **John**, and **William**, and **Jacob**, and **Hiram**, . . . Behold I have looked upon you from the beginning, and have seen that in your hearts dwelt truth, and righteousness. And now I reveal

unto you my friends, through my beloved son, your Savior. And for the cause of my church it must needs have been that ye were cast out from among those who had **polluted themselves and the holy authority of their priesthood**, that I the Lord could preserve my holy priesthood on earth, even on this land on which I the Lord have said Zion should dwell.

Now marvel not that I have preserved you and kept you on this land. It was for my purpose, yea even for a wise purpose, . . . For verily, verily saith the Lord, even Jesus, your Redeemer, **they have polluted my name**, and have done **continually wickedness** in my sight, therefore shall they be led whithersoever I will and but few shall remain to receive their inheritances. Therefore I say unto you my son David, fear not, for I am your Lord and your God; and I have held you in my own hands. . . . Now I say unto you that my church may again arise, she must acknowledge before me that they all have turned away from me and built up themselves. Even in the pride of their own hearts have they done wickedness in my name, even all manner of abominations, even such that the people of the world never was guilty of.

Therefore I the Lord have dealt so marvelously with my servant William. Therefore I have poured out my spirit upon him from time to time, that the "man of sin" might be revealed through him. . . . build up my church even in the land of Kirtland, and set forth all things pertaining to my kingdom. Thou shalt write concerning the downfall of those who once composed my church, . . .

But here David [Whitmer] said **a vision opened before him**, and the spirit which was upon him bid him stop and talk to me concerning it. He said that **in the bright light before him he saw a small chest or box of very curious and fine workmanship**, which seemed to be locked, but he was told that it contained precious things, and that if I remained faithful to God, I should obtain the chest and its contents. . . . I saw the same or a similar promise from the Spirit . . . I was told that it contained "the treasures of wisdom, and knowledge from God."

At this point we counselled particularly relative to the authority by which the church was reorganized in Kirtland, and the reasons why the Lord required us to be rebaptized, confirmed, ordained. . . . morning came, . . . on the bank of a beautiful stream, we dedicated ourselves to God in the united solemn prayer of faith. I then led those four men into the water and ministered to them in the name of the Lord Jesus. But as we returned again to our council room, brother David and I turned aside, and called upon the Lord, and received direct instruction how we should further proceed. And we all partook of bread and wine in remembrance of the Lord Jesus. I then confirmed those who were now born into the church of Christ, anew.—And then (as directed) I ordained H. Page to the office of High Priest, in the holy priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God. And we two ordained Jacob Whitmer to the same office. Then we all laid hands on John Whitmer and re-ordained him to the priesthood, and to be counsellor to David in the first presidency of the church. And then with the most solemn feelings which I ever experienced, we stepped forward and all laid hands upon David and re-ordained him to all the gifts and callings to which he had been appointed through Joseph Smith, in the general assembly of the inhabitants of Zion, in July 1834. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, August, 1849, pp. 101-104)

McLellin's movement never really got off the ground. Later in his life, David Whitmer was somewhat reluctant to talk about his association with McLellin:

. . . Brother Joseph ordained me his successor—. . . many of the brethren came to me after Brother Joseph was killed, and importuned me to come out and lead the church. **I refused to do so**. Christ is the only leader and head of his church. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., 1887, p. 55)

## Unreliable Witnesses

Since a person who is investigating the Book of Mormon has only the testimony of eleven men to rely on, he

should be certain that they were honorable men. If the Book of Mormon witnesses were honest, stable and not easily influenced by men, we would be impressed by their testimony. Unfortunately, however, we find that this is not the case. The evidence shows that they were gullible, credulous, and their word cannot always be relied upon.

Since the testimony of the three witnesses who claimed to see the angel is especially important, we want to summarize the information we have on their character.

### Martin Harris

Martin Harris seems to have been very unstable in his religious life. G. W. Stodard, a resident of Palmyra, made this statement in an affidavit dated November 28, 1833:

I have been acquainted with Martin Harris, about thirty years. As a farmer, he was industrious and enterprising, so much so, that he had, . . . accumulated, in real estate, some eight or ten thousand dollars. Although he possessed wealth, his moral and religious character was such, as not to entitle him to respect among his neighbors. . . . He was first an orthodox Quaker, then a Universalist, next a Restorationer, then a Baptist, next a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon. By his willingness to become all things unto all men, he has attained a high standing among his Mormon brethren. (*Mormonism Unveiled*, by E. D. Howe, 1834, pp. 260-261)

Martin Harris' instability certainly did not cease when he joined the Mormon Church. The Mormons themselves admitted that Harris "became partially deranged or shattered, as many believed, flying from one thing to another, as if reason and common sense were thrown off their balance" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 8, p. 124). The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson admits that Martin Harris "changed his religious position eight times" during the period when he was in Kirtland, Ohio:

He and other prominent dissenters in the Church were formally excommunicated in the last week of December 1837. . . . Martin Harris remained at Kirtland for the next 30 years . . .

Martin Harris also felt strong resentment against Church leaders, in large part stemming from the blow to his ego in never being given a major office. If such thinking is obviously immature, it was nevertheless real to the man who had sacrificed domestic peace, fortune, and reputation to bring about the printing of the Book of Mormon and the founding of the Church. Real or supposed rejection breeds hostility and, at its worst, retaliation. . . .

The foregoing tendencies explain the spiritual wanderlust that afflicted the solitary witness at Kirtland. In this period of his life he **changed his religious position eight times**, including a rebaptism by a Nauvoo missionary in 1842. Every affiliation of Martin Harris was with some Mormon group, except when he was affiliated with the Shaker belief, a position not basically contrary to his Book of Mormon testimony because the foundation of that movement was acceptance of personal revelation from heavenly beings. (*Improvement Era*, March 1969, p. 63)

If we add the "eight times" that Martin Harris changed his religious position in Kirtland to the five changes he made before, we find that he changed his mind thirteen times! Richard Anderson is forced to admit that Martin Harris' life shows evidence of "religious instability" (*Ibid.*) The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin stated that

Martin Harris was an unaggressive, vacillating, easily influenced person who was no more pugnacious than a rabbit. . . . His conviction of one day might vanish and be replaced by doubt and fear before the setting of the sun. He was changeable, fickle, and puerile in his judgment and conduct. (*The Historical Background for the Doctrine and Covenants*, p. 23, as quoted in an unpublished manuscript by LaMar Petersen)

After changing his mind about religion many times, Martin Harris returned to the Mormon Church. According to A. Metcalf, however, he was still not satisfied. Metcalf claims that Harris told him that he "never believed that the Brighamite branch of the Mormon church, nor the Josephite church, was right, because in his opinion, God had rejected them," and he took his endowments in

Salt Lake City, only to find out "what was going on in there" (*Ten Years Before The Mast*, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, pp. 348-349).

According to a revelation given by Joseph Smith, Martin Harris was "a wicked man." When he was on his mission for "the apostate James J. Strang," the Mormons in England said that he was "filled with the rage and madness of a demon." They also said that it was "not the first time the Lord chose a wicked man as a witness," and that "evil men, like Harris, out of the evil treasures of their hearts bring forth evil things." Speaking of Martin Harris and "one or two" who came with him, the Mormons stated that "a lying deceptive spirit attends them," and that "they are of their father, the devil." They also said: "The very countenance of Harris will show to every spiritual-minded person who sees him, that the wrath of God is upon him" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 8, pp. 124-128).

Dr. Storm Rosa made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

"As to Martin Harris, of late I have heard but little of him. My acquaintance with him induces me to believe him a monomaniac; he is a man of great loquacity and very unmeaning, ready at all times to dispute the ground of his doctrines with any one." (Letter quoted in *Early Days of Mormonism*, by J. H. Kennedy, New York, 1888, p. 172)

This seems like a serious charge, but the reader will remember that the Mormons themselves admitted that Harris had "fits of monomania."

Martin Harris' wife made some very serious charges against his character (see our *Case*, vol. 2, pages 2-4). These charges, however, are not actually much worse than those made by the Mormons. Mrs. Harris stated that Martin had "mad-fits." The Mormons said that when he left the church he "was filled with the rage and madness of a demon." She stated that Martin was a liar. The Mormons admitted that when he came to England "a lying deceptive spirit" attended him. She stated that Mormonism had made him "more cross, turbulent and abusive to me." Joseph Smith himself later classified Martin Harris as one of those who were "too mean to mention."

### Oliver Cowdery

Oliver Cowdery was apparently rather credulous. According to Joseph Smith, Cowdery was led astray by Hiram Page's "peep-stone." He was excommunicated from the Mormon Church and united with the "Methodist Protestant Church" at Tiffin, Ohio. In 1841 the Mormons published a poem which stated that the Book of Mormon was "denied" by Oliver. He accused Joseph Smith of adultery. The Mormons, on the other hand, claimed that Oliver "committed adultery." Joseph Smith listed Oliver Cowdery among those who were "too mean to mention." The Mormons claimed that he joined "a gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs." Joseph Smith testified that when a warrant was issued against Cowdery for "being engaged in making a purchase of bogus money and dies," he "left the country." Joseph Smith also testified that Cowdery intended to get property "and that if he could not get it one way, he would get it another, God or no God, Devil or no Devil, property he must and would have." According to Leland Gentry, Joseph Smith claimed that Oliver Cowdery told him that he intended to deal dishonestly in the future.

Oliver Cowdery seems to have returned to the Mormon Church before his death (see our pamphlet *A Critical Look—A Study of the Overstreet "Confession" and the Cowdery "Defence"*), but David Whitmer claimed that Cowdery died believing Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet and that his revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* must be rejected:

I did not say that Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer had not endorsed the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1836. They did endorse it in 1836; I stated that they "came out of their errors (discarded the *Doctrine and Covenants*), repented of them, and died believing as I do to-day," and I have the proof to verify my statement. If any one chooses to



doubt my word, let them come to my home in Richmond and be satisfied. In the winter of 1848, after Oliver Cowdery had been baptized at Council Bluffs, he came back to Richmond to live, . . . Now, in 1849 the Lord saw fit to manifest unto John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery and myself nearly all the errors in doctrine into which we had been led by the heads of the old church. We were shown that the Book of Doctrine and Covenants contained many doctrines of error, and that it must be laid aside; . . . They were led out of their errors, and are upon record to this effect, rejecting the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. (*An Address to Believers in The Book of Mormon*, 1887, pp. 1 and 2)

### David Whitmer

David Whitmer was also very credulous. He was influenced by Hiram Page's "peep-stone," and possibly by a woman with a "black stone," in Kirtland, Ohio. Joseph Smith identified David Whitmer with those who were "too mean to mention," and also called him a "dumb ass." The Mormons accused Whitmer of joining with a "gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs." David Whitmer evidently supported James J. Strang for awhile, then changed his mind and supported the McLellin group. Whitmer was to be the prophet and head of the McLellin church. He gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have told him the Mormons "polluted my name, and have done continually wickedness in my sight." The revelation also stated that "in the pride of their own hearts have they done wickedness in my name, even all manner of abominations, even such that the people of the world never was guilty of." David Whitmer also claimed that "in the bright light before him he saw a small chest or box of very curious and fine workmanship."

David Whitmer never returned to the Mormon Church. Toward the end of his life he was a member of the "Church of Christ"—another small group which believed in the Book of Mormon. Just before his death, Whitmer published *An Address to All Believers in Christ* in which he stated:

If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838, God spake to me again by his own voice from the heavens, and told me to "separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them." In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into error and blindness. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, 1887, p. 27)

We have quoted the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe as saying that the Book of Mormon plates were seen and handled "by eleven competent men, of independent minds and **spotless reputations**." We feel, however, that we have demonstrated that these witnesses were easily influenced by men and therefore were **not** competent witnesses. Contrary to John A. Widtsoe's statement, these witnesses were **not** men of "spotless reputation," but rather men whose word could not always be relied upon. Some of them even gave false revelations in the name of the Lord. Mr. Widtsoe stated that Oliver Cowdery's "reputation for honesty has never been questioned." We have shown, however, that the Mormons themselves—including Joseph Smith—testified that Oliver was dishonest and even involved in the bogus money business. We feel, therefore, that the Book of Mormon witnesses have been "weighed in the balances" and found wanting.

### Angels and Gold Plates

As we have shown, eleven men besides Joseph Smith stated that they had seen the plates—three of these eleven witnesses claimed that they were shown the plates by an angel of God. Brigham Young claimed that there was at least one other man who claimed he was shown the plates:

One of the Quorum of the Twelve—a young man full of faith and good works, prayed, and the vision of his mind was opened, and the angel of God came and laid the plates before him, and he saw and handled them, and saw the angel, and conversed with him as he would with one of his friends; but after all this, he was left to doubt, and plunged into apostacy, and has continued to contend against this work. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 164)

Thomas Ford, who had been Governor of Illinois, related a story which throws doubt upon the existence of the plates. Fawn Brodie quotes this story and then makes this statement:

Yet it is difficult to reconcile this explanation with the fact that these witnesses, and later Emma and William Smith, emphasized the size, weight, and metallic texture of the plates. Perhaps Joseph built some kind of makeshift deception. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 80)

It is very possible that Joseph Smith did have some type of metal plates. There have been several reports of metal plates being found which later turned out to be forgeries. One of the latest cases was reported in a newsletter published by the Brigham Young University Department of Archaeology on January 17, 1962:

**GOLD PLATES FROM MEXICO.** News of a set of small gold plates, purportedly found in an ancient grave in southern Mexico, and inscribed with characters resembling the Demotic Egyptian-like characters in the Anthon Transcript from the plates of the Book of Mormon(!), has come from several sources. Photographs of these plates and drawings of their inscriptions have also been received. . . . All five are inscribed on each side with five lines of mixed Anthon Transcript and Maya-like characters, with the exception of one of the larger plates, which bears only a few such characters, distributed around a complex of symbols which Dr. M. Wells Jakeman of the BYU archaeology department has identified as definitely Aztec—four purely Aztec day-name symbols, a tree pictograph, and a cross-shaped symbol.

Dr. Jakeman, as well as Dr. Ross T. Christensen also of the archaeology department, feel that these plates are **not** of ancient origin, because of the mixing, in the inscriptions, of symbols from at least two different writing systems widely separated in time. . . . even stronger indication that the plates are not of ancient origin or authentic, is the near certainty that the Aztec symbols were copied from one of the two surviving Aztec hieroglyphic manuscripts. . . .

From a preliminary investigation, then, it would appear that these gold plates from Mexico are **forgeries**, and that a **serious fraud** has been committed, since the plates are reported to have been sold for a large sum of money, on the testimony of the "discoverer" that they are of ancient origin. (*University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, B.Y.U., January 17, 1962, p. 4)

If Joseph Smith was not capable of making a set of gold plates, he probably had friends that were. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated that Oliver Cowdery followed "**blacksmithing**" when he was a youth (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 119-120).

If Oliver Cowdery had spent time blacksmithing before he met Joseph Smith, it would have been possible for him to have made a set of metal plates. As we have shown, the Mormons themselves later accused him of joining a gang of counterfeiters.

### Too Much Excitement

While the testimony of the eight witnesses could be explained simply by admitting that Joseph Smith had some type of plates, the testimony of the three witnesses is more difficult to explain. They claim that "an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; . . ."

Besides the angel that appeared to the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, there were many other occasions in the history of Mormonism when angels were supposed



to have appeared, Joseph Smith declared that on March 27, 1836, the Kirtland Temple was filled with angels:

Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was **filled with angels**, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 428)

Under the date of March 30, 1836, the following appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

The Savior made his appearance to some, while angels ministered to others, . . . the occurrences of this day shall be handed down upon the pages of sacred history, to all generations; as the day of Pentecost, so shall this day be numbered and celebrated as a year of jubilee, and time of rejoicing to the Saints of the Most High God. (*Ibid.*, p. 433)

Joseph Smith claimed that he and Oliver Cowdery saw Moses, Elias, Elijah and the Lord in the Kirtland Temple (see *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 110). If a person reads only Joseph Smith's account of this "endowment" he is apt to be very impressed. William E. McLellin, however, gives an entirely different story. He claims that there was "no endowment." In March, 1848, he said: ". . . we boldly affirm that **no** endowment from God has as yet been given in Kirtland" (*Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, March, 1848, p. 69). It should be remembered that McLellin was one of the twelve Apostles at the time the endowment was supposed to have been given. On pages 6-7 of the same publication William E. McLellin joined with five others in stating:

And, during the winter of thirty-five and six, hundreds upon hundreds of the Ministers of the Church collected . . . to receive their "**endowment from on high**." . . . Finally, the 6th of April, the time, the long looked for time arrived . . . most of them expecting to wait on the Lord there, until he visibly displayed himself, by shedding upon them, as it were, "cloven tongues of fire," so that they might go to all the world, and preach to them in their own languages, . . .

But we are sorry to have to record, that the light of the next morning's sun found disappointed hundreds wending their way from that noble edifice, to their homes and their firesides, to reflect upon, and brood over their sad disappointment. The least we can say relative to the anticipated endowment is, **it was a failure!!**

While speaking of the dedication at Kirtland the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated:

That evening there was a collection . . . amounting to four hundred and sixteen, gathered in the house; . . . David Whitmer bore testimony he saw three angels passing up the south aisle, and there came a shock on the house like the sound of a mighty rushing wind, . . . and hundreds of them were speaking in tongues, . . . or declaring visions, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 10)

It is interesting to note that David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, called the story of the endowment "a trumped up yarn." In fact, a reporter for the *Des Moines Daily News* stated that Whitmer absolutely denied the manifestations in the temple (in the article it reads "temple at Nauvoo," but it must refer to the Kirtland temple since Whitmer left the church before the Nauvoo temple was built):

Many of the declarations of the prophet, after he lost the spirit of revelation, which were called prophecies, signally failed to come to pass. The great heavenly "visitation," which was alleged to have taken place in the temple at Nauvoo, was **a grand fizzle**. The elders were assembled on the appointed day, which was promised would be a veritable day of Pentecost, but **there was no visitation**. No Peter, James and John; no Moses and Elias, put in an appearance. "I was in my seat on that occasion," says Mr. Whitmer, "and **I know that the**

**story sensationally circulated**, and which is now on the records of the Utah Mormons as an actual happening, was nothing but a **trumped up yarn**. I saw a great many of these things which I know were not right, but I clung on in patience, trusting everything would eventually be but [sic] right." (*The Des Moines Daily News*, October 16, 1886)

David Whitmer's charge that the endowment was a "trumped up yarn" becomes very interesting when we compare the report of the proceeding of March 27, 1836, which was published at the time with that published about sixteen years later in Joseph Smith's *History*. In the *Messenger and Advocate* for March, 1836, we read:

President F. G. Williams bore record that a Holy Angel of God, came and set between him and J. Smith sen. while the house was being dedicated.

President Hyrum Smith, (one of the building committee) made some appropriate remarks. . . . (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 2, p. 281)

In Joseph Smith's *History*—first published in Utah about sixteen years later—a statement that David Whitmer saw angels has been added:

President Frederick G. Williams arose and testified that . . . an angel entered the window and took his seat between Father Smith and himself, and remained there during the prayer.

**President David Whitmer also saw angels in the house.**

President Hyrum Smith made some appropriate remarks . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 427)

Apparently some of the Mormons saw the angels and others did not. At the funeral of Myron Tanner, President David John made this statement about the angels in Kirtland:

Bishop Tanner told me that he saw angels ascending and descending during those days, and that he called his mother out to see them, but his mother could not see them, although he saw them plainly. (*Biography of Myron Tanner*, published by authority of the family, Salt Lake City, 1907, pp. 28-29)

Ebenezer Robinson made this statement concerning the angel that was supposed to have sat between F. G. Williams and Joseph Smith's father:

"President F. G. Williams bore record that a Holy Angel of God came and sat between him and J. Smith sen. while the house was being dedicated."

**We did not see the angel**, but the impression has evidently obtained with some, that we did see the angel, from the fact that different persons, strangers from abroad, have called upon us and expressed gratification at meeting with a person who had seen an angel, referring to the above circumstance. We told them they were mistaken, that **we did not see the angel**, but that President F. G. Williams testified as above stated. We believed his testimony, and have often spoke of it both publicly and privately. (*The Return*, vol. 1, no. 6, June 1889, typed copy)

When we look at the testimony of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon or the report of happenings in the Kirtland temple we must remember that some of the early Mormons were very credulous and could be worked up into a state of excitement in which they actually believed that they saw visions. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith made this statement concerning an incident in the Kirtland temple:

Sylvester Smith bore testimony of seeing the hosts of heaven and the horsemen. In his exertion and excitement it seemed as though he would jump through the ceiling. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 10)

John Whitmer, who was Church Historian in Joseph Smith's time, related the following concerning some of the visions that members of the church had:

For a perpetual memory, to the shame and confusion of the Devil, permit me to say a few things respecting the proceedings of some of those who were disciples, and some remain among us, and will, and have come from under the error and enthusiasm which they had fallen.

Some had visions and could not tell what they saw. Some would fancy to themselves that they had the sword of Laban, and would wield it as expert as a light dragon; some would act like an Indian in the act of scalping; some would slide or scoot on the floor with the rapidity of a serpent, which they termed sailing in the boat to the Lamanites, preaching the gospel. And many other vain and foolish maneuvers that are unseemingly and unprofitable to mention. Thus the Devil blinded the eyes of some good and honest disciples. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 6)

The Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* admitted that “false spirits” had sometimes been in the church:

The church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have also had their **false spirits**; . . .

Soon after the gospel was established in Kirtland, and during the absence of the authorities of the church, many **false spirits** were introduced, many **strange visions** were seen, and wild enthusiastic notions were entertained; men ran out of doors under the influence of this spirit, and some of them got upon the stumps of trees and shouted, and all kinds of extravagances were entered into by them; one man pursued a ball that he said he saw flying in the air, until he came to a precipice when he jumped into the top of a tree which saved his life, and many ridiculous things were entered into, calculated to bring disgrace upon the church of God; . . . At a subsequent period a Shaker spirit was on the point of being introduced, . . . We have also had brethren and sisters who have had the gift of tongues falsely; they would speak in a muttering, unnatural voice, and their bodies be distorted like the Irvingites before alluded to; whereas there is nothing unnatural in the spirit of God. . . .

There have also been ministering angels in the church which were of **Satan** appearing as an angel of light: — A sister in the State of New York had a vision who said it was told her that if she would go to a certain place in the woods **an angel** would appear to her,—she went at the appointed time and saw a glorious personage descending arrayed in white, with **sandy coloured hair**; . . . Many true things were spoken by this personage and many things that were **false**.—How it may be asked was this known to be a **bad angel**? by **the color of his hair**; that is one of the signs that he can be known by, and **by his contradicting a former revelation**. (*Times and Seasons*, edited by Joseph Smith, April 1, 1842, vol. 3, p. 747)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith related the following concerning a Mormon known as “Black Pete”:

They had a meeting at the farm, and among them was a negro known generally as Black Pete, who became a revelator. Others also manifested wonderful developments; they could see angels, and letters would come down from heaven, they said, and they would be put through wonderful unnatural distortions. Finally on one occasion, Black Pete got sight of one of those revelations carried by a black angel, he started after it, and ran off a steep wash bank twenty-five feet high, passed through a tree top into the Chagrin river beneath. He came out with a few scratches, and his ardor somewhat cooled. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 4)

On at least one occasion even Joseph Smith had a hard time deciding whether a manifestation was from God or the Devil. Ezra Booth related the following:

As the 4th of June last, was appointed for the sessions of the conference, it was ascertained that that was the time specified, when the great and mighty work was to be commenced, . . . Smith, the day before the conference, professing to be filled with the spirit of Prophecy, declared, that “not three days should pass away, before some should see their Savior, face to face.” Soon after the session commenced, . . . He reminded those present of the Prophecy, which he said “was given by the spirit yesterday.” . . . by long speaking, himself and some others became much excited. He then laid his hands on the head of Elder White, who had participated largely in the warm feeling

of his leader, and ordained him to the High Priesthood. . . . White arose, and presented a pale countenance, a fierce look, with his arms extended, and his hands cramped back, the whole system agitated, and a very unpleasant object to look upon. He exhibited himself as an instance of the great power of God, and called upon those around him, “If you want to see a sign, look at me.” He then stepped upon a bench, and declared, with a loud voice, he saw the Savior; and thereby, for the time being rescued Smith’s prophecy from merited contempt.—It, however, procured White the authority to ordain the rest. So said the spirit, and so said Smith. The spirit in Smith selected those to be ordained, and the spirit in White ordained them. But the spirit in White proved an erring dictator; so much so, that some of the candidates felt the weight of hands thrice, before the work was rightly done. Another Elder, who had been ordained to the same office as White, . . . moved upon the floor, his legs inclining to a bend; one shoulder elevated above the other, upon which the head seemed disposed to recline, his arms partly extended; his hands partly clenched; his mouth partly open, and contracted in the shape of an italic O; his eyes assumed a wild ferocious case, and his whole appearance presented a frightful object to the view of the beholder.—“Speak, brother Harvey” said Smith. But Harvey intimated by signs, that his power of articulation was in a state of suspense, and of the Devil, but Smith said, “the Lord binds in order to set at liberty.” After different opinions had been given, and there had been much confusion, Smith learnt by the spirit, that Harvey was under a **diabolical influence**, and that Satan had bound him; and he commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. (*Mormonism Unveiled*, 1834, pp. 188-189)

The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin gives this information concerning the same incident:

During the latter part of February, 1831, the Prophet recorded a revelation instructing him to gather the missionaries . . . to Kirtland . . . Levi Hancock, a witness to the strange events said that while Joseph was ordaining Harvey Whitlock a high priest, “He turned as black as Lyman [Wight] was white. His fingers were set like claws. He went around the room and showed his hands and tried to speak, his eyes were in the shape of oval O’s.” Hyrum Smith was not willing to accept this behavior as being from God, and told his brother, the Prophet, so. Joseph retorted, “**Do not speak against this.**” “I will not believe, unless you inquire of God and he owns it,” demanded Hyrum. “Joseph bowed his head, and in a short time got up and **commanded Satan to leave** Harvey [sic],” concluded Levi Hancock, “laying his hands upon his head at the same time.” . . .

Leman Copley, a very large man of two hundred and fourteen pounds, from his sitting position in the window turned a complete summersault in the house and settled back across a bench where he lay helplessly. The Prophet instructed Lyman Wight to “chase” Satan out of Copley, after which the evil spirit immediately left him. Then another, Harvey Green, was bound and began screaming like a panther. These operations continued all day and into the night intermixed with the instructions from their Prophet. Levi Hancock reflected upon the scenes of the day by writing, “I was so scared I would not stir without his [Joseph’s] liberty for all the world. I knew the things I had seen were not made [up].” (*Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max H. Parkin, pp. 79-80)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

In Brother John’s history he speaks of the Spirit of God being poured out in abundance upon that occasion, some seeing visions, etc., but brethren, you will learn in the next world, if you do not know it already, that the devil can give visions, appearing as an Angel of Light. Brother John gives an account of a prophecy uttered by Lyman Wight just after Brother Joseph ordained him a High Priest, which prophecy will prove to be a false prophecy. Brother John’s history of the church says as follows: “He (Joseph) laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him to the high priesthood

after the holy order of God. And the spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in this congregation that should live until the Savior should descend from Heaven with a shout, with all the holy angels with him, etc.” The early future will determine as to whether this prophecy was true or false. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, p. 65)

On February 9, 1843, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which was supposed to give “three grand keys by which good or bad spirits may be distinguished.” It is now published as Section 129 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and reads as follows:

1. There are two kinds of beings in heaven, namely: Angels, who are resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones—
2. For instance, Jesus said: Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.
3. Secondly: The spirits of just men made perfect, they who are not resurrected, but inherit the same glory.
4. When a messenger comes saying he has a message from God, **offer him your hand and request him to shake hands with you.**
5. If he be an angel he will do so, and you will **feel his hand.**
6. If he be the spirit of a just man made perfect he will come in his glory; for that is the only way he can appear—
7. Ask him to shake hands with you, **but he will not move**, because it is contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive; but he will still deliver his message.
8. If it be **the Devil** as an angel of light, when you ask him to shake hands he will **offer you his hand, and you will not feel anything**; you may therefore detect him.
9. These are three grand keys whereby you may know whether any administration is from God. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 129)

It would seem, according to this revelation, that if the Devil ever found out that a person cannot feel his hand, he could greatly deceive Joseph Smith’s followers by refusing to shake hands so that they would think he was “a just man made perfect.”

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, claimed that he could scare the Devil away with a weapon of death:

Now, I will tell you, I have about a hundred shots on hand all the time—three or four fifteen-shooters, and three or four revolvers, right in the room where I sleep; and the Devil does not like to sleep there, for he is afraid they will go off half-cocked.

If you will lay a **bowie knife or a loaded revolver under your pillow** every night, you will not have many unpleasant dreams, nor be troubled with the nightmare; for there is nothing that the Devil is so much afraid of **as a weapon of death.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 164)

It seems that the early Mormons could see almost anything in vision. John Pulsipher recorded the following in his journal:

“One pleasant day in March, while I was at work in the woods, about one mile from the Temple, . . . there was a **steamboat past over Kirtland in the air!** It was a clear, sunshine day. When we first heard the distant noise, we all stopt [sic] work. We listened and wondered what it could be. As it drew nearer, we **heard the puffing of a steamboat**, intermingled with the sound of many wagons rattling over a rough stony road. We all listened with wonder—but could not see what it was. It seemed to pass right over our heads—we all heard the sound of a steamboat as plain as we ever did in our lives. It passed right along and soon went out of our hearing. When it got down to the city it was **seen by a number of persons.** It was a large fine and beautiful boat, painted in the finest style. It was filled with people. All seemed full of joy. Old Elder Beamon, who had died a few months before was seen standing in the bow of the Boat swinging

his hat and singing a well known hymn, The boat went steady along over the city **passed right over the Temple** and went out of sight to the west! This wonderful sight, encouraged the Saints because they knew the Lord had not forgotten them.

“The people of Kirtland that saw the steamboat in the air said it arrived over the Temple, a part of it broke off and turned black and went north and was soon out of sight. While the boat, all in perfect shape went to the W[est] more beautiful and pure than before.” (“John Pulsipher Journal,” as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 331)

Levi Hancock related the following in his journal:

“When night came . . . we walked heavily, some said that they felt as if they would be ceased [sic] by Satan. Others that they felt as the Devil and his angels were hanging about them. . . . I said, ‘let us pray.’ So we all kneeled down and prayed around the circle, as soon as the last one got through about nine o’clock at night and the moon shown brightly. A sudden bray of a jackass was heard about twenty feet behind us we looked and could see nothing in the way. It started toward the pond braying all the time. . . . This braying continued across the pond and ascended the high hills on the other side until it grew less and less distant until it got out of hearing. ‘There,’ said Brother Baldwin, ‘this proves to me that this work is true, for when we prayed for assistance the Devil ran away.’ We all felt that it must have been Satan, . . . God knows that I lie not.” (“Levi Hancock Journal,” pp. 50-51, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 81)

But, the reader may ask, were the Book of Mormon witnesses that credulous? Anti-Mormon writers claim that they were. E. D. Howe, for instance, made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

He was naturally of a very visionary turn of mind on the subject of religion, holding one sentiment but a short time. . . . He frequently declares that he has conversed with Jesus Christ, Angels and the Devil. Christ he says is the handsomest man he ever saw; and the Devil looks very much like a jack-ass, with very short, smooth hair, similar to that of a mouse. . . . He has frequent fits of prophesying, . . . he frequently prophesies of the coming of Christ, the destruction of the world, and the damnation of certain individuals. At one time he declared that Christ would be on earth within fifteen years, and all who did not believe the book of Mormon would be destroyed. . . . Martin is generally believed by intelligent people, to be laboring under a partial derangement; and that any respectable jury would receive his testimony, in any case, of ever so trifling a nature, we do not believe; yet the subjects of the delusion think him a competent witness to establish miracles of the most unreasonable kind. (*Mormonism Unveiled*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pp. 13-15)

J. J. Moss gave this testimony in the *Braden and Kelly Debate*, page 387:

Q. You may state Mr. Moss, what Martin Harris said to you about seeing the Devil?

A. He said he saw the Devil and he looked like a jackass, and he had hair like a mouse. . . .

Stephen H. Hart made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

Martin Harris, . . . worked off and on for fifteen or twenty years for me. His judgment about farming was good. . . . One night he went upstairs to bed without a light, but soon came down and said the devil had stirred his bed. My wife went upstairs with the light and found that the bed was all right; Martin said the devil had made it all right. There was a pile of bedding we supposed he had felt of instead of the bed. One night he fell downstairs; he said the devil came to his bed and he had a tussel with him and the devil threw him down-stairs. Every wrong he attributed to the devil. Martin claimed he would renew his age and be translated like Enoch. . . . Martin, when closely questioned about the plates from which the “Book of Mormon” purports



to have been taken, would say he saw the plates by the eye of faith. (Statement of Stephen H. Hart, as cited in *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Oakland, Calif., April 1888, p. 3)

Fawn Brodie feels that Joseph Smith was capable of convincing the Book of Mormon witnesses that they had seen a vision. Perhaps Mrs. Brodie is correct. Mary Rollins Lightner (a devout Mormon) wrote this interesting information in her journal:

A few evenings after . . . Mother and I went over to the Smith home. . . . After prayer and singing, Joseph began talking. Suddenly he stopped and seemed almost transfixed. He was looking ahead and his face outshone the candle which was on a shelf just behind him. . . . he looked at us very solemnly and said, “Brothers and Sisters, do you know who has been in our midst this night?” One of the Smith family said, “An angel of the Lord.” Joseph did not answer. Martin Harris was sitting at the Prophet’s feet on a box. He slid to his knees, clasped his arms around the Prophet’s knees and said, “I know, **it was our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**” Joseph put his hand on Martin’s head and answered, “Martin, God revealed that to you. Brothers and Sisters, the Savior has been in your midst. I want you to remember it. He cast a veil over your eyes for you could not endure to look upon Him.” (“Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Journal,” as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max Parkin, pp. 82-83)

### Harris’ Shaker Book

As we have already shown, in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 8, pages 124-128, the Mormons admitted that Martin Harris joined the Shakers: “In one of his fits of monomania, he went and joined the ‘Shakers’ or followers of Anne Lee.” The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson states that Martin Harris “affiliated with the Shaker belief,” but he feels that this was “not basically contrary to his Book of Mormon testimony because the foundation of that movement was acceptance of personal revelation from heavenly beings” (*Improvement Era*, March 1969, p. 63).

Now, while it is true that the Shakers believed in revelation, a Mormon could not accept these revelations without repudiating the teachings of Joseph Smith. The Shakers, for instance, felt that “Christ has made his second appearance on earth, in a chosen **female** known by the name of Ann Lee, and acknowledged by us as our **Blessed Mother** in the work of redemption” (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 358). If Martin Harris accepted this teaching, he was certainly out of harmony with Joseph Smith’s revelations, for in one of the revelations we read that “the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 49:22). The Shakers, of course, did not believe the Book of Mormon, but they had a book entitled *A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book; From the Lord God of Heaven, to the Inhabitants of Earth*. More than sixty individuals gave testimony to the “Sacred Roll and Book.” Although not all of them mention angels appearing, some of them tell of many angels visiting them—one woman told of eight different visions. On page 304 of this book we find the testimony of eight witnesses. They claim that they saw an angel and the “Roll and Book”:

We, the undersigned, hereby testify, that we saw the holy Angel standing upon the house-top, as mentioned in the foregoing declaration, holding the Roll and Book.

Betsey Boothe.	Sarah Maria Lewis.
Louisa Chamberlain.	Sarah Ann Spencer.
Caty De Witt.	Lucinda McDoniels.
Laura Ann Jacobs.	Maria Hedrick.

(*A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book; From the Lord God of Heaven, to the Inhabitants of Earth*, 1843, p. 304)

Joseph Smith only had three witnesses who claimed to see an angel. The Shakers, however, had a large number of witnesses who claimed they saw angels and the Roll and Book. There are over a hundred pages of testimony from “Living Witnesses.” (For a great deal more information on the *Sacred Roll and Book* see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 50-58.)

The evidence seems to show that Martin Harris accepted the *Sacred Roll and Book* as a divine revelation. In our *Case*, vol. 2, page 50, we cited a very revealing statement by Clark Braden:

**Harris** declared repeatedly that he had as much evidence for a **Shaker book** he had as for the Book of Mormon. (*The Braden and Kelly Debate*, p. 173)

Since we published this statement, evidence has been brought to our attention from a Mormon source which shows that Harris claimed to have a greater testimony to the Shakers than to the Book of Mormon. In a thesis written at Brigham Young University, Wayne Cutler Gunnell stated that on December 31, 1844, “Phineas H. Young [Brigham Young’s brother] and other leaders of the Kirtland organization” wrote a letter to Brigham Young in which they stated:

There are in this place all kinds of teaching; Martin Harris is a **firm believer in Shakerism**, says his **testimony is greater than it was of the Book of Mormon.** (“Martin Harris—Witness and Benefactor to the Book of Mormon,” 1955, p. 52)

The fact that Martin Harris would even join with such a group shows that he was unstable and easily influenced by men. Therefore, we feel that his testimony that the Book of Mormon was of divine origin cannot be relied upon. How can we put our trust in a man who was constantly following after movements like the Shakers?

We have a great deal more information concerning the Book of Mormon witnesses, angels and gold plates in our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 1-62.

### Ancient or Modern?

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, has made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon: “The Book of Mormon must be read as an ancient, not as a modern book. Its mission, as described by the book itself, depends in great measure for its efficacy on its **genuine antiquity**” (*An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, by Hugh Nibley, 1957, p. 1). On page 13 of the same book, Dr. Nibley states: “The Book of Mormon can and should be tested. It invites criticism, . . .” Many members of the Mormon Church feel that Dr. Nibley is the church’s greatest scholar and that his work in behalf of the Book of Mormon is “unanswerable.” Richard Anderson made this statement:

A student of the nineteenth century may indeed find parallels in this period and the Book of Mormon, but without a knowledge of the world of antiquity, he simply is not equipped to make a judgment whether the Book of Mormon resembles more Joseph Smith’s environment or the ancient culture it claims to represent. Professor Nibley is the only person now publishing on this question who is equipped to make valid observations. (*Since Cumorah*, Forward, p. xii)

Hugh Nibley has spent a great deal of time trying to prove that the Book of Mormon is an authentic “record of ancient religious history.” He has published many books and articles in which he has attempted to show that there are parallels between the Book of Mormon and “the ancient culture it claims to represent.” While Dr. Nibley has found a number of parallels, we feel that they are of little importance, especially when we consider the vast number of books and ancient records which he has had access to. If Dr. Nibley had spent half the time searching for parallels to the nineteenth century, we feel that he would have found an impressive list.

### Fits Smith’s Environment

In 1831 Alexander Campbell made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

This prophet Smith, through his stone spectacles, wrote on the plates of Nephi, in his book of Mormon, every error and almost every truth discussed in New York for the last ten years. He decides all the great controversies;—infant baptism, ordination, the

trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of free masonry, republican government, and the rights of man. (*Millennial Harbinger*, February, 1831, p. 93)

The Mormon writers George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl made these comments concerning Campbell's statement:

Alexander Campbell, who came in contact with the first missionaries of our Church, urged as an objection against the Book of Mormon that it deals with a number of modern theological controversies. And so it does. But that is not a valid ground for rejection. Truth is eternal. . . . Religious controversies must have been, to a large extent, the same anciently as they are today. (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, Salt Lake City, 1955, p. 419)

There is, of course, some truth in this statement, but we feel that there are too many things in the Book of Mormon that are similar to Joseph Smith's environment to be explained away in this manner.

## Revivals

Although the Mormon Church now frowns on revivals, Joseph Smith attended revival meetings, and the Book of Mormon is filled with scenes similar to those which he would have witnessed at these meetings. Although Wesley P. Walters was unable to find any evidence of the revival which was supposed to have occurred in 1820 at Palmyra, he did find that revivals occurred in the years 1817, 1824 and 1829. Benjamin F. Johnson claimed that Joseph Smith not only attended revival meetings, but that he was "in the anxious circles honestly seeking religion and to learn, which was the right church; . . ." (Letter by Benjamin F. Johnson, dated 1903, as cited in "An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 29).

Western New York was known as the "Burned-Over District" because of the revivals which swept over it in the 19th century. The revivals sometimes produced a great deal of excitement, and many people claimed to have visions or revelations. Alexander Campbell wrote the following on March 1, 1824:

I read, . . . of a revival in the state of New York, in which the Spirit of God was represented as being abundantly poured out . . . This man was regenerated when asleep, by a vision of the night. That man heard a voice in the woods, saying, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 1, 1955 reprint, pp. 148-149)

In the Book of Mormon we read that Enos went out into the "forests" and "cried unto" God in "mighty prayer and supplication." Finally, he heard "a voice" which said: "Enos, **thy sins are forgiven thee**, . . ." (Book of Mormon, p. 125, verse 5).

Many times the participants in the revival would fall to the ground. Charles G. Finney, a famous revival preacher, relates the following: ". . . in the midst of my discourse I saw a powerful man, . . . fall from his seat. As he sunk down he groaned, and then cried or shrieked out, that he was sinking to hell" (*Charles G. Finney, An Autobiography*, p. 69). On page 136 of the same book, Finney stated: "I had not preached long, before, . . . I observed a man fall from his seat near the door; . . . I was satisfied that it was a case of falling under the power of God, as the Methodists would express it. . . ." On page 150, Finney tells of another woman who "groaned aloud, and fell prostrate on the floor. She was unable to rise; . . ." On pages 162-163, Charles Finney states: "At this moment a young man . . . fell upon some young men that stood near him; and they all of them partially swooned away, and fell together. . . . Convictions were so deep and universal, that we would sometimes go into a house, and find some in a kneeling posture, and some prostrate on the floor." On page 172, he tells of a woman who "sunk down upon the floor," and on page 196 we read of a man who sunk "helpless" to the floor. Charles Finney claimed that "the word of the Lord would cut the strongest men down, and render them entirely helpless. I could name many case of this kind" (*Ibid.*, p. 229).

George A. Smith, a Mormon Apostle, made this comment concerning the revivals:

. . . just at the time that God was revealing unto his servant Joseph to raise up men . . . Satan was at work . . . There were in many parts of the country strange manifestations, great camp and other protracted meetings were assembled together to worship under the various orders denominated Methodists, Campbelites, Presbyterians, Baptists, Unitarians, etc., among whom were manifested the development of a spirit which deprived men of their strength; they would faint away, or, they would manifest a variety of contortions of countenance. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 2)

The Book of Mormon contains a number of accounts of people falling to the ground. In Jacob 7:124 we read: ". . . the power of God came down upon them, and they were overcome that they fell to the earth." Mosiah 4:1 tells of a "multitude" that fell "to the earth." Alma 18:24 relates how another man "fell unto the earth," and Alma 19:6 says he was "**under the power of God**; . . ." This wording is very interesting, for Charles Finney told of people "falling **under the power of God**, as the Methodists would express it, . . ." (*Charles G. Finney*, p. 136).

On page 103 of his book, Charles Finney related the following:

I had not spoken to them in this strain of direct application, I should think, more than a quarter of an hour when all at once an awful solemnity seemed to settle down upon them; the congregation began to fall from their seats in every direction, and cried for mercy. If I had had a sword in each hand, I could not have cut them off their seats as fast as they fell. Indeed nearly the whole congregation were either on their knees or prostrate, . . .

In the Book of Mormon we read:

. . . when king Benjamin had made an end of speaking . . . he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and behold **they had fallen to the earth**, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them. . . . they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, . . . (Mosiah 4:1-2)

In the revivals which occurred in Joseph Smith's time some of those who fell to the ground became as though they were dead. Benjamin Seth Youngs related the following:

In the year eighteen hundred and five, I was sent . . . to the people of the Revival in Kentucky, and the adjacent states. . . . I have seen the bodies of men and women, shaken as trees with a tempest; and others cast down prostrate to the earth, and lying sometimes for hours, cold and stiff, like corpses! (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pp. 378-379)

James B. Finley told of a man who tried to break up a revival by riding his horse into the crowd:

Suddenly, as if smitten by lightning, he fell from his horse. . . . I trembled, for I feared God had killed the bold and daring blasphemer. He exhibited no sign whatever of life; his limbs were rigid, his wrists pulseless, and his breath gone. Several of his comrades came to see him, but they fell like men slain in battle. . . . for thirty hours he lay, to all human appearance, dead. During this time the people kept up singing and praying. At last he exhibited signs of life, . . . and springing to his feet, his groans were converted into loud and joyous shouts of praise. (*The Rise and Progress of an American State*, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, pp. 13-14)

One witness to a revival wrote:

"A more tremendous sight never struck the eyes of mortal man. . . . hundreds of people lay prostrate on the ground crying for mercy. Oh! My dear brother, had you been there to have seen the convulsed limbs, the apparently lifeless bodies, . . ." (*The Stammering Century*, by Gilbert Seldes, p. 60)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, related the following:

I have seen persons lie on the benches, on the floor of the meeting houses, or on the ground at their camp meetings, for ten, twenty, and thirty minutes, and I do not know but an hour, and not a particle of pulse about them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, p. 113)

The king who fell "unto the earth" in the Book of Mormon,



Alma 18:42, lay upon the earth “as if he were dead.” His servants carried him to his bed, and “for two days and two nights” they were unable to determine if he was dead or alive. Finally, he was found to be “under the power of God” (Alma 19:6). In Alma 19:18 we read that when a multitude came they found “the king, and the queen, and their servants prostrate upon the earth, and they all lay there as though they were dead; . . .” In Alma 22:18 we read of another king that “was struck as if he were dead.”

In the revivals which took place in Joseph Smith’s time the people who fell “under the power of God” usually awoke praising God. In *The Stammering Century*, page 59, we find the following statement:

Speech and motion return in the same gradual manner; the features become more full than before. Pleasure paints the countenance as peace comes to the soul, and when faith is obtained the person rises up, and with most heavenly countenance shouts—“Glory to God.”

Charles Finney related the following:

After lying in a speechless state about sixteen hours, Miss G—’s mouth was opened, and a new song was given her. She was taken from the horrible pit of miry clay, and her feet were set upon a rock; and it was true that many saw it and feared. (*Charles G. Finney*, p. 66)

In the Book of Mormon, Alma 19:29-30, we read the following concerning a woman who had been laying prostrate on the ground:

. . . she arose and stood upon her feet, and cried with a loud voice, saying: O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell! O blessed God, have mercy on this people!

And when she had said this, she clasped her hands, being filled with joy, speaking many words which were not understood: . . .

Such scenes must have been very common in the revivals of the 19th century. Charles Finney relates the following:

. . . the young man . . . exclaimed as he came, “Squire W— is converted!” . . . “I went up into the woods to pray, . . . I saw Squire W— pacing to and fro, and singing as loud as he could sing; and every few moments he would stop and clap his hands with his full strength, and shout, ‘I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!’ Then he would march and sing again; and then stop, and shout, and clap his hands.” While the young man was telling us this, behold, Squire W— appeared in sight, . . . he cried out, “I’ve got it! I’ve got it!” clapped his hands with all his might, and fell upon his knees and began to give thanks to God. (*Charles G. Finney*, pp. 32-33)

The story of king Benjamin in the Book of Mormon certainly sounds like a “camp-meeting.” Mosiah 2:5 tells that the people “pitched their tents round about.” Then a “tower” was erected from which king Benjamin spoke. The king delivered a sermon which would have fit very well in a revival meeting of the 19th century. Finally, the people fell down upon the earth, for they “had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth” (Mosiah 4:2). They repented and “the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, . . .” (Mosiah 4:3).

Notice how similar this is to a report of a “camp-meeting” reported by Captain Frederick Marryat:

“The camp was raised upon . . . a piece of table-land comprising many acres. . . . At one end, . . . was a raised stand, which served as a pulpit for the preachers, . . .

“Outside of the area, which may be designated as the church, were hundreds of tents pitched. . . . In front of the pulpit was a space railed off, and strewn with straw, which I was told was the anxious seat, and on which sat those who were touched by their conscience or the discourse of the preacher. . . . girl after girl dropped down upon the straw on one side, and men on the other. . . .

“Every minute the excitement increased; some wrung their hands and called for mercy; some tore their hair; boys lay down crying bitterly, . . . some fell on their backs with their eyes closed, waving their heads in a slow motion, and crying out—‘Glory, glory, glory!’” (*Diary in America*, as cited in *Uncommon Americans*, by Don C. Seitz, pp. 74-77)

M. T. Lamb made these comments concerning the Book of Mormon and revivals:

It is well known that in Western New York, sixty or seventy years ago, during the boyhood and youth of Joseph Smith, strangely exciting revival scenes were frequent, notably among the Methodists of that day, and in connection with camp meetings, and that in just such exciting revival scenes, Mr. Smith himself received his first and his strongest religious convictions. Many a time he had witnessed men and women fall down under the influence of the truth, and remain apparently unconscious for hours, sometimes for a day, and in rare instances for three days together—and they suddenly reviving, rise up and break forth into the most extravagant expressions of joy and praise to the Saviour who had redeemed them.

Hence when it became desirable to describe in the Book of Mormon a genuine revival or an individual conversion, nothing would be more natural than for him to draw upon his own observations and experience for the model. . . . the religious experiences of the Book of Mormon were borrowed from the modern camp meeting. The book abounds in modern camp-meeting expressions. (*The Golden Bible*, New York, 1887, pp. 222, 223 and 227)

## Infant Baptism

In Joseph Smith’s day there was a great deal of controversy about the baptism of infants. Alexander Campbell published this statement on January 7, 1828: “The question of infant baptism is now generally discussed all over the land, and immense has been the result” (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 5, p. 138). On December 3, 1827, this statement appeared in *The Christian Baptist*: “Now, a disciple who holds infant baptism is, in this respect weak, . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 109). On page 116 of the same volume, “infant sprinkling” is called “a corruption” in the church. On April 3, 1826, Campbell spoke of “the popish rite of baby baptism or sprinkling” (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 181).

According to his son, Sidney Rigdon—who later became a member of the First Presidency in the Mormon Church—resigned his position in a church because of the fact that he would not teach the doctrine of “infant damnation” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1966, pp. 21-22).

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this comment concerning the controversy over infant baptism:

We used to quarrel with one another, when we were among the sectarians, about our peculiar doctrines. . . . There was also much wrangling as to whether infants that died went to hell or not. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 240)

This controversy over baptism of infants is reflected in the Book of Mormon. About 400 years after the coming of Christ, Mormon was supposed to have written an epistle to his son. In this epistle he stated that those who believed in infant baptism were in danger of “death, hell, and an endless torment”:

For, if I have learned the truth, there have been disputations among you concerning the baptism of your little children. . . . I know that it is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children. . . . little children are alive in Christ, . . . if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell.

Behold I say unto you, that he that supposeth that little children need baptism is in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity, for he hath neither faith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must go down to hell.

For awful is the wickedness to suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must perish because he hath no baptism. . . . he that saith that little children need baptism denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at naught the atonement of him and the power of his redemption.

Wo unto such, for they are in danger of death, hell, and an endless torment. I speak it boldly; God hath commanded me. . . . all little children are alive in Christ, and



also all they that are without the law. (Moroni 8:5, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22)

The teachings of the Book of Mormon concerning infant baptism are very similar to those of Alexander Campbell. On May 5, 1828, Campbell wrote:

If baptism be connected with the remission of sins, infants require it not; for they have no sins to be remitted—at least the Calvinists and Arminians teach this doctrine; for they say that “original sin” is all that is chargeable upon infants. . . . infants, on the Calvinistic and Arminian hypothesis, need not be baptized: and in this I am both a Calvinist and an Arminian. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 5, pp. 231-32)

In the Book of Mormon, Moroni 8:8 we read: “. . . little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them . . .”

On April 5, 1824, Alexander Campbell wrote:

Can the rite of sprinkling an infant with consecrated water, O! Calvinist! alter the decree of heaven? . . . can the neglect of a parent to bring to you their infant offspring, seal the destruction of that infant? Who gave you the right of thus consigning to endless woe unsprinkled infants, and of opening heaven by a few drops of water to those impaled in your fold? (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 1, p. 183)

On February 6, 1826, Campbell wrote that he believed that “all infants dying shall be saved.” (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 141)

M. T. Lamb made these interesting comments concerning the Book of Mormon and infant baptism:

In his old age he [Mormon] is alleged to have written some fatherly letters to his son, Moroni, . . . Among other things he bitterly and fiercely assails . . . those who claimed that infants should be baptized. A careful examination of the previous history of the Nephites and of the doctrines taught in the Book of Mormon will make so clear the modern complexion of the whole matter as to give it almost the appearance of burlesque, rather than a sober discussion. . . . It is true that the practice of baptizing infants prevailed from a very early period upon the Eastern continent. But here in this Western world during olden time, the Latter Day Saints [i.e., the Nephites] had things their own way from the very beginning. The instructions upon the mode and the subjects of baptism were plain and unmistakable from Nephi down to Mormon. It is impossible to suppose after a thousand years of the clearest possible revelations, that any professing Christian could, for one moment, have seriously entertained the notion that infants must be baptized.

The whole thing is modern. The arguments used against the practice are the arguments of to-day, and not such as would have been presented in any other age of the world. (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 231, 232 and 234)

## Church of Christ

The following information is found in Joseph Smith’s History as it was published in the *Times and Seasons*, May 15, 1843:

. . . a gentleman of the name of Alexander Campbell, . . . resided in Bethany, Brook county, Virginia, where he published a monthly periodical, called the “Christian Baptist.” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 193)

After examining a reprint of *The Christian Baptist*, a seven volume work by Campbell, we feel that there may be some relationship between Alexander Campbell’s teachings and the Book of Mormon. Campbell began publishing *The Christian Baptist* in 1823 and continued this work until 1830—the same year the Book of Mormon was published. Campbell had another publication, *The Millennial Harbinger*, which he continued to print after *The Christian Baptist* had ceased publication.

By the year 1829, Campbell had become well known as a defender of the Christian religion. In fact, his debate with Robert Owen, “the infidel philosopher,” made the front page three times in the newspaper published in Joseph Smith’s own neighborhood (see *The Wayne Sentinel*, May 29, 1829; June 19, 1829, and June 26, 1829).

While Alexander Campbell rejected modern revelation and accepted only the Bible as a guide for his faith (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 1, p. 54), he believed that the “greatest moral calamity that has befallen the Protestants is this, that they imagined the Reformation was finished when Luther and Calvin died” (*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 89).

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards claims that the Mormons and a few “apostate groups that have broken away from this Church” are the only ones who believe that the Church of Jesus Christ “fell into an apostate condition as predicted by the Apostles, and that the Church could not be reestablished upon the earth merely through a reformation but only through a **restoration**” (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 3).

It is interesting to note, however, that Alexander Campbell was using the term “restoration” years before the Book of Mormon was printed. On September 11, 1824, he wrote:

In a word we have had reformations enough . . .

A **restoration** of the ancient order of things is all that is necessary to the happiness and usefulness of christians. . . . Celebrated as the era of Reformation is, we doubt not but that the era of **restoration** will as far transcend it . . . as the New Testament transcends . . . the creed of Westminster and the canons of the Assembly’s Digest. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 2, p. 136)

On June 6, 1825, Campbell published an article entitled “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.” In this article he stated: “The constitution and law of the primitive church shall be the constitution and law of **the restored church**” (*Ibid.*, p. 221).

On November 6, 1826, Campbell wrote:

We contend that all christian sects are more or less apostatized from the institutions of the Saviour, and that by all the obligations of the christian religion they that fear and love the Lord are bound to return to the ancient order of things in spirit and in truth. (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 89)

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett recognizes that there is some relationship between the work of Alexander Campbell and that of Joseph Smith:

It is interesting to note that some years before the Lord revealed himself to man in our latter day that people both in America and England were hoping, longing and even expecting light to burst from the heavens. “The state of expectancy in the religious world was such that many thousands were yearning for the primitive gospel; the words restoration, revelation, reformation, and the ancient order of things were in the air.” . . .

In the area where the Lord was to give his “preface unto the book of commandments, which I have given to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth,” had previously experienced a work of preparation nothing short of miraculous. . . . This **work of preparation** had been accomplished by a new religious movement known as the Disciples of Christ. “No Church in the world taught so many doctrines of the restoration as the ‘Campbellites’ had been teaching for a few years.”

Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander became weary of the strife which existed in modern-day Christianity. They fervently hoped to promote unity among the Christian sects by restoring the primitive Church of the New Testament. They . . . did not start out to organize a new church, but to restore the ancient order of things which they hoped all Christian sects could be united into. Since they practiced baptism by immersion, the Baptist Association invited them to join them. . . .

**Campbell claimed the Christian world was in need of a restoration** of the gospel. . . . they taught of an **apostasy**, that the Christian Church must be restored, that the practice of “laying on hands” must be **restored**. The most popular belief of the Campbellites was their first five principles, which were: faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . .

With such “unorthodox” teachings it is no wonder that friction should soon cause the separation of the Campbellites and Baptist, but not without having thousands of erstwhile Baptists willing to follow the “restoration” movement of the Campbells. Among the Baptist preachers to join the Campbellite movement was Sidney Rigdon. . . . the Campbells organized a new denomination called The Disciples of Christ. . . .

This new movement has never been given its full

credit as a **forerunner**, preparing the way for the glorious restoration.

... The teachings of the “Disciples” had certainly opened the way for the divine truths that were soon to be taught in every village and town on the frontier. . . . In no other region but in northern Ohio could the Church of Christ gotten such a foothold. The doctrines revealed through Joseph Smith were so new, disturbing and revolutionary to those of orthodox Christianity that a wave of persecution would have engulfed the new Church before it made very marked inroads. But here on the Western Reserve thousands had been prepared for such a divine message. (*Supplement to the Remarkable Story of How We Got the Revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants*, by Ivan J. Barrett, pp. 1-5)

There were many others besides the Campbellites who believed in the idea of a restoration. The Mormon scholar Marvin S. Hill gives us this very interesting information:

That early Mormonism had a “primitive gospel” orientation has long been recognized. This fact was first discerned by Alexander Campbell, who saw the emergence of Mormonism as a gross, satanic imitation of his restorationist movement. . . . In truth, the primitivist movement was of national scope, spilling well beyond the limits of its institutionalization by the Disciples of Christ, including among its advocates those who formed other sects, and also many who became Mormons. . . . the movement which greatly influenced the character of Mormon thought got underway between the end of the American Revolution and the beginning of the Jacksonian period. . . .

The primitive gospel movement emerged independently in New England, the South, and the West among a variety of groups. Usually each group was led by a layman or a man with limited clerical training who was influenced by a strong, anticlerical bias and who sought to break down any distinction between clergy and laity in the church. These groups took flight from the existing old-line churches. They saw them as corrupt and apostate in nature and affirmed the necessity of a restoration of the primitive faith and order. . . . Lucy Mack Smith, the Prophet’s mother, details in her history how she affiliated in New England with several religious groups, including the Presbyterians and Methodists, but found this experience frustrating and concluded that no existing church would give her life and salvation. . . .

Lucy indicates that her husband shared this primitivist outlook, and in 1811, after becoming excited on the subject of religion, he vowed that he would join no church but contend for “the ancient order, as established by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His Apostles.” . . .

With such a background it was quite natural for young Joseph Smith to acquire a primitivist attitude. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 352-355)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states: “Does it not seem incredible that of all the churches in the world, there was not one that bore his name when the Lord restored his Church in this dispensation?” (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p. 136).

Actually, sometime before the Book of Mormon was published, a controversy had developed concerning the Lord’s church. In *The Gospel Luminary* for July, 1827, we find this statement: “The name Christian should be taken to the exclusion of all sectarian names, as the most proper appellation to designate the body and its members” (*The Gospel Luminary*, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 163). This article was published in West-Bloomfield, N.Y., about 15 miles from Joseph Smith’s home.

Alexander Campbell was one of those who wanted the church to be called after the name of Christ. The following statements concerning the name of the church were published in *The Christian Baptist* on July 4, 1825:

Look into the New Testament. There the church is the **Church of Christ**, and his disciples are Christians. Look out of the New Testament, and look into the creeds and confessions. Here we see a Baptist church, a Methodist church, and a Presbyterian church, &c.

. . . The New Testament names, which all must approve of, are thrown aside to give place to sectarian names, . . .

When we give a name and a creed to a church, other than the name of Christ, or Christian, and the New Testament, or the Gospel, that church acquires immediately in our imaginations and feelings, and in fact, a character altogether different from what the Church of Christ really possesses in the light of the New Testament. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 2, p. 237)

The following appeared in *The Christian Baptist* on August 1, 1825:

Sectarianism, . . . robs the saint of the name of his Saviour; and of his authority too, by giving him the name of a sect. . . . Paul was greater than John the Baptist, (Matth. xi. 11.) yet he would not permit any of Christ’s disciples to call themselves by his name, or by the name of Apollos, or of Peter. . . . God makes it the duty of every christian to oppose every sectarian name and creed, . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 9-10)

Thus we see that a controversy concerning the name of the church was going on in the 1820’s. Joseph Smith, however, would have us believe that this same controversy was going on almost 2,000 years ago and that it was settled by Jesus himself. In the Book of Mormon we read:

And they said unto him: Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church, for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter.

And the Lord said unto them: . . . why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing? . . . ye shall call the church in my name; . . . how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses’ name then it be Moses’ church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 27:3, 4, 7, 8)

In 3 Nephi 26:21 we read that those who “were baptized in the name of Jesus were called the **Church of Christ**,” and in 4 Nephi 1:1 we are told that “the disciples of Jesus had formed a **Church of Christ** in all the lands round about.”

When Joseph Smith first established the Mormon Church, it was known as “the **Church of Christ**” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 20:1). By 1834, however, the name of the church was changed to “The Church of the Latter-day Saints.” David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, stated:

In June, 1829, the Lord gave us the name by which we must call the church, being the same as he gave the Nephites. We obeyed His commandment, and called it **The Church of Christ** until 1834, when, through the influence of Sydney Rigdon, the name of the church was changed to “The Church of the Latter Day Saints,” dropping out the name of Christ entirely, that name which we were strictly commanded to call the church by, and which Christ by His own lips makes so plain. (*Address to All Believers in Christ*, p. 73)

The name of the church was changed on May 3, 1834. This is recorded in the *History of the Church* as follows:

After prayer, the conference proceeded to discuss the subject of names and appellations, when a motion was made by Sidney Rigdon, and seconded by Newel K. Whitney, that this Church be known hereafter by the name of “**The Church of the Latter-day Saints**.” Remarks were made by the members, after which the motion passed by unanimous vote. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 2, p. 63)

Sidney Rigdon, who had previously been associated with the Campbellites, became very bitter against them and may have decided to change the name of the church so that the Mormons would not appear to have any connection with them. Some of the Mormons, however, objected to the new name of the church because Christ’s name had been left out. Due to contention over the name of the church, in 1838 Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which Christ’s name was reinserted into the name of the



church. Since that time the church has been called “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (See Section 115 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*.)

### Ministers and Money

Before the Book of Mormon was published there was a great deal of contention concerning the idea of a paid ministry. The following statement appeared in a publication called *Plain Truth* and was reprinted in the *Palmyra Herald* on October 30, 1822:

The clergy are guilty of begging money of the people under pretence of saving souls; which instead of applying to the wants of the needy, they spend in luxurious living! Their hands are too delicate to work, but they are not ashamed to beg a living for the cause of the Lord.

Alexander Campbell’s publication is filled with material against the idea of a paid ministry. On December 1, 1823, Campbell said:

Give money to make poor pious youths learned clergy, or vain pretenders to erudition; and they pray that they may preach to you; yes, and pay them too. Was there ever such a craft as priestcraft? No, it is the craftiest of all crafts! It is so crafty that it obtains by its craft the means to make craftsmen, and then it makes the deluded support them! (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 1, p. 91)

On Feb. 2, 1824, Campbell wrote that “money is of vital consequence in the kingdom of the clergy. Without it a clergyman could not be made, nor a congregation supplied with a ‘faithful pastor.’ O Mammon, thou wonder-working god!” (*Ibid.*, p. 124). This statement appeared in the same issue (p. 140):

“Will you,” said an honest inquirer, “allow the clergy no salary at all? Will you not allow the poorer class of the clergy a decent little competence?” I replied I have no allowances to make. Let them have what the Lord has allowed them. “How much is that?” said he. Just nothing at all, said I. A church constituted upon New Testament principles, having its own bishop or bishops, or, as sometimes called, elders, will not, and ought not, to suffer them to be in want of any thing necessary, provided they labor in word and doctrine, and provided also, they are ensamples to the flock in industry, disinterestedness, humility, hospitality, and charity to the poor. Such bishops will be esteemed very highly in love for their work’s sake; but especially those who, by their own hands, minister not only to their own wants, but also to the wants of their brethren.

On April 3, 1826, Campbell wrote:

That any man is to be paid at all for preaching, i.e. making sermons and pronouncing them; or that any man is to be hired for a stipulated sum to preach and pray, and expound scripture, by the day, month, or year, I believe to be a relic of popery. (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 185)

The Book of Mormon is very much against the idea of a paid ministry. In Mosiah 18:24 and 26 we read:

And he also commanded them that the priests whom he had ordained should labor with their own hands for their support. . . .

And the priests were not to depend upon the people for their support; but for their labor they were to receive the grace of God, that they might wax strong in the Spirit, having the knowledge of God, that they might teach with power and authority from God.

The Book of Mormon certainly seems to reflect the controversy over a paid ministry which was going on in Joseph Smith’s time.

On November 5, 1827, Alexander Campbell published a letter from a church in New York, and on February 5, 1828, he published one from a church in Manchester, England, to “the Church of Christ at New York.” Below is a comparison of extracts from these two letters with a verse from the Book of Mormon.

#### The Christian Baptist

Our Elder **labors with his own hands**, that he [he?] may live honestly, . . . (vol. 5, p. 163)

. . . our elders **labor . . . for their support**, and are not in burdensome to the church; but in case of need, . . . (vol. 5, p. 95)

#### Book of Mormon

Yea, and all their priests and teachers should **labor with their own hands for their support**, in all cases save it were in sickness, or in much want; . . . (Mosiah 27:5)

In the *Wayne Sentinel* (published in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood) for September 7, 1827, we find a copy of an “Epistle” from the “Yearly Meeting of Friends in London.” In this “Epistle” we find an attack on the paid ministry, stating that “the ministry of the Gospel is to be **“without money and without price.”** In the Book of Mormon, Alma 1:20, we read: “. . . they did impart the word of God, one with another, **without money and without price.**” The words “without money and without price” also appear in Isaiah 55:1. Nevertheless, it is interesting that both the “Epistle” published in the *Wayne Sentinel* and the Book of Mormon use these words to attack a paid ministry.

### Westminster Confession

In the *Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 1964-65, page 7, we read the following:

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms were adopted, in 1729, by the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church, as the “confession of their faith,” excepting certain clauses relating to the civil magistrate.

The Westminster Confession and Catechisms were a vital part of the Presbyterian faith in the nineteenth century. Alexander Campbell stated that the “Westminster Catechism, is the ‘text-book’ for the religious instruction of the offspring and households of Presbyterians” (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 3, p. 42).

According to Joseph Smith, his “father’s family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith” before the angel told him about the gold plates (see *Pearl of Great Price* Joseph Smith 2:7). Since the Westminster Confession and Catechisms were sold at the Wayne Bookstore in Palmyra (see *Wayne Sentinel*, January 26, 1825), it is likely that the Smith family possessed them. Although Joseph Smith was not converted to the Presbyterian Church, he may have been familiar with the Westminster Confession. In fact, he may have heard his brothers learning the Catechisms at various times.

Although the Book of Mormon theology is not Calvinistic, certain portions of it resemble the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. For instance, the Westminster Confession, Chapter 32, is probably the source for Alma, Chapter 40. Below is a comparison of the two.

1. Both claim to give information concerning the state of man after death.

. . . **the state of the soul . . . between death and the resurrection** . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 40:11)

. . . **the state of Men after death, and of the resurrection** . . . (The Westminster Confession, Chapter 32, as printed in *The Confession of Faith the Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, Philadelphia, 1813)

2. Both state that the souls of men return to God after death.

. . . the spirits . . . are taken home **to that God who gave them life.** (Alma 40:11)

. . . their souls . . . return **to God who gave them.** (Westminster Confession, Chapter 32:1)

3. Both claim that the righteous are received into a state of peace.

. . . **the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness,** . . . (Alma 40:12)

**The souls of the righteous, are received into the highest heavens,** . . . (Westminster Confession, Chapter 32:1)



4. Both state that the wicked are cast out into darkness.  
 . . . **the spirits of the wicked shall be cast out into outer darkness;**  
 . . . (Alma 40:13)  
 . . . **the souls of the wicked, are cast into hell, . . . and utter darkness, . . .** (Westminster Confession 32:1)
5. Both state that the souls of the wicked remain in darkness until the judgment.  
 . . . **the souls of the wicked, yea, in darkness . . . remain in** this state, until the time of their resurrection. (Alma 40:14)  
 . . . **the souls of the wicked remain in darkness,** reserved to the judgment of the great day. (Westminster Confession 32:1)
6. Both state that the soul will be united again with the body at the time of the resurrection.  
 . . . the **souls** and the **bodies** are re-**united,** . . . (Alma 40:20)  
 . . . **bodies . . . shall be united** again to their **souls.** (Westminster Confession 32:2)
- For additional parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Westminster Confession see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 70-72.

### Masonic Influence

The reader will remember that Alexander Campbell charged that the “question of free masonry” is discussed in the Book of Mormon. Masonry was a very important issue in Joseph Smith’s time. Whitney R. Cross states:

William Morgan became a Mason in Rochester in 1823, but found himself excluded from the Batavia chapter. . . he wrote the *Illustrations of Masonry* . . . the unfortunate author suffered a series of mysterious persecutions. First the authorities held him briefly on a debt claim, so that his lodgings could be searched for the manuscript. On September 8, 1826, parties of strangers, . . . began appearing in town. Their attempt at arson on the print shop failed. . . he was kidnapped on the evening of September 12. . . He may after a time have been released across the Canadian border. More probably he was tied in a weighted cable, rowed to the center of the Niagara River . . . and dropped overboard. In any case, it cannot be proved that he was ever seen again. . . The event implicated Masons all the way from the Finger Lakes to the Niagara Frontier . . . Thus by 1827 village committees from Rochester westward had begun to organize politically against the accused society. . . The major issue seemed to be one of morality: Masonry was believed to have committed a crime. Its members had put their fraternal obligations ahead of their duty to state and society, sanctioning both a lawless violation of personal security and a corrupt plot to frustrate the normal constitutional guarantees of justice . . . Its titles and rituals smacked of monarchy as well as infidelity. The secrecy which required such reckless guarding suggested ignoble and dangerous designs. Whence, for instance, came the skulls, reputed to be used for drinking vessels in the ceremony of the Royal Arch degree? Curiosity, fancy, and rumor thus multiplied the apparent threats of Masonry to the peace, order, and spirituality of society.

Such reactions grew as expert propagandists played upon the fears and wonderment of the multitude. . . the Antimasonic excitement . . . may well have been the most comprehensive single force to strike the “infected district” during an entire generation. Charles Finney latter estimated that two thousand lodges and forty-five thousand members in the United States suspended fraternal activity. Most of the groups in western New York must have done so. (*The Burned-Over District*, by Whitney R. Cross, New York, 1965, pp. 114, 115, 117, 120)

Walter Franklin Prince made this statement concerning the relationship between the Book of Mormon and the excitement over Masonry:

Now in at least twenty-one chapters in seven out of the sixteen “books” of the Book of Mormon are to be found passages, varying

from several to sixty-three lines in length, plainly referring to Masonry under the guise of pretended similar organizations in ancient America. (*The American Journal of Psychology*, vol. 28, 1917, p. 376)

After studying copies of the *Wayne Sentinel* and the *Palmyra Freeman* (these are newspapers that were printed in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood), we have become convinced that the controversy over Masonry is reflected in the Book of Mormon. To understand the relationship it is necessary to know how excited the people in New York became after Morgan’s disappearance. In the *Wayne Sentinel* for March 23, 1827, we find the following quoted from the *Rochester Daily Advertiser*:

The excitement respecting Morgan, instead of decreasing, spreads its influence and acquires new vigour daily. Scarcely a paper do we open without having our eye greeted by accounts of meetings, together with preambles and resolutions, some of them of a cast still more decided and proscriptive than any we have yet published. . . .

The Freemason, too—not only those who took off Morgan, but every one who bears the masonic name—are proscribed, as unworthy of “any office in town, county, state, or United States!” and the institution of masonry, . . . is held up as **dangerous** and detrimental to the interests of the country!

The controversy over Masonry soon became political. The *Wayne Sentinel* carried the following statement on November 16, 1827: “The election in this county (says the *Ontario Messenger*) has resulted in the choice of the entire **anti-Masonic** ticket.”

On November 9, 1827, Eliphalet Murdock claimed that some years before his father was found with his throat cut. He implied that the Masons had murdered him because they felt he had revealed their secrets:

. . . I believe the Lodge was thus induced to suppose that he had revealed those secrets, and dealt with him accordingly! Thus, I believe my father fell a victim to masonic vengeance, and that without a cause! (*Wayne Sentinel*, November 9, 1827)

The feeling against Masonry became so strong that many Masons left the fraternity to actively work against it. The following appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on July 18, 1828:

. . . the masonic society has been **silently growing** among us, whose principles and operations are calculated to **subvert and destroy** the great and important principles of the commonwealth. . . . It requires the **concealment of crime** and protects the guilty from punishment.

It encourages the commission of **crime** by affording the guilty facilities of escape.

It affords opportunities for the corrupt and designing to form plans against the government and the lives and characters of individuals. . . .

An institution, thus fraught with so many and great evils, is **dangerous** to our **government** and the safety of our citizens, and it is unfit to exist among a free people.

We, therefore, . . . solemnly absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the masonic institution. . . . and in support of these resolutions, . . . and the safety of individuals against the usurpations of all **secret societies** and open force, and against the “vengeance” of the masonic institution, . . .

Resolved, That however beneficial **secret societies and combinations** may have been considered in the dark ages . . . yet in this enlightened age and country, they become not only useless to their members, but **dangerous to the government.**

On September 26, 1828, the *Wayne Sentinel* carried an article in which the following appeared:

If you listen to the party which lately welcomed Don Miguel as their “tutelar angel,” . . . the Freemasons have been the cause of all the “seditions, privy cons[p]iracies, and rebellions,” which, for the last thirty years, have afflicted Europe. . . . The Free-masons are, therefore, radically and essentially, demagogues, jacobins, conspirators, assassins, infidels,

traitors, and atheists. Their **band** of union is formed of the broken cement of existing order—their secret is the watch-word of sedition and rebellion—their object is anarchy and **plunder**— . . . unless they are suppressed, there will soon be neither religion, morals, literature, nor civilized society left! (*Wayne Sentinel*, September 26, 1828)

The *Morgan Investigator*, published in Batavia, New York, carried these statements:

“**Beware of Secret Combinations.**”

These are the dying words of General George Washington . . . there is something in the principles of masonry that tends to distract the mind and lead to the perpetration of **crimes** . . . (*The Morgan Investigator*, March 29, 1827, p. 1)

In another article published in the same paper we find the following statement: “I believe the institution of masonry **dangerous to our liberties**, and I think they have gone far enough in the march towards supreme power to receive a check.” The same paper called the Masons “an organized **band** of desperadoes” and spoke of the “dark and treasonable plot, formed against the lives of our citizens and the laws of our country.” The following appeared in a book printed in Utica, New York, in 1829:

4. Masonry is a **murderous** institution . . . the very principles, spirit, and essence, of this ancient fraternity, are **murderous!**

5. Those who join the institution, solemnly swear that, if they violate “any part” of their oaths, they will submit to be executed in the manner the oaths prescribe. . . . What a disgrace . . . a society should exist which claims the prerogative of sacrificing human beings, . . .

6. The masonic society is inconsistent with our free institutions. . . .

7 . . . If a murderer or any other criminal who is a master mason is brought before the bar of justice to be tried, and gives this signal [signal] of distress; if the judge or prosecutor or any of the jurors are master masons, and see him give this sign, they are under the solemnities of an oath, to risk their lives to save his. (*An Inquiry into the Nature and Tendency of Speculative Free-Masonry*, by John G. Stearns, pp. 76, 77 and 79)

In an address delivered September 11, 1829, we find the following:

This day has been set apart, as an occasion for assaulting the proud institution simultaneously throughout the state; for lifting against it the voices of freemen in all our borders. . . . He [Morgan] laid down his life for his country; his **widow** and his **orphans**, are alive to bear witness. He fell by the hands of masonic violence, . . . the midnight foe of our liberties. . . . The horrors of the Revolution in France are, however, clearly traced to the hand of this midnight Order, and the present convulsed state of Mexico is principally owing to the secret operations of two masonic parties, . . . (*The Anti-Masonic Review and Monthly Magazine*, vol. 1, no. 10, pp. 296-297)

On March 14, 1828, the *Wayne Sentinel* reported that an “anti-Masonic” newspaper was to begin publication in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood. It was to be known as *The Palmyra Freeman*. We have only had access to photographs of a few pages from this paper, but these pages have led us to the conclusion that it was extremely anti-Masonic. On December 2, 1828, this statement appeared in the *Palmyra Freeman*: “Our Government and Country will be **destroyed**, unless the people put down **Masonry** root and branch.” In the same issue we find the following: “And what will the people of this country think of themselves ten or twenty years hence, if they should suffer themselves to be duped, and do not unite hand and heart, to put down a **secret society**, which, if again suffered to get fairly the ascendancy will crush them and their liberties together.” On November 10, 1829, this statement appeared in the *Palmyra Freeman*: “Masonry, thank God, is now before the wor[l]d in all her naked deformity! — a **secret combination** to destroy liberty and religion, . . .” (*Palmyra Freeman*, November 10, 1829).

Now, when we look at the Book of Mormon we see that it is filled with references to secret societies. The Jaredites “formed a

secret combination” (Ether 8:18), and the Nephites and Lamanites had a “secret band” known as the Gadianton robbers (Helaman 8:28). Furthermore, the Book of Mormon warns the American people that a “secret combination” (Ether 9:24) would be among them.

In the Book of Mormon, Ether 8:14, we read:

And it came to pass that they all swear unto him, by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens, and also by the earth, and **by their heads**, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired should lose his head; and whoso should divulge whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them, the same should lose his life.

According to an expose of Masonry published in the *Wayne Sentinel* on March 14, 1828, the “Obligation of the Seventh, or Royal Arch degree” contained these words:

. . . I promise and swear, that I will aid and assist a companion Royal Arch mason wherever I shall see him engaged in any difficulty so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be **right or wrong**.— Furthermore do I promise and swear, that a companion Royal Arch mason’s secrets given me . . . shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast as in his own, when he communicated it to me, Murder and Treason **not** excepted. . . . binding myself under the no less penalty than to have my **skull struck off**, and my brains exposed . . .

Another oath contained the words, “. . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my head struck off . . .” The same issue of the *Wayne Sentinel* also stated that “the candidate is . . . presented with a human skull and told he must submit to the degradation of drinking his 5th libation from the skull.” In the Book of Mormon we read:

But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those **bands of robbers**, and did enter into their covenants and **their oaths**, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their **secret signs**, and their **secret words**; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his **band**, who had taken this covenant. (Book of Mormon, Helaman 6:21-22)

The Masons, of course, had secret signs and words. In fact, William Morgan’s expose stated that “the signs, due-guards, grips, words, passwords, and their several names comprise pretty much all the secrets of Masonry . . .” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 55). On page 68 we find this statement concerning the word “Shibboleth”: “This word was also used by our ancient brethren to **distinguish** a friend from foe, . . .”

As we have shown, the Masons were accused of being “dangerous to our government,” and some people felt that unless they were “suppressed, there will soon be neither religion, morals, literature, nor civilized society left!” (*Wayne Sentinel*, September 26, 1828). The Book of Mormon paints a similar picture concerning secret societies:

And they did set at **defiance** the law and the rights of their country; and they did **covenant** one with another to destroy the governor, and to establish a king over the land, that the land should no more be at **liberty** but should be subject unto kings. (3 Nephi 6:30)

In Ether 8:22 we read that “whatsoever nation shall uphold such **secret combinations**, . . . shall be **destroyed**.” In verse 25 of the same chapter we read that “whosoever buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries, . . .”

Because of the Morgan affair the Masons were accused of murder and shielding the guilty. John G. Stearns called Masonry “a **murderous** institution.” The Book of Mormon speaks of “**murderous combinations**” (Ether



8:23), “secret murders” (3 Nephi 9:9), and in 3 Nephi 6:29 we read that the wicked entered “into a covenant to destroy them, and to deliver those who were guilty of murder from the grasp of justice, . . .” Moroni, who was supposed to have lived about 400 A.D., claimed that the Lord revealed to him the condition of the Gentiles in the last days:

And it shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of **secret combinations** and the works of darkness.

Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads? (Book of Mormon, Mormon 8:27 and 40)

These verses must have been referring to Freemasonry. Ether 8:23-25 also seems to be warning against Masonry:

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, . . . suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain—and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you . . . to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this **secret combinations** which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up.

For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, . . . (Ether 8:23-25)

This warning reminds us of the words attributed to George Washington: “Beware of **secret combinations**” (*The Morgan Investigator*, March 29, 1827). The words “**secret combinations**” are found in the Book of Mormon in the following places: 2 Nephi 9:9, 26:22; Alma 37:30-31; Helaman 3:23; 3 Nephi 4:29; Mormon 8:27; Ether 8:19, 22, 9:1, 13:18, 14:8, 10. These words were frequently used with regard to Masonry. In fact, newspapers published in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood speak of “**secret combinations**” (see *Wayne Sentinel*, July 18, 1828, and *Palmyra Freeman*, November 10, 1829). The *Wayne Sentinel* for July 18, 1828, uses the words “**secret societies**,” and the *Palmyra Freeman*, December 2, 1828, calls the Masons a “**secret society**.” The Book of Mormon uses the words “**secret society**” in the following places: 3 Nephi 3:9; Ether 9:6, 11:22.

The Masons were sometimes accused of being a “**band**,” and it was claimed that one of their objects was to “**plunder**” (*Wayne Sentinel*, September 26, 1828). The Book of Mormon speaks of the “**band of Gadianton**” (Helaman 11:10), who “did commit murder and **plunder**” (Helaman 11:25).

The word “**craft**” was frequently used with regard to Masonry. The Book of Mormon tells us that Gadianton was “expert in many words, and also in his **craft**” (Helaman 2:4).

The Masons claimed that their ceremonies went back to “**ancient**” times (*Mormonism Exposed*, p. 68). The Book of Mormon quotes Giddianhi—an evil man—as saying:

And behold, I am Giddianhi; and I am the governor of this the **secret society** of Gadianton; which society and the works thereof I know to be good; and they are of **ancient** date and they have been handed down unto us. (3 Nephi 3:9)

In the Masonic ritual the candidate has “a rope called a Cable-tow round his neck” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 18). In the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 26:22, we read: “And there are also secret combinations, . . . according to the combinations of the devil, . . . and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, . . .”

In their ceremonies the Masons wore “a **lambskin** or white apron” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 24). According to 3 Nephi 3:7, the Gadianton robbers wore “a **lambskin** about their loins” (3 Nephi 4:7).

Joseph Smith’s Book of Moses—as published in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*—also contains material which reflects the controversy over Masonry:

And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, . . .

And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called **Master Mahan**, . . .

For Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became **Master Mahan**, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan; . . .

For, from the days of Cain, there was a **secret combination**, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses, 5:29, 31, 49, 51)

The statement, “Swear unto me by thy throat,” is very interesting, for according to an expose of Masonry published in the *Wayne Sentinel*, November 10, 1826, the candidate had to swear by his throat: “To all of which I do most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, . . . binding myself under no less penalty, than to have my throat cut across; . . .”

Even more interesting, however, are the words “**Master Mahan**.” They are so similar to the words “**Master Mason**” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 70) that we are almost forced to the conclusion that Joseph Smith had these words in mind.

S. H. Goodwin, a prominent Mason, made these statements concerning the relationship of the Book of Mormon to Masonry:

. . . the present writer is convinced that the years which saw the preparation and publication of the “Golden Bible” of this new faith, also witnesses the very material prenatal influence of Masonry upon Mormonism, proof of which lies thickly sprinkled over the pages of the Book of Mormon. . . . the evidence of the Mormon prophet’s reaction to the anti-Masonic disturbance is as clear and conclusive in the Book of Mormon, as is that which points out, beyond controversy, the region in which that book was produced, and establishes the character of the religious, educational and social conditions which constituted the environment of Joseph Smith. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, Salt Lake City, 1961, pp. 8-9)

Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made this statement in rebuttal to this charge:

It is true that during the period of the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon Morgan disappeared. It is also true that the author of “Mormonism and Masonry” does not show that Joseph Smith, or any one of those who were directly associated with him in the translation and publication of the book ever attended an anti-Masonic meeting, had any knowledge whatever of the ritual of the Masonic fraternity, or participated in the most remote manner in the crusade which followed the disappearance of Morgan and consequently could not have made Masonry the basis upon which the book was written. (*The Relationship of “Mormonism” and Freemasonry*, pp. 175-176)

Actually, any one who could read a newspaper at the time the Book of Mormon was written could have known a great deal about “the ritual of the Masonic fraternity.” As to Ivins’ statement that there is no proof that any one connected with the Book of Mormon was involved in the anti-Masonic movement, it can now be shown that Martin Harris (a witness to the Book of Mormon who provided money for its publication) was deeply involved. The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

The same point is made by his appointment in 1827 on the Palmyra “committee of vigilance” by the Wayne County **anti-Masonic** convention, a cause long since discredited but which then attracted many public-spirited individuals. (*Improvement Era*, February 1969, p. 20)

As a reference for this statement Dr. Anderson cites the *Wayne Sentinel* for October 5, 1827. In the “anti-Masonic convention” which Dr. Anderson speaks of the following



resolution was passed:

Resolved. That we conceive it a dereliction of our duty to give our suffrages for any office within the gift of the people to a freemason who has not publicly renounced the institution and principles of freemasonry, or to any person who approbates the institution or treats with levity, or attempts to palliate or screen the hor[r]id transaction relative to the abduction of William Morgan. (*Wayne Sentinel*, October 5, 1827)

Thus we see that at least one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon was deeply involved in the anti-Masonic excitement which followed Morgan's disappearance.

### Bible Influence

The King James Version of the Bible probably had more influence on the Book of Mormon than any other book. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt, however, stated that Joseph Smith "was **unacquainted** with the contents of the Bible; he was brought up to work" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 288).

After a careful examination of the matter, we have come to the conclusion that the Apostle Pratt's statement is not true. In fact, the evidence seems to show that Joseph Smith was very familiar with the Bible. In a manuscript which the Mormon Church suppressed for about 130 years Joseph Smith himself stated:

At about the age of twelve years my mind became Seriously impress with regard to the all important concerns for the welfare of my immortal Soul which led me to Searching the Scriptures believing as I was taught, that they contained the word of God . . . thus from the age twelve years to fifteen I pondered many things . . . and by Searching the Scriptures I found that . . . there was no society or denomination that built upon the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the new testament . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," by Paul R. Cheesman, Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1965, pp. 127-128)

Joseph Smith's own mother quoted him as saying:

. . . but Joseph, from the first, utterly refused even to attend their meetings, saying, "Mother, . . . I can take my Bible, and go into the woods, and learn more in two hours, than you can learn at meeting in two years, if you should go all the time." (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, 1853, p. 90)

Unlike the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt, the Mormon writer J. N. Washburn freely admits that "Joseph knew his Bible." (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 1954, p. 4)

### The Apocrypha

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie gives this information concerning the Apocrypha:

Scholars and Biblical students have grouped certain apparently scriptural Old Testament writings, which they deem to be of doubtful authenticity or of a spurious nature, under the title of the Apocrypha. . . . The Apocrypha was included in the King James Version of 1611, but by 1629 some English Bibles began to appear without it, and since the early part of the 19th century it has been excluded from almost all protestant Bibles. . . . the British and Foreign Bible Society has excluded it from all but some pulpit Bibles since 1827.

From these dates it is apparent that controversy was still raging as to the value of the Apocrypha at the time the Prophet began his ministry. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 41)

Although the Apocrypha was not generally accepted among the Protestants, Joseph Smith was interested in it, and when he purchased a Bible in the late 1820's he picked one which contained the Apocrypha. Reed Durham gives this interesting information:

The Bible used for Joseph Smith's Revision was purchased in E. B. Grandin's Bookstore in Palmyra, New York; . . . It was an edition of the Authorized Version "together with the Apocrypha," which was located between the two testaments, and was an 1828 edition, printed in Cooperstown, New York, by H. and E. Phinney Company.

("A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," by Reed C. Durham, Jr., Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 25)

Edward Stevenson tells of Joseph Smith's interest in the Apocrypha:

Opening the Bible to the Apocrypha, he said, "There are many precious truths in these books,—just as true as any of the Bible—but it requires much of the Spirit of God to divide the truths from the errors which have crept into them." . . . (*The Juvenile Instructor*, September 15, 1894, p. 570)

Since we know that Joseph Smith purchased a Bible with the Apocrypha and was somewhat familiar with its contents, it should come of no surprise to find that the Book of Mormon contains some parallels to it.

The Apocrypha seems to solve the mystery of the origin of the name "Nephi." While the name "Nephi" is not found in either the Old or New Testament of the Bible, it is one of the most important names in the Book of Mormon. At least four men in the Book of Mormon are named "Nephi." It is also the name of several books in the Book of Mormon, a city, a land, and a people. Mormon scholars have never been able to find the source of this name. Dr. Wells Jakeman admitted that "there does not seem to be any acceptable Hebrew meaning or derivation for this name." He states, however, that Nephi's name might have been derived from "the name of the young Egyptian grain god Nepri or Nepi . . ." Dr. Hugh Nibley, on the other hand, feels that the name was derived from another Egyptian source. Other Mormon writers suggest entirely different sources for this name. While Mormon writers seem to be in a state of confusion with regard to this name, the Apocrypha seems to settle the matter. In 2 Maccabees 1:36 we read:

And Neemias called this thing Naphthar, which is as much as to say, a cleansing; but many men call it **Nephi**.

It is obvious, then, that Joseph Smith must have borrowed the name "Nephi" from the Apocrypha.

The name "Ezias," found in the Book of Mormon, Helaman 8:20, is another name that does not appear in the Old or New Testaments of the Bible. It is interesting to note, however, that this same name is found in the Apocrypha, 1 Esdras 8:2.

The story of Judith in the Apocrypha seems to be reflected in the story of the decapitation of Laban in the Book of Mormon. Below is a list of four parallels between the two stories.

1. In both stories the wicked man was drunk with wine.

. . . **he was** drunken with wine. (1 Nephi 4:7)

. . . **he was filled with wine**. (Judith 13:2)

2. In both cases the servant of the Lord took the wicked man's weapon.

. . . I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth . . . (1 Nephi 4:9)

. . . she . . . took down his fauchion from thence, . . . (Judith 13:6)

3. In both cases the servant of the Lord took hold of the wicked man's hair.

. . . **took** Laban by **the hair of his head**, . . . (1 Nephi 4:18)

. . . **took** hold of **the hair of the head**, . . . (Judith 13:7)

4. In both cases the wicked man's head was cut off with his own weapon.

. . . **and I smote** off **his head** with his own sword. (1 Nephi 4:18)

**And** she **smote** twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away **his head** from him, . . . (Judith 13:8)

In our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 2, pages 74-76 we showed 16 parallels between these two stories as well as parallels between other books of the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon. Since the apocryphal books were written hundreds of years

after the Nephites were supposed to have left Jerusalem, the parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha tend to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon is not the ancient record it claims to be.

## Old Testament

There can be no doubt that the first books of the Bible furnished a great deal of source material for the writing of the Book of Mormon. The book of Genesis seems to have had a real influence upon the first few chapters of the Book of Mormon. Two of Nephi's brothers, Joseph and Jacob, have names taken from the book of Genesis. His mother's name is Sariah, which reminds us of Abraham's wife Sarah—also called Sarai (Genesis 17:15). Ishmael—a friend of the family—is also a name taken from Genesis (see chapter 17, verse 18). The name Laban is likewise found in Genesis (see chapter 24, verse 29).

The story of Nephi in some ways parallels the story of Joseph found in Genesis, and the story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of bondage seems to have been the source for a good deal of the material found in the First Book of Nephi and the book of Ether. For a list of parallels see our *Case*, vol. 2, pages 76-81.

The Mormon leaders claim that the Nephites had the Old Testament books which were written prior to the time they left Jerusalem—i.e., about 600 B.C. Large portions of Isaiah are quoted in the Book of Mormon. In fact, more than eighteen chapters of Isaiah are found in the Book of Mormon. The Ten Commandments and many other portions of the Old Testament are also found in the Book of Mormon. In this book we cannot even begin to list all of the verses that are taken from the Old Testament.

Since it is claimed that the Nephites had the books written before 600 B.C., we are not too concerned about quotations taken from them. The Book of Mormon, however, borrows from books written after 600 B.C. For instance, the Book of Daniel seems to have had some influence on the Book of Mormon (see parallels in our *Case*, vol. 2, p. 81).

One of the most serious mistakes the author of the Book of Mormon made was that of quoting from the book of Malachi many years **before it was written**. Below is a comparison of some verses which were supposed to have been written by Nephi sometime between B.C. 588 and 545, and some verses which were written by Malachi about 400 B.C. In Malachi 4:1 we read:

For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, . . .

In the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 22:15, Malachi's words have been borrowed:

For behold, saith the prophet, . . . the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.

In Malachi 4:2 we read: ". . . the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; . . ." In the Book of Mormon we read: ". . . he shall rise from the dead with healing in his wings; . . ." (2 Nephi 25:13)

In our *Case*, vol. 2, page 81, we show that 2 Nephi 26:4, 6 and 9 were also taken from Malachi 4:1-2.

About 600 years after Nephi was supposed to have written these words, Jesus appeared to the Nephites and said: ". . . Behold other scriptures I would that ye should write, that ye have not." (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 23:6) Jesus then told the Nephites to

write the words which the Father had given unto **Malachi**, which he should tell unto them. . . . And these are the words which he did tell unto them, saying: Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, . . .

For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall. (3 Nephi 24:1; 25:1-2)

These words, attributed to Jesus, very plainly show that the Nephites could not have the words of Malachi until Christ came among them. The Mormon writer George Reynolds stated: "As Malachi lived between two and three hundred years after Lehi left Jerusalem, the Nephites knew nothing of the glorious things that the Father had revealed to him until Jesus repeated them" (*Complete Concordance of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1957, p. 442). Now, if the Nephites knew nothing concerning these words until the coming of Christ, how did Nephi quote them 600 years before?

## New Testament

Mark Twain said that the Book of Mormon "seems to be merely a prosy detail of imaginary history, with the Old Testament for a model; followed by a tedious plagiarism of the New Testament. The author labored to give his words and phrases the quaint, old-fashioned sound and structure of our King James's translation of the Scriptures; and the result is a mongrel—half modern glibness, and half ancient simplicity and gravity" (*Roughing It*, by Mark Twain, p. 110).

Hugh Nibley made this statement concerning Mark Twain's criticism of the Book of Mormon:

Mark Twain accuses Joseph Smith of having in composing the Book of Mormon "smouched from the New Testament, and no credit given." But since the Book of Mormon was written to be read by people who knew and believed the Bible—indeed one cannot possibly believe the Book of Mormon without believing the Bible—it is hard to see why a deceiver would strew the broadest clues to his pilfering all through a record he claimed was his own. (*Since Cumorah*, p. 127)

We agree with Dr. Nibley that "it is hard to see why a deceiver would strew the broadest clues to his pilfering all through a record he claimed was his own." Nevertheless, the clues are there. Wesley M. Jones says that the

New Testament was one of Joseph Smith's most important sources. He used . . . St. Matthew with a sprinkle here and there from the other Gospels and, of course, from St. Paul. Whatever he used, though, he enlarged "to make it more plain." In short, St. Matthew was the clay and Joseph the potter. (*A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources*, by Wesley M. Jones, Detroit, Michigan, 1964, p. 65)

The ministry of Christ seems to have been the source for a good deal of the Book of Mormon. For instance, the story of Christ raising Lazarus from the dead seems to have had a definite influence upon the story of Ammon in the Book of Mormon. Below are a few parallels between the two stories.

1. In both stories a man seems to die and a period of time passes.

And it came to pass that after two days and two nights they were about to take his body and lay it on a sepulchre, . . . (Alma 19:5)

Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. (John 11:17)

2. Both Martha and the queen use the word "stinketh."

. . . others say that he is dead and that he **stinketh**, . . . (Alma 19:5)  
. . . by this time **he stinketh**: . . . (John 11:39)

3. Both Ammon and Jesus use the word "sleepeth" with regard to the man.

. . . he **sleepeth** . . . (Alma 19:8)  
. . . Lazarus **sleepeth**; . . . (John 11:11)

4. Both Ammon and Jesus say that the man will rise again.

. . . he **shall rise again**; . . . (Alma 19:8)  
. . . Thy brother **shall rise again**. (John 11:23)

5. The conversation between Ammon and the queen contains other phrases that are similar to those used by Jesus and Martha.

And Ammon **said unto her: Believest thou this?** And **she said unto him: . . . I believe . . .** (Alma 19:9)

Jesus **said unto her, believest thou this?** **She saith unto him, Yea, Lord I believe . . .** (John 11:25-27)

6. In both cases the man arose.

. . . he arose, . . . (Alma 19:12)

. . . he that was dead came forth, . . . (John 11:44)

In the Book of Mormon we read the story of a great storm which the Nephites encountered on their way to the “promised land” (see 1 Nephi 18:6-21). In our *Case*, vol. 2, pages 67-69, we pointed out 12 parallels between this story and a story published in the *Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827. While these parallels seem rather convincing, we pointed out that there is another source for this story which cannot be easily dismissed, for the evidence of plagiarism is all too apparent. This is the story concerning Jesus found in Mark 4:37-39. Below is a comparison of the two stories.

1. The two stories use identical language when speaking of the storm.

. . . **there arose a great storm,** . . . (1 Nephi 18:13)

. . . **there arose a great storm,** . . . (Mark 4:37)

2. In both stories the storm becomes so severe that the people are about to “perish,” and they seek help from their spiritual leader.

. . . my brethren began to see .they must **perish** . . . wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands . . . (1 Nephi 18:15)

. . . they awake him, and say that . . . unto him, Master, carest thou not that we **perish?** (Mark 4:38)

3. In both cases after the leader comes forth the storm ceases. Almost identical wording appears in both accounts concerning the calming of the sea.

. . . **the winds did cease and there was a great calm.** (1 Nephi 18:21)

. . . **the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.** (Mark 4:39)

It is very obvious that the author of the Book of Mormon has borrowed from Mark, yet the book of Nephi is supposed to be about 600 years older than the book of Mark. Therefore, the appearance of this story in the Book of Mormon proves beyond all doubt that it is not an ancient document. Dr. Hugh Nibley states that “A forgery is defined by specialists in ancient documents as ‘any document which was not produced in the time, place, and manner claimed by it or its publishers.’” (*Since Cumorah*, p. 160). The Book of Mormon certainly falls into this class.

One of the most striking parallels is the beheading of John the Baptist in the New Testament and the attempted beheading of Omer in the Book of Mormon. In the Bible we read:

But when Herod’s birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias **danced before them**, and pleased Herod.

Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist’s **head** in a charger.

And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath’s sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. (Matthew 14:6-11)

Now, in the Book of Mormon we read the following:

And now, therefore, let my father send for Akish, the son of Kimnor; and behold, I am fair, and **I will dance before him**, and I will please him, that he will desire me to wife; wherefore if he shall desire of thee that ye shall give unto him me to wife, then shall ye say: I will give her if ye will bring unto me the **head** of my father, the king.

. . . the daughter of Jared danced before him that she pleased him, insomuch that he desired her to wife. . . .

And Jared said unto him: I will give her unto you, if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king. (Ether 8:10-12)

While the incident in the Bible happened during Christ’s lifetime, the incident in the Book of Mormon was supposed to have occurred many hundreds of years before Christ.

Wesley M. Jones make this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

Joseph’s chief source of material by all odds, was the Bible, in which he was exceptionally versed (as were many people of his day). . . . St. Paul, too, was most helpful to Joseph; his unique phrases became a part of Joseph’s literary vocabulary and shine out on most any page in Joseph’s work—though Paul was not yet born when the “Nephite Record” was allegedly written. And more, the ministry of St. Paul is duplicated almost exactly in the ministry of Alma, one of Joseph’s characters—even in manner of speech and travels. (*A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* by Wesley M. Jones, pp. 14-15)

The reader will no doubt remember that when Paul was on the way to Damascus to persecute the church, the Lord appeared to him and said: “. . . Saul, **why persecutest thou me?**” (Acts 9:4).

In the Book of Mormon, Alma also persecuted the church, and like Paul he received a vision. The “angel of the Lord” spoke to him and said: “. . . Alma, . . . **why persecutest thou** the church of God?” (Mosiah 27:13).

In our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 86-87, we listed 17 parallels between Alma and the Apostle Paul.

## List of Parallels

As we have already shown, the Nephites were not supposed to have had the books of the New Testament because they were written hundreds of years after they left Jerusalem. Nevertheless, we find many New Testament verses and parts of verses throughout the Book of Mormon. In the following list of parallels between the Book of Mormon and the New Testament we have tried to eliminate verses that also appear in the Old Testament. All of the verses from the Book of Mormon were supposed to have been written between 600 B.C. and 33 A.D. In this list we will use the letters “BM” as an abbreviation for the Book of Mormon and “KJV” as an abbreviation for the King James Version of the Bible.

**KJV:** That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you (1 John 1:3)  
**BM:** to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard (1 Nephi 1:18)

**KJV:** stedfast, unmoveable (1 Corinthians 15:58)

**BM:** steadfast, and immovable (1 Nephi 2:10)

**KJV:** being grieved for the hardness of their hearts (Mark 3:5)

**BM:** being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts (1 Nephi 2:18)

**KJV:** that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not (John 11:50)

**BM:** that one man should perish than that a nation should . . . perish in unbelief (1 Nephi 4:13)

**KJV:** people and kindreds and tongues (Revelation 11:9)

**BM:** kindreds, tongues, and people (1 Nephi 5:18)

**KJV:** they are not of the world (John 17:14)

**BM:** who are not of the world (1 Nephi 6:5)



**KJV:** the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)  
**BM:** the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world (1 Nephi 10:10)

**KJV:** through the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13)  
**BM:** by the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 10:17)

**KJV:** of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6)  
**BM:** all those who diligently seek him (1 Nephi 10:17)

**KJV:** the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)  
**BM:** the same yesterday, today, and forever (1 Nephi 10:18)

**KJV:** he that seeketh findeth (Luke 11:10)  
**BM:** he that . . . seeketh shall find (1 Nephi 10:19)

**KJV:** bare record that this is the Son of God (John 1:34)  
**BM:** bear record that it is the Son of God (1 Nephi 11:7)

**KJV:** the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Romans 5:5)  
**BM:** the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men (1 Nephi 11:22)

**KJV:** the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him (Luke 3:22)  
**BM:** the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove (1 Nephi 11:27)

**KJV:** heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man (John 1:51)  
**BM:** heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the children of men (1 Nephi 11:30)

**KJV:** all sick people that were taken with divers diseases . . . and those which were possessed with devils (Matthew 4:24)  
**BM:** who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils (1 Nephi 11:31)

**KJV:** wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)  
**BM:** wars, and rumors of wars (1 Nephi 12:2)

**KJV:** the earth did quake, and the rocks rent (Matthew 27:51)  
**BM:** the earth and the rocks, that they rent (1 Nephi 12:4)

**KJV:** their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14)  
**BM:** their garments are made white in his blood (1 Nephi 12:10)

**KJV:** made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14)  
**BM:** made white in the blood of the Lamb (1 Nephi 12:11)

**KJV:** gold, and silver, . . . and fine linen, . . . and silk, and scarlet, . . . and all manner vessels of most precious wood (Revelation 18:12)  
**BM:** gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing (1 Nephi 13:7)

**KJV:** pervert the right ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10)  
**BM:** pervert the right ways of the Lord (1 Nephi 13:27)

**KJV:** blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart (John 12:40)  
**BM:** blind the eyes and harden the hearts (1 Nephi 13:27)

**KJV:** the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13)  
**BM:** the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 13:37)

**KJV:** endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22)  
**BM:** endure unto the end . . . shall be saved (1 Nephi 13:37)

**KJV:** tidings of great joy (Luke 2:10)  
**BM:** tidings of great joy (1 Nephi 13:37)

**KJV:** first shall be last; and the last shall be first (Matthew 19:30)  
**BM:** last shall be first, and the first shall be last (1 Nephi 13:42)

**KJV:** the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (Revelation 17:1 and 15)  
**BM:** the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people (1 Nephi 14:11)

**KJV:** the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:16)  
**BM:** the fiery darts of the adversary (1 Nephi 15:24)

**KJV:** nor unclean person, . . . hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ (Ephesians 5:5)  
**BM:** there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God (1 Nephi 15:34)

**KJV:** shall be saved; yet so as by fire (1 Corinthians 3:15)  
**BM:** shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire (1 Nephi 22:17)

**KJV:** blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke (Acts 2:19)  
**BM:** blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke (1 Nephi 22:18)

**KJV:** the lust of the flesh (1 John 2:16)  
**BM:** the lusts of the flesh (1 Nephi 22:23)

**KJV:** the things that are in the world (1 John 2:15)  
**BM:** the things of the world (1 Nephi 22:23)

**KJV:** his own sheep, . . . they know his voice (John 10:4)  
**BM:** his sheep, and they know him (1 Nephi 22:25)

**KJV:** and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd (John 10:16)  
**BM:** and there shall be one fold and one shepherd (1 Nephi 22:25)

**KJV:** by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16)  
**BM:** by the law no flesh is justified (2 Nephi 2:5)

**KJV:** full of grace and truth (John 1:14)  
**BM:** full of grace and truth (2 Nephi 2:6)

**KJV:** I lay down my life, that I might take it again (John 10:17)  
**BM:** who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit (2 Nephi 2:8)

**KJV:** the firstfruits unto God (Revelation 14:4)  
**BM:** the firstfruits unto God (2 Nephi 2:9)

**KJV:** that old serpent, which is the Devil (Revelations 20:2)  
**BM:** that old serpent, who is the devil (2 Nephi 2:18)

**KJV:** he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)  
**BM:** who is the father of all lies (2 Nephi 2:18)

**KJV:** hath chosen that good part (Luke 10:42)  
**BM:** have chosen the good part (2 Nephi 2:30)

**KJV:** O wretched man that I am (Romans 7:24)  
**BM:** O wretched man that I am (2 Nephi 4:17)

**KJV:** the sin which doth so easily beset us (Hebrews 12:1)  
**BM:** the sins which do so easily beset me (2 Nephi 4:18)

**KJV:** I know whom I have believed (2 Timothy 1:12)  
**BM:** I know in whom I have trusted (2 Nephi 4:19)

**KJV:** If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally (James 1:5)  
**BM:** God will give liberally to him that asketh (2 Nephi 4:35)

**KJV:** ye ask amiss (James 4:3)  
**BM:** I ask not amiss (2 Nephi 4:35)

**KJV:** this corruptible must put on incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:53)  
**BM:** this corruption could not put on in corruption (2 Nephi 9:7)

**KJV:** Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14)  
**BM:** transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light (2 Nephi 9:9)

**KJV:** death and hell delivered up the dead (Revelation 20:13)  
**BM:** death and hell must deliver up their dead (2 Nephi 9:12)

**KJV:** we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14:10)  
**BM:** they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One (2 Nephi 9:15)

**KJV:** my words shall not pass away (Matthew 24:35)  
**BM:** his eternal word, which cannot pass away (2 Nephi 9:16)

**KJV:** he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still (Revelations 22:11)  
**BM:** they who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still (2 Nephi 9:16)

**KJV:** Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)

**BM:** the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire; prepared for them (2 Nephi 9:16)

**KJV:** endured the cross, despising the shame (Hebrews 12:2)

**BM:** endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame (2 Nephi 9:18)

**KJV:** the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34)

**BM:** the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world (2 Nephi 9:18)

**KJV:** that your joy might be full (John 15:11)

**BM:** their joy shall be full (2 Nephi 9:18)

**KJV:** commandeth all men every where to repent (Acts 17:30)

**BM:** commandeth all men that they must repent (2 Nephi 9:23)

**KJV:** where no law is, there is no transgression (Romans 4:15)

**BM:** where there is no law given there is no punishment (2 Nephi 9:25)

**KJV:** the wisdom of this world is foolishness (1 Corinthians 3:19)

**BM:** their wisdom is foolishness (2 Nephi 9:28)

**KJV:** But woe unto you that are rich (Luke 6:24)

**BM:** But wo unto the rich (2 Nephi 9:30)

**KJV:** where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matthew 6:21)

**BM:** hearts are upon their treasures (2 Nephi 9:30)

**KJV:** shalt be thrust down to hell (Luke 10:15)

**BM:** shall be thrust down to hell (2 Nephi 9:34)

**KJV:** die in your sins (John 8:21)

**BM:** die in their sins (2 Nephi 9:38)

**KJV:** to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life (Romans 8:6)

**BM:** to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life (2 Nephi 9:39)

**KJV:** and to him that knocketh it shall be opened (Matthew 7:8)

**BM:** And whoso knocketh, to him will he open (2 Nephi 9:42)

**KJV:** Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28)

**BM:** Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female (2 Nephi 10:16)

**KJV:** He that is not with me is against me (Luke 11:23)

**BM:** they who are not for me are against me, saith our God (2 Nephi 10:16)

**KJV:** lay aside . . . the sin (Hebrews 12:1)

**BM:** lay aside our sins (2 Nephi 10:20)

**KJV:** reconciled to God (Romans 5:10)

**BM:** reconciled unto God (2 Nephi 10:24)

**KJV:** by grace are ye saved (Ephesians 2:8)

**BM:** through the grace of God that ye are saved (2 Nephi 10:24)

**KJV:** the power of his resurrection (Philippians 3:10)

**BM:** the power of the resurrection (2 Nephi 10:25)

**KJV:** the only begotten of the Father (John 1:14)

**BM:** the Only Begotten of the Father (2 Nephi 25:12)

**KJV:** there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)

**BM:** there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, . . . whereby man can be saved (2 Nephi 25:20)

**KJV:** in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22)

**BM:** made alive in Christ (2 Nephi 25:25)

**KJV:** in no wise cast out (John 6:37)

**BM:** in nowise be cast out (2 Nephi 25:29)

**KJV:** grind him to powder (Matthew 21:44)

**BM:** grind them to powder (2 Nephi 26:5)

**KJV:** darkness rather than light (John 3:19)

**BM:** darkness rather than light (2 Nephi 26:10)

**KJV:** I . . . will draw all men unto me (John 12:32)

**BM:** he may draw all men unto him (2 Nephi 26:24)

**KJV:** be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:48)

**BM:** will beat us with a few stripes (2 Nephi 28:8)

**KJV:** in everlasting chains (Jude, verse 6)

**BM:** his everlasting chains (2 Nephi 28:19)

**KJV:** judged every man according to their works (Revelation 20:13)

**BM:** judged according to their works (2 Nephi 28:23)

**KJV:** the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14)

**BM:** a lake of fire (2 Nephi 28:23)

**KJV:** built his house upon a rock (Matthew 7:24)

**BM:** built upon the rock (2 Nephi 28:28)

**KJV:** built his house upon the sand (Matthew 7:24)

**BM:** built upon a sandy foundation (2 Nephi 28:28)

**KJV:** For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath (Matthew 13:12)

**BM:** for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have (2 Nephi 28:30)

**KJV:** out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (Revelation 20:12)

**BM:** out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works (2 Nephi 29:11)

**KJV:** ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3)

**BM:** ye shall all likewise perish (2 Nephi 30:1)

**KJV:** fell from his eyes as it had been scales (Acts 9:18)

**BM:** scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes (2 Nephi 30:6)

**KJV:** for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed (Matthew 10:26)

**BM:** There is nothing which is secret save it shall be revealed (2 Nephi 30:17)

**KJV:** made manifest by the light (Ephesians 5:13)

**BM:** made manifest in the light (2 Nephi 30:17)

**KJV:** the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

**BM:** the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world (2 Nephi 31:4)

**KJV:** to fulfil all righteousness (Matthew 3:15)

**BM:** to fulfil all righteousness (2 Nephi 31:5)

**KJV:** strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life (Matthew 7:14)

**BM:** straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life (2 Nephi 31:18)

**KJV:** with the tongues . . . of angels (1 Corinthians 13:1)

**BM:** with the tongue of angels (2 Nephi 32:2)

**KJV:** because ye ask not (James 4:2)

**BM:** because ye ask not (2 Nephi 32:4)

**KJV:** men ought always to pray, and not to faint (Luke 18:1)

**BM:** ye must pray always, and not faint (2 Nephi 32:9)

**KJV:** how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (Romans 11:33)

**BM:** How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways (Jacob 4:8)

**KJV:** withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned (John 15:6)

**BM:** wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned (Jacob 5:7)

**KJV:** quench not the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

**BM:** quench the Holy Spirit (Jacob 6:8)

**KJV:** nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done (Luke 22:42)

**BM:** Nevertheless, not my will be done (Jacob 7:14)

**KJV:** thy faith hath made thee whole (Matthew 9:22)

**BM:** thy faith hath made thee whole (Enos 8)

**KJV:** whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matthew 21:22)

**BM:** Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing . . . ye shall receive it (Enos 15)

**KJV:** Come, ye blessed (Matthew 25:34)

**BM:** Come unto me, ye blessed (Enos 27)

**KJV:** grievous to be borne (Matthew 23:4)

**BM:** grievous to be borne (Mosiah 2:14)

**KJV:** when ye shall have done all those things . . . say, We are unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10)

**BM:** if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants (Mosiah 2:21)

**KJV:** drinketh damnation to himself (1 Corinthians 11:29)

**BM:** drinketh damnation to his own soul (Mosiah 2:33)

**KJV:** He came unto his own (John 1:11)

**BM:** he cometh unto his own (Mosiah 3:9)

**KJV:** I judge: and my judgment is just (John 5:30)

**BM:** he judgeth, and his judgment is just (Mosiah 3:18)

**KJV:** become as little children (Matthew 18:3)

**BM:** become as little children (Mosiah 3:18)

**KJV:** put off the old man (Colossians 3:9)

**BM:** putteth off the natural man (Mosiah 3:19)

**KJV:** believe that he is, and that he (Hebrews 11:6)

**BM:** believe that he is, and that he (Mosiah 4:9)

**KJV:** enemy of all righteousness (Acts 13:10)

**BM:** enemy to all righteousness (Mosiah 4:14)

**KJV:** the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)

**BM:** the thoughts and intents of his heart (Mosiah 5:13)

**KJV:** stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work (1 Cor.15:58)

**BM:** steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works (Mosiah 5:15)

**KJV:** O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (1 Corinthians 15:55)

**BM:** the grave should have no victory, and that death should have no sting (Mosiah 16:7)

**KJV:** I am the light of the world (John 8:12)

**BM:** He is the light . . . of the world (Mosiah 16:9)

**KJV:** they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29)

**BM:** If they be good, to the resurrection of endless life and happiness; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of endless damnation (Mosiah 16:11)

**KJV:** one faith, one baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

**BM:** one faith and one baptism (Mosiah 18:21)

**KJV:** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free (Galatians 5:1)

**BM:** stand fast in this liberty wherewith ye have been made free (Mosiah 23:13)

**KJV:** Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

**BM:** pray without ceasing (Mosiah 26:39)

**KJV:** Marvel not that . . . Ye must be born again (John 3:7)

**BM:** Marvel not that all mankind . . . must be born again (Mosiah 27:25)

**KJV:** the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity (Acts 8:23)

**BM:** the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)

**KJV:** every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God (Romans 14:11)

**BM:** every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess before him (Mosiah 27:31)

**KJV:** stand fast in the faith (1 Corinthians 16:13)

**BM:** stand fast in the faith (Alma 1:25)

**KJV:** sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8:11)

**BM:** sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob (Alma 5:24)

**KJV:** the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

**BM:** the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, and mercy, and truth (Alma 5:48)

**KJV:** taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

**BM:** take away the sins of the world (Alma 5:48)

**KJV:** the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire (Matthew 3:10)

**BM:** the ax is laid at the root of the tree, therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire (Alma 5:52)

**KJV:** Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance (Matthew 3:8)

**BM:** bring forth works which are meet for repentance (Alma 5:54)

**KJV:** come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6:17)

**BM:** come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things (Alma 5:57)

**KJV:** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9)

**BM:** and to cleanse from all unrighteousness (Alma 7:14)

**KJV:** lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us (Hebrews 12:1)

**BM:** lay aside every sin, which easily doth beset you (Alma 7:15)

**KJV:** he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (Revelation 22:11)

**BM:** he who is filthy shall remain in his filthiness (Alma 7:21)

**KJV:** faith, hope, charity (1 Corinthians 13:13)

**BM:** faith, hope, and charity (Alma 7:24)

**KJV:** thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God (Acts 5:4)

**BM:** thou hast not lied unto men only but thou hast lied unto God (Alma 12:3)

**KJV:** resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15)

**BM:** resurrection of the dead, . . . both the just and the unjust (Alma 12:8)

**KJV:** the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from (Rev. 6:16)

**BM:** the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from (Alma 12:14)

**KJV:** to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27)

**BM:** must die; and after death, they must come to judgment (Alma 12:27)

**KJV:** this Melchisedec, . . . To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all (Hebrews 7:1-2)

**BM:** this same Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid . . . of one-tenth part of all (Alma 13:15)

**KJV:** not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able (1 Corinthians 10:13)

**BM:** not be tempted above that which ye can bear (Alma 13:28)

**KJV:** Rabboni; which is to say, Master (John 20:16)

**BM:** Rabbanah, which is . . . powerful or great king (Alma 18:13)

**KJV:** be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16)

**BM:** being wise yet harmless (Alma 18:22)

**KJV:** I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel (Luke 7:9)

**BM:** I say unto thee, woman, there has not been such great faith among all the people of the Nephites (Alma 19:10)

**KJV:** My soul is exceeding sorrowful (Matthew 26:38)

**BM:** my heart is exceeding sorrowful (Alma 31:31)

**KJV:** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)

**BM:** if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen (Alma 32:21)

**KJV:** springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14)

**BM:** springing up unto everlasting life (Alma 32:41)



**KJV:** one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (Matthew 5:18)

**BM:** it shall be all fulfilled, every jot and tittle, and none shall have passed away (Alma 34:13)

**KJV:** child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness (Acts 13:10)

**BM:** against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness (Alma 34:23)

**KJV:** cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men (Matthew 5:13)

**BM:** cast out, . . . and is trodden under foot of men (Alma 34:29)

**KJV:** behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2)

**BM:** behold now is the time and the day of your salvation (Alma 34:31)

**KJV:** work out your own salvation with fear (Philippians 2:12)

**BM:** work out your salvation with fear (Alma 34:37)

**KJV:** worship him . . . in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)

**BM:** worship God, . . . in spirit and in truth (Alma 34:38)

**KJV:** and learn of me; for I (Matthew 11:29)

**BM:** and learn of me; for I (Alma 36:3)

**KJV:** Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me (Mark 10:47)

**BM:** Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me (Alma 36:18)

**KJV:** meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls (Matthew 11:29)

**BM:** meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls (Alma 37:34)

**KJV:** I am the light of the world (John 8:12)

**BM:** he is . . . the light of the world (Alma 38:9)

**KJV:** the lusts of the eyes (1 John 2:16)

**BM:** the lusts of your eyes (Alma 39:9)

**KJV:** shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12)

**BM:** shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth (Alma 40:13)

**KJV:** fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Hebrews 10:27)

**BM:** fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God (Alma 40:14)

**KJV:** restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets (Acts 3:21)

**BM:** restoration of those things of which has been spoken by the mouths of the prophets (Alma 40:22)

**KJV:** Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:43)

**BM:** then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of God (Alma 40:25)

**KJV:** without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12)

**BM:** without God in the world (Alma 41:11)

**KJV:** it is appointed unto men once to die (Hebrews 9:27)

**BM:** it was appointed unto man to die (Alma 42:6)

**KJV:** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free (Galatians 5:1)

**BM:** stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has made them free (Alma 58:40)

**KJV:** cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also (Matthew 23:26)

**BM:** the inward vessel shall be cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also (Alma 60:23)

**KJV:** lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20)

**BM:** lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven (Helaman 5:8)

**KJV:** except ye repent, ye shall . . . perish (Luke 13:5)

**BM:** except ye repent ye shall perish (Helaman 7:28)

**KJV:** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (John 3:14)

**BM:** And as he lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so shall he be lifted up who should come (Helaman 8:14)

**KJV:** treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment (Romans 2:5)

**BM:** heaping up for yourselves wrath against the day of judgment (Helaman 8:25)

**KJV:** darkness rather than light (John 3:19)

**BM:** darkness rather than light (Helaman 13:29)

**KJV:** graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, . . . and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:52-53)

**BM:** graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of their dead; and many saints shall appear unto many (Helaman 14:25)

**KJV:** the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (2 Peter 2:22)

**BM:** the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire (3 Nephi 7:8)

The verses or parts of verses from the Book of Mormon which we have presented above were all supposed to have been written between 600 B.C. and 33 A.D. Those which follow were supposed to have been written between 34 A.D. and 421 A.D. In 34 A.D. Jesus was supposed to have appeared to the Nephites and given them the Sermon on the Mount (see 3 Nephi, chapters 12-14). Since it is possible that Jesus could have given the same sermon to the Nephites we will not bother to list any of these verses. There are many other verses which Jesus was supposed to have given to the Nephites which are parallel to verses found in the four Gospels. We will not deal with any of these quotations in this study.

**KJV:** old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17)

**BM:** Old things are done away, and all things have become new (3 Nephi 12:47)

**KJV:** the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth (2 Peter 3:10)

**BM:** the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth (3 Nephi 26:3)

**KJV:** and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Corinthians 12:4)

**BM:** and heard unspeakable things, which are not lawful to be written (3 Nephi 26:18)

**KJV:** whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell (2 Corinthians 12:3)

**BM:** whether they were in the body or out of the body, they could not tell (3 Nephi 28:15)

**KJV:** no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17)

**BM:** no variableness, neither shadow of turning (Mormon 9:9)

**KJV:** that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:3)

**BM:** that ye may consume it on your lusts (Mormon 9:28)

**KJV:** an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast (Hebrews 6:19)

**BM:** an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast (Ether 12:4)

**KJV:** partakers of the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1)

**BM:** partakers of the heavenly gift (Ether 12:8)

**KJV:** By faith the walls of Jericho fell down (Hebrews 11:30)

**BM:** it was the faith of Alma and Amulek that caused the prison to tumble (Ether 12:13)

**KJV:** By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death (Hebrews 11:5)

**BM:** by faith that the three disciples obtained a promise that they should not taste of death (Ether 12:17)

**KJV:** through faith . . . obtained promises (Hebrews 11:33)

**BM:** by faith . . . obtained the promise (Ether 12:22)

**KJV:** he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9)

**BM:** the Lord spake unto me, saying: . . . my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness (Ether 12:26)

**KJV:** better things of you (Hebrews 6:9)

**BM:** better things of you (Moroni 7:39)

**KJV:** have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3)

**BM:** have not charity he is nothing (Moroni 7:44)

**KJV:** Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; . . . is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, . . . hopeth all things, endureth all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

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

**KJV:** and have not charity, I am nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2)

**BM:** if ye have not charity, ye are nothing (Moroni 7:46)

**KJV:** Charity never faileth (1 Corinthians 13:8)

**BM:** charity never faileth (Moroni 7:46)

**KJV:** that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2)

**BM:** that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (Moroni 7:48)

**KJV:** that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:3)

**BM:** that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure (Moroni 7:48)

**KJV:** the name of thy holy child Jesus (Acts 4:30)

**BM:** the name of his Holy Child, Jesus (Moroni 8:3)

**KJV:** there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4)

**BM:** the gifts of God, . . . are many; and they come from the same God (Moroni 10:8)

**KJV:** there are differences of administrations (1 Corinthians 12:5)

**BM:** there are different ways that these gifts are administered (Moroni 10:8)

**KJV:** but it is the same God which worketh all in all (1 Corinthians 12:6)

**BM:** but it is the same God who worketh all in all (Moroni 10:8)

**KJV:** the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal (1 Corinthians 12:7)

**BM:** the manifestations of the Spirit of God unto men, to profit them (Moroni 10:8)

**KJV:** For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom (1 Corinthians 12:8)

**BM:** For behold, to one is given by the Spirit of God, that he may teach the word of wisdom (Moroni 10:9)

**KJV:** to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8)

**BM:** to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit (Moroni 10:10)

**KJV:** To another faith (1 Corinthians 12:9)

**BM:** to another, exceeding great faith (Moroni 10:11)

**KJV:** to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:9)

**BM:** to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (Moroni 10:11)

**KJV:** To another the working of miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10)

**BM:** to another, that he may work mighty miracles (Moroni 10:12)

**KJV:** to another prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:10)

**BM:** to another, that he may prophesy (Moroni 10:13)

**KJV:** to another discerning of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:10)

**BM:** to another, the beholding of angels and ministering spirits (Moroni 10:14)

**KJV:** to another divers kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10)

**BM:** to another, all kinds of tongues (Moroni 10:15)

**KJV:** to another the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10)

**BM:** to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues (Moroni 10:16)

**KJV:** all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will (1 Corinthians 12:11)

**BM:** all these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ; and they come unto every man severally, according as he will (Moroni 10:17)

**KJV:** Every good gift . . . cometh down from the Father (James 1:17)

**BM:** Every good gift cometh of Christ (Moroni 10:18)

**KJV:** the Judge of quick and dead (Acts 10:42)

**BM:** the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead (Moroni 10:34)

In our *Case*, vol. 2, pages 87-102, we listed 400 parallels between the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, and even at that we certainly did not use all of the parallels that could be listed.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts once made this statement:

1. The Unknown states the fact that Nephi wrote between 600 and 500 B.C. and then presents what he calls the first difficulty that I am to overcome. "How can a writer," he asks, "claiming to live at that time make repeated quotations from the writings of Christ's Apostles who were not born until 600 years after the time Nephi wrote?" He then charges that Nephi quotes "passage after passage" from the writings of Christ's apostles, Matthew, John, Paul, Luke, Peter, etc.; and gives what he calls just "two or three examples" of such quotations. The gentleman very much overstates the difficulty he presents, by making it appear that the alleged quotations are very numerous, when the fact is that **the two or three cases he cites virtually exhaust the alleged quoted passages so far as the New Testament is concerned.** (*Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, 1907, p. 329)

The list of parallels which we presented in our *Case* proves that B. H. Roberts has misrepresented the facts. We have found well over a hundred quotations from the New Testament in the first two books of Nephi alone, and these two books were supposed to have been written between 600 and 545 B.C.

## A Real Dilemma

According to the Book of Mormon, Christ appeared to the Nephites after his crucifixion and told them he was going to quote the words of Moses. The words which he should have quoted are found in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 and 19:

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; . . .

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Instead of quoting these words from Deuteronomy, however, Jesus quoted from Peter's paraphrase of Moses' words found in Acts 3:22-26. This is very obvious when we compare Peter's paraphrase of Moses' words and the words Christ was supposed to have quoted to the

Nephites. Below is Peter's paraphrase as found in the Book of Acts:

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

24 **Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken**, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (Acts 3:22-26)

In the Book of Mormon we read:

Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.

Verily I say unto you, **yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken**, have testified of me.

And behold, ye are the children of the prophets; and ye are of the house of Israel; and ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

The Father having raised me up unto you first, and sent me to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; . . . (3 Nephi 20:23-26)

It is obvious, then, that the Book of Mormon follows Peter's paraphrase rather than the actual words of Moses recorded in Deuteronomy. Notice that verses 24 through 26 of the third chapter of Acts, though slightly rewritten, are quoted in the Book of Mormon. These words have nothing to do with Moses, but are in reality the words of Peter. Peter spoke these words in the temple at Jerusalem some time after the day of Pentecost. While it is possible that these words could have been recorded at the time, the Book of Acts was probably not written until twenty or thirty years later. George B. Arbaugh made the following statement concerning this:

"Christ" in Book of Mormon Quotes Material Not Yet Written

Christ quotes to the Indians the following statement supposedly made by Moses. Actually, these are not Moses' words, but a paraphrase of them made by Peter. . . .

Simon Peter here paraphrases and condenses Moses' lengthy statement in Deuteronomy 18:15-19. The wording is quite different from that in Deuteronomy, but the writers of the Book of Mormon failed to check on the original statement and assumed that Peter's report of it was a verbatim quotation. Therefore the Book of Mormon quotes Acts. (*Gods, Sex, and Saints*, by George Arbaugh, p. 36)

It is interesting to note that Nephi—who was supposed to have written between 600 and 545 B.C.—also quoted this portion of the Book of Acts (see 1 Nephi 22:20).

The book of Moroni, in the Book of Mormon, is filled with quotations from Paul's epistles to the Corinthians. Wesley M. Jones stated:

Joseph with all his cunning overlooked something most damaging of all. Here is Joseph plagiarizing a sermon of Paul. His puppet, Moroni, lives on a distant continent, 4000 miles from Paul with no communication, yet they use **the same words!** (*Joseph Smith: Scripture-Maker*, by Wesley M. Jones, Oakland, California, 1966, p. 4)

Mormon writers find it difficult to answer this problem. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, makes this statement:

Critics will say that Mormon's words were simply hijacked by Joseph Smith from Paul's words in the New Testament. It is true that the text in verse 45 is almost word for word the same as its parallel in 1 Corinthians. Now I am going to speak as a higher critic. **I do not believe that Paul was the original author of the words in question.** I think that the original author was the Savior. Paul had access to them and used our Lord's words to suit himself when writing to the Corinthians. In his time he would not be accused of plagiarism. When our Lord came to this continent as a resurrected, glorified person, he gave the same sermon on faith, hope, and charity. Mormon had access to that sermon just as Paul did and used it as he pleased. He was unaware that Paul had used the sermon on the other continent at an earlier time. We cannot accuse the Prophet Joseph Smith of being stupid, whatever else we may accuse him of. He told the truth and made an interesting contribution to our knowledge of Paul and his famous sermon. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, Extension Publications, B.Y.U., 1964 ed., p. 8)

Dr. Sperry also states:

Chapters seven and ten of the Book of Moroni contain teachings which so closely parallel passages in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 that they constitute a literary problem. . . .

That there is more than a casual connection between these two scriptures is apparent to everyone. . . .

That there is a problem we grant readily enough, and we shall attempt a reasonable explanation of it. . . . We cannot, of course, force men to believe anything, whether fact or fancy. But we can point to the strong possibility that Paul was **not** the exclusive author of the ideas contained in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 concerning spiritual gifts. Isn't it reasonable to believe that the great apostle adapted an important body of teachings common to the early Christian Church to suit his needs in dealing with the Corinthians? It would seem to the writer that Jesus was far more likely to have been the original author of the doctrines concerning spiritual gifts than was Paul. . . . It should be emphasized that we are attempting here to give only a reasonable answer to the problem raised; **absolute proof is wanting**. We cannot prove beyond doubt that Jesus preached a sermon on spiritual gifts either to the Nephites or to His Palestinian followers, records of which could be drawn on by Moroni and Paul. However, it is a very attractive and reasonable presumption that he did. . . .

Now let us turn to the literary problem raised by the presence of extracts from 1 Corinthians 13 in Moroni 7:45-47. Nearly all of Chapter 7 in the Book of Moroni is presented as a sermon by Moroni's father, Moroni, as he taught in a synagogue. The sermon deals with faith, hope, and charity. Most persons, we are sure, would be willing to admit that the bulk of it is as original as one could reasonably expect of a preacher dealing with a familiar subject. However, verses 45 and 46 parallel 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 so closely in some respects that they must be accounted for . . . many phrases are word for word the same as in the King James version. Here the author frankly admits the possibility that Joseph Smith **used** the familiar version as he translated Moroni's words; . . . In considering the Book of Mormon we have to take the translator into account. When the prophet Joseph Smith came to a passage which contained statements which reminded him of similar ones in the New Testament, he was doubtless influenced by their wording and used them whenever it was possible to do so. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1964, pp. 113-118, 120-121)

On pages 206-207 of the same book, Dr. Sperry states:

It is true that the Book of Mormon does contain many verses of scripture, other than those in Isaiah, which agree **verbatim** with their parallels in the King James Version. . . .



Budvarson claims that “at least twenty-seven thousand words from the King James translation of the Bible are contained in the Book of Mormon.” Our own estimate is about **seventeen thousand words**, an estimate we think is much more accurate.

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn made these statements concerning this problem:

One thing appears to be beyond doubt: Joseph knew his Bible. All the way through the Book of Mormon (true seemingly less in the Book of Ether than elsewhere) are words and expressions that could hardly have come from any other source. (This has no reference at all to the hundreds of quotations from Isaiah, Malachi, Matthew, and other writers of Holy Writ. It means rather that the language of the Book of Mormon is frequently **Bible language**, sometimes almost **word for word, and often exactly the same.**) One explanation for this is that in the process of translation Joseph used such terms as he could command for what he desired to say, and Bible language appears to have come readily to him.

There seems only one other explanation for this phenomenon. It is that the Nephite prophets in their own teaching and preaching and writing employed the **very same terms** used by Bible leaders, for whatever reason, and quite independently of them. The likeness of the two texts in many places is **too striking**, it seems to me, **to be accidental**, whatever the real reason is. (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1954, pp. 4-5)

We feel that neither Dr. Sperry nor Mr. Washburn have given a satisfactory explanation as to why so much of the New Testament appears in the Book of Mormon. Dr. Sperry’s explanation seems to be wishful thinking, for he admits that “absolute proof is wanting.” The only reasonable explanation, we feel, is that the author of the Book of Mormon had the King James Version of the Bible. And since this version did not appear until 1611 A.D., the Book of Mormon could **not** have been written prior to that time. The Book of Mormon, therefore, is a modern composition, and not a “record of ancient religious history.”

## Alpha and Omega

Perhaps one of the most serious mistakes made by the author of the Book of Mormon was that of having Jesus quote part of Revelation 21:6 to the Nephites. Below is a comparison of the way the words appear in the book of Revelation and the way they are found in the Book of Mormon.

**3 Nephi 9:18** - I am the light and the life of the world. **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.**

**Revelation 21:6** - And he said unto me, It is done. **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.**

The words “Alpha” and “Omega” are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie states:

These words, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, are used figuratively to teach the timelessness and eternal nature of our Lord’s existence, . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 31)

The Greek language was used throughout the Roman Empire at the time of Christ; therefore, the New Testament was written in Greek and the words “Alpha” and “Omega” were well understood. The Nephites, however, were supposed to have left Jerusalem 600 years before the time of Christ, and therefore they would not have been familiar with these words. If Jesus had told the Nephites that he was “Alpha and Omega,” it would have had absolutely no meaning to them. When the author of the Book of Mormon took these words from the book of Revelation he evidently did not realize that they were from the Greek language. On May 15, 1843, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in answer to the charge that he had used a Greek word in the Book of Mormon. In this letter he made the following statement:

The error I speak of, is the definition of the word “**Mormon.**” It has been stated that this word was derived from the Greek word *mormo*. This is not the case. **There was no Greek or Latin upon the plates** from which I, through the grace of God, translated the Book of Mormon. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 194)

J. N. Washburn makes this statement concerning the findings of another Mormon writer:

The Book of Mormon, he finds, does **not** contain any of the numerous words in the New Testament that are of Greek origin. (*Contents, Structure, And Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, p. 161)

This statement is certainly incorrect. As we have already shown, the words *Alpha* and *Omega* are definitely of Greek origin. The Book of Mormon also contains the name *Timothy* (3 Nephi 19:4). *Timothy* is a Greek name and never appears in the Old Testament. In the same verse that we find the name *Timothy* we also find the name *Jonas*. *Jonas* is the New Testament name for *Jonah* and is found in Matthew 12:39.

The appearance of Greek words in the Book of Mormon—especially the words *Alpha* and *Omega*—is another evidence that it is not an ancient record, but rather a modern composition.

## Origin of Indians

The fact that Joseph Smith had a great interest in the ancient inhabitants of the land prior to his “translation” of the Book of Mormon is no secret to those who have read the *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*. Mrs. Smith said:

I presume our family presented an aspect as singular as any that ever lived upon the face of the earth—all seated in a circle, father, mother, sons and daughters, and giving the most profound attention to a boy, eighteen years of age, . . .

During our evening conversations, **Joseph** would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the **ancient inhabitants** of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with **ease**, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them. (*History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 1954 edition, pp. 82-83)

It is not surprising that Joseph Smith would take an interest in the ancient inhabitants of this continent, for many people were discussing the question at that time. We find this statement in the *Palmyra Herald* for October 30, 1822:

In the year 1810, I opened, . . . one of the flat mounds, . . . in Ohio, . . . we found the skeletons of a number of bodies, . . . all deposited directly due east and west, the heads to the west; precisely as is the practice in **Christian** burials.

The *Palmyra Register* for May 26, 1819, reported that one writer “believes (and we think with good reason) that this country was once inhabited by a race of people, at least, partially civilized, & that this race has been exterminated by the forefathers of the present and late tribes of Indians in this country.”

The *Wayne Sentinel*, published at Palmyra, contained these statements on July 24, 1829:

The Aborigines . . . are fast dwindling away, and will soon be buried in the depths of that oblivion which conceals the history and fate of a people who (judging from the traces discovered of the progress which they had made in civilization, and the arts and sciences, as developed by the western antiquities) must have been but a little behind the present generation in many respects. When we look at the straggling Indians who . . . reveal the ravages of intemperance and almost every other loathsome vice, we can hardly persuade ourselves that they are remnants of the powerful race of people who, as it were but yesterday, stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific . . . we may picture them in our minds as a flourishing and mighty nation . . . powerful in wealth and natural resources; combining moral and political excellence . . . and we may suppose that some dreadful plague, some national calamity swept them from the

face of the earth; or perhaps that like Sodom and Gomorrah of old, their national sins became so heinous, that the Almighty in his wrath utterly annihilated them . . .

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon states that the Nephites were a civilized people who were destroyed by the Lamanites—a wicked people—for their sins.

On February 19, 1823, an article appeared in the *Palmyra Herald* which could have had some influence on the story found in the Book of Mormon. In this article we find the following:

The Indians are reported the aborigines of North America;—but I doubt the truth of this proposition. The fortifications and the remains of antiquity in Ohio and elsewhere prove them to be the work of some other people than the Indians. Many of these fortifications were not forts, but religious temples, or places of public worship. . . .

The first settlers of North America were probably the Asiatics, the descendants of Shem—Europe was settled by the children of Japheth. The Asiatics, at an early period, might easily have crossed the Pacific Ocean, and made settlements in North America. The South American Indians probably were the first inhabitants of North America.—The descendants of Japheth might afterwards cross the Atlantic, and subjugate the Asiatics, or drive them to South America. . . . several facts tend to corroborate the conjecture. The language, customs, and religious ceremonies of the South American Indians, resemble those of the Asiatics. The manners, language, and even size of the N. American Indians, especially the Esquimaux, have a great resemblance to the northern nations of Europe. What wonderful catastrophe destroyed at once the first inhabitants, with the species of the mammoth, is beyond the researches of the best scholar and greatest antiquarian. (*Palmyra Herald*, February 19, 1823)

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon tells that America was inhabited by two different races of people—the Nephites and Lamanites were originally one people. Joseph Smith said that the Book of Mormon teaches

that America in ancient times has been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first were called Jaredites, and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came directly from the city of Jerusalem. . . . The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 1, p. 167)

Like the article in the *Palmyra Herald*, the Book of Mormon claims that the first inhabitants of North America came from Asia. The *Palmyra Herald* states that the Asiatics may have crossed the Pacific Ocean. A footnote on page 572 of the 1888 edition of the Book of Mormon states that the Jaredites landed on “the Western coast of North America,” so we would assume that they also came across the Pacific Ocean. The article in the *Palmyra Herald* states: “What wonderful catastrophe destroyed at once the first inhabitants, with the species of the mammoth, is beyond the researches of the best scholar and greatest antiquarian.” The Book of Mormon, however, attempts to answer this question: “And now I, Moroni, proceed to give an account of those ancient inhabitants who were destroyed by the hand of the Lord upon the face of this north country” (Book of Mormon, Ether 1:1).

The Book of Mormon claims to have been written in “the language of the Egyptians” (1 Nephi 1:3). This is rather strange since the Nephites were supposed to have come from Jerusalem. This unusual idea, however, may have been suggested by an article which appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on June 1, 1827:

Decyphering of Hieroglyphics.—Professor Seyffarth of Leipsig, who has been employed in decyphering the Egyptian Antiquities at Rome, states, . . . that he has found . . . a Mexican manuscript in hieroglyphics, from which he infers, that the Mexicans and the Egyptians had intercourse with each other from the remotest antiquity, and that they had the same system of mythology.

During, and even before, Joseph Smith’s time it was believed by many people that the Indians were the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.

Although the Book of Mormon does not claim that the Indians are the Lost Ten Tribes, it does claim that they are descendants of Joseph, thus making them Israelites. Because of this similarity anti-Mormon writers have suggested that Joseph Smith borrowed his idea concerning the origin of the Indians from the thinking of his time. Several books had been published prior to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon which contained the idea that the Indians were of Israelite origin. The Bureau of American Ethnology printed the following statement concerning this matter in 1907:

Father Duran in 1585 was one of the first to state explicitly that “these natives are of the ten tribes of Israel”. . . Antonio de Montezinos, . . . while journeying in South America in 1641 claimed that he met savages who followed Jewish practices. This story he repeated in Holland, in 1644, to Manasseh ben Israel, who printed it in his work, *Hope of Israel*. . . . Thomas Thorowgood, in 1652, . . . sought to prove that the Indians were the Jews . . . From this work many subsequent writers obtained their chief arguments. . . . The identification of the American aborigines with the ‘lost ten tribes’ was based on alleged identities in religions, practices, customs and habits, traditions, and languages. Adair’s *History of the American Indians*, published in 1775, was based on this theory. . . .” (*Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, vol. 1, p. 775, as photographically reproduced in *Mormon Claims Examined*, p. 20)

In 1816, at Trenton, New Jersey, Elias Boudinot published a book entitled, *A Star in the West; or, a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Tribes of Israel, Preparatory to Their Return to Their Beloved City, Jerusalem*. On pages 279-280 of this book we find the following statement:

What could possibly bring greater declarative glory to God, or tend more essentially to affect and rouse the nations of the earth, . . . and thus call their attention to the truth of divine revelation, than a full discovery, that these wandering nations of Indians are the long lost tribes of Israel; . . .

The following was published in the *Wayne Sentinel* (the paper to which the family of Joseph Smith apparently subscribed) on October 11, 1825:

Those who are most conversant with the public and private economy of the Indians, are strongly of opinion that they are the lineal descendants of the Israelites, and my own researches go far to confirm me in the same belief. (*Wayne Sentinel*, October 11, 1825, as photographically reprinted in *Mormon Claims Examined*, p. 45)

One of the most interesting books on this subject which was published prior to the Book of Mormon was Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. The first edition was printed in 1823; it was soon sold out and an enlarged edition appeared in 1825.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts evidently read the *View of the Hebrews* and became concerned because of the many parallels between it and the Book of Mormon. He prepared a manuscript in which these parallels are listed. Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, stated:

But the most publicized list of parallels of the Book of Mormon and another work is B. H. Roberts’ comparison of that book with Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. Commenting on this, Mrs. Brodie wrote: “The scholarly Mormon historian, B. H. Roberts once made a careful and impressive list of parallels between the *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon, but for obvious reasons it was never published.” (*Improvement Era*, October 1959, p. 744)

In a letter to Ariel L. Crowley, Ben E. Roberts (B. H. Roberts’ son) admitted that his father had prepared a manuscript dealing with the *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon:

I hasten to correct any impression that you may have in regard to Fathers’ manuscript dealing with the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*.

During the last years of his life, he had been working on an outline of comparison. This work was never finished, and of course, was not in shape for publication. You may rest assured, however, that he found nothing in his study which reflected upon the integrity of Joseph Smith’s



account of the Book of Mormon. (Letter by Ben E. Roberts, printed in *About the Book of Mormon*, by Ariel L. Crowley, p. 132)

Mimeographed copies of B. H. Roberts' list of parallels were "privately distributed among a restricted group of Mormon scholars," and in January, 1956, Mervin B. Hogan had them published in *The Rocky Mountain Mason*. Although Ben E. Roberts claims that his father's manuscript does not cast doubt upon the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, a careful reading of it would seem to indicate that B. H. Roberts had lost faith in the Book of Mormon. Sterling M. McMurrin stated that Roberts' "study of Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon attests his determination to keep the case for Mormonism open and honest" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 144). Davis Bitton states that B. H. Roberts wrote the parallels "towards the end of his life." Mr. Bitton also states: "This document, which has been known about for many years, is published by at least one group as a means of embarrassing the Church" (*Ibid.*, p. 122).

However this may be, Roberts' parallels were certainly not written as a faith promoting work. Notice some of the comments made by B. H. Roberts:

Query: Could all this have supplied structural work for the Book of Mormon? (*The Rocky Mountain Mason*, Jan. 1956, p. 20)

Was this sufficient to suggest the strange manner of writing the book of Mormon in the learning of the Jews, and the language of the Egyptian, but in an altered Egyptian? (*Ibid.*, p. 22)

Query: Would this treatise of the destruction of Jerusalem suggest the theme to the Book of Mormon author, is the legitimate query, since the *View of the Hebrews* was published seven to five years before the Book of Mormon. (*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25)

Query: Did the author of the Book of Mormon follow too closely the course of Ethan Smith in this use of Isaiah, would be a legitimate query. The *View of the Hebrews* was published seven to five years before the Book of Mormon. (*Ibid.*, p. 25)

B. H. Roberts lists 18 parallels between *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon. In Parallel No. 4 Roberts states:

(4) Origin of American Indians: It is often represented by Mormon speakers and writers, that the Book of Mormon was the first to represent the American Indians as the descendants of the Hebrews; holding that the Book of Mormon is unique in this. The claim is sometimes still ignorantly made. (*The Rocky Mountain Mason*, January 1956, p. 18)

Roberts goes on to point out that the idea the Indians were originally Hebrews was popular even before 1830:

... In his index to the *View of the Hebrews* (Second Edition) (p. 1x) Ethan Smith informs us that from page 114 to page 225 (111 pages) will be devoted to "promiscuous testimonies," to the main fact for which his book stands, viz., the Hebrew origin of the American Indian. He brings together a very long list of writers and published books to show that this view very generally obtained throughout New England. One hundred and eleven pages devoted to evidence alone of the fact of such Hebrew origin gives space for much proof. Referring to Adair's testimonies on the subject, the *View of the Hebrews* lists twenty-three arguments to prove such origin (pp. 147-8). (*Ibid.*, pp. 18-19)

In parallel No. 5, B. H. Roberts points out that the idea of the Indians having a lost book may have been suggested by Ethan Smith's book:

(5) The Lost Book: "Dr. West of Stockbridge gave the following information. An old Indian informed him that his fathers in this country had not long since had a book which they had for a long time preserved. But having lost the knowledge of reading it, they concluded it would be of no further use to them; and they buried it with an Indian chief." It was spoken of "as a matter of fact." (*View of the Hebrews*, second edition, p. 223).

"Some readers have said: If the Indians are of the tribes of Israel, some decisive evidence of the fact will ere long be exhibited. This may be the case. . . . Would evidence like the following be deemed as verging toward what would be satisfactory? Suppose a leading character in Israel—wherever they are—should be found to have in his possession some biblical fragment of ancient Hebrew writing. This man dies, and it is buried with him in such a manner as to be long preserved. Some people afterward removing that earth, discover this fragment, and ascertain what it is,—an article of ancient Israel. Would such an incident . . . be esteemed of some weight? Something like this may possibly have occurred in favour of our Indians being of Israel." (p. 217)

Finding the Pittsfield Parchment (Hebrew): "Mr. Merrick gave the following account: That in 1815, he was levelling some ground under and near an old wood-shed standing on a place of his, situated on Indian Hill (a place in Pittsfield so called, and lying, as the writer was afterwards informed, at some distance from the middle of the town where Mr. Merrick is now living.) He ploughed and conveyed away old chips and earth. . . . After the work was done, he discovered, near where the earth had been dug the deepest, a kind of black strap, . . . in the fold it contained four folded leaves of old parchment. These leaves were of a dark yellow (suggesting gold color?) and contained some kind of writing. (They turned out to be Bible quotations.) They were written in Hebrew with a pen, in plain and intelligible writing." (pp. 219-220.) Query: Could all this have supplied structural work for the Book of Mormon? (*Ibid.*, pp. 19-20)

In parallel No. 9, B. H. Roberts points out that the Book of Mormon claims the descendants of Lehi became divided into two groups. There was a "civilized branch" who were called Nephites and a wicked people called Lamanites. The Lamanites were "an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety, and did seek in the wilderness for beasts of prey" (2 Nephi 5:24). The Nephites and Lamanites fought many wars, until finally the Nephites—the civilized people—were annihilated. Roberts' parallel No. 9 seems to show that Ethan Smith had suggested such an idea some years before the Book of Mormon was published:

(9) Accounting for an Overthrown Civilization in America as Witnessed by the Ruined Monuments of It; and the Existence of Barbarous Peoples Occupying America at the Advent of the Europeans:

Two classes, barbarous and civilized were found.

Ethan Smith found opposition to his views growing out of the supposition that if the American Indians were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, then they would have been a civilized rather than a barbarous people when discovered. Of this he says:

Some have felt a difficulty arising against the Indians being the ten tribes, from their ignorance of the mechanic arts, of writing, and of navigation. Ancient Israel knew something of these; and some imagine that these arts being once known, could never be lost. But no objection is hence furnished against our scheme. The knowledge of mechanic arts possessed in early times has been lost by many nations. . . . And Israel in an outcast state, might as well have lost it. It seems a fact that Israel have lost it, let them be who or where they may. Otherwise, they must have been known in the civilized world.

But that the people who first migrated to this western world did possess some knowledge of the mechanic arts . . . appears from incontestable facts, which are furnished in Baron Humboldt, and in *American Archaeology*, such as the finding of brick, earthen ware, sculptures, some implements of iron, as well as other metals, and other tokens of considerable improvement; which furnish an argument in favour of the Indians having descended from the ten tribes. . . .

The probability then is this; that the ten tribes arriving in this continent with some knowledge of the arts of civilized life; finding themselves in a vast wilderness filled with the best of game, inviting them to the chase; most of them fell into a wandering idle hunt-life. Different clans parted from each other, lost each other, and



formed separate tribes. Most of them formed a habit of this idle mode of living and were pleased with it. More sensible parts of this people associated together, to improve their knowledge of the arts; and probably continued thus for ages. From these the noted relics of civilization discovered in the west and south were furnished. But the savage tribes prevailed; and in process of time their savage jealousies and rage annihilated their more civilized brethren. And thus, as a wholly vindictive Providence would have it, and according to ancient denunciations, all were left in an “outcast” savage state. This accounts for their loss of the knowledge of letters, of the art of navigation, and of the use of iron. . . .

It is highly probable that the more civilized part of the tribes of Israel, after they settled in America, became wholly separated from the hunting and savage tribes of their brethren; that the latter lost the knowledge of their having descended from the same family with themselves; that the more civilized part continued for many centuries; that tremendous wars were frequent between them and their savage brethren, till the former became extinct.

This hypothesis accounts for the ancient works, forts, mounds, and vast enclosures, as well as tokens of a good degree of civil government, which are manifestly very ancient, and from centuries before Columbus discovered America. . . .

These partially civilized people became extinct. What account can be given of this, but that the savages extirpated them, after long and dismal wars? And nothing appears more probable than that they were the better part of the Israelites who came to this continent, who for a long time retained their knowledge of the mechanic and civil arts; while the greater part of their brethren became savage and wild. . . .

Then he adds this in conclusion of the theme:

But however vindictive the savages must have been;—however cruel and horrid in extirpating their more civilized brethren; yet it is a fact that there are many excellent traits in their original character. (pp. 171-174.)

Query: Let it be remembered that the work from which this is quoted existed from five to seven years before the publication of the Book of Mormon, and the two editions of the work flooded the New England states and New York. (*Ibid.*, pp. 22-24)

We cannot take the space here to reprint all of B. H. Roberts’ parallels, but Hal Hougey of Pacific Publishing Company, Concord, California, has reprinted them in a pamphlet entitled “*A Parallel*”—*The Basis of the Book of Mormon*. He has also included some material of his own which tends to strengthen Roberts’ original work.

Like the Book of Mormon, the *View of the Hebrews* has statements concerning the color of the Indians:

Mr. Adair expresses the same opinion; and the Indians have their tradition, that in the nation from which they originally came, all were of **one colour**. (*View of the Hebrews*, 1825, p. 88)

Under the last argument he [Mr. Adair] says; “The Indian tradition says that their forefathers in very remote ages came from a far distant country, where all the people were of **one colour**; and that in process of time they removed eastward to their present settlements.” (*Ibid.*, p. 152)

The Indians in other regions have brought down a tradition, that their former ancestors, away in a distant region from which they came, **were white**. (*Ibid.*, p. 206)

The Book of Mormon states that the descendants of Lehi were originally white, but that the Lamanites were cursed with a dark skin:

And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity. . . . as they were **white**, and exceeding fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a **skin of blackness** to come upon them. (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 5:21) [1978 edition]

The Mormon writer Sidney B. Sperry makes these comments concerning *View of the Hebrews*:

It is true that there are some obvious parallels between Ethan Smith’s book and the Book of Mormon, but parallels can be drawn between the Nephite record and many other early American books. . . . We submit that the style and purpose of *View of the Hebrews* is so different from that of the Book of Mormon that any fair-minded person who examines the two must have grave doubts that Joseph Smith was any more dependent upon Ethan Smith’s book than upon a dozen other early American publications dealing with the American Indians. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 178-179)

### “Wonders of Nature”

Another book which Joseph Smith may have read before “translating” the Book of Mormon was written by Josiah Priest. It was entitled *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, and was published in 1825 at Albany, New York. Josiah Priest became a well known author. In fact, the “Fifth Edition” of his work *American Antiquities*, printed in 1835, contained the statement that “22,000 volumes of this work have been published within thirty months. . . .” We know that Joseph Smith was familiar with Priest’s later work, *American Antiquities*, because he quotes from it in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, pages 813-814.

Priest’s earlier work, *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, was available in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood prior to the time the Book of Mormon was “translated.” Wesley P. Walters has sent us a photograph of an original copy of this book containing a sticker showing that it belonged to the “Manchester Library.” Walters also found that library records show that this book was checked out by a number of people during the year 1827. Therefore, it must have been well known in the area of Palmyra and Manchester where Joseph Smith lived.

*The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed* quotes extensively from Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. Over thirty pages are devoted to “Proofs that the **Indians** of North America are lineally descended from the ancient **Hebrews**” (*The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, Albany, New York, 1825, p. 297).

Josiah Priest’s book contains a great deal of information about the Indians. It is interesting to note that his book speaks of the “isthmus of Darien” and uses the words “narrow neck of land”: “. . . a **narrow neck of land** is interposed betwixt two vast oceans” (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 598). These same words are found in the Book of Mormon: “. . . the **narrow neck of land**, by the place where the sea divides the land” (Ether 10:20).

### “No Traveller Returns”

The book by Josiah Priest throws new light upon a controversy regarding a quotation from William Shakespeare which is found in the Book of Mormon. Since Shakespeare was not born until 1564, we would not expect the Book of Mormon to quote from his words. Anti-Mormon writers, however, feel that they have identified a quotation from his works. This is a statement made by Lehi almost 600 years before Christ: “. . . **from whence no traveler can return**; . . .” (2 Nephi 1:14). Notice how similar this is to the words of Shakespeare: “. . . **from whose bourn no traveller returns** . . .” (*Hamlet*, Act 3, Scene 1, as quoted in *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, p. 237).

The Mormon apologist Sidney B. Sperry made this statement:

Joseph Smith has been charged by many of his critics as being an impostor . . . some of them, . . . claim that he quotes words of Shakespeare in a passage of the Book of Mormon . . . And, indeed, it would seem a bit strange to learn that Lehi could quote Will Shakespeare about 2140 years before the Bard of Avon was born! . . . The Mormon people have **no** objection to scholars finding parallels to Shakespeare . . . We hold that Joseph Smith translated the Nephite text of the Book of Mormon and that he used the

best vocabulary at his command. If such a vocabulary demonstrated a knowledge of works of Shakespeare, so much the better. But we suggest that it would be very difficult to prove that Joseph Smith was familiar with the works of Shakespeare; . . .

In fairness to critics, and in anticipation of future discussions of the problem, we wish to call attention to a particular word used in the quotations by both Lehi and Shakespeare . . .

The word we have in mind is “**traveller**.” It stands out **like a sore thumb** as far as Lehi is concerned. . . .

We are led to the conclusion that the **only word** that Joseph Smith might have **put into Lehi’s mouth from Shakespeare**, assuming he was exposed to the lines from Hamlet, is “traveller.” (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 123, 124, 128, 129)

The reader will notice that although Dr. Sperry admits that the word “traveller” might have been “put into Lehi’s mouth from Shakespeare,” he states that it “would be very difficult to prove that Joseph Smith was familiar with the works of Shakespeare; . . .” Although we have shown that “Shakespeare’s works, 10 vols.” were sold at the Wayne Bookstore in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood (*Wayne Sentinel*, January 26, 1825), we now have a much better idea of where Joseph Smith might have found these words. In examining Josiah Priest’s *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, we found a story which quotes the words of Shakespeare. In quoting these words, however, they are in the wrong order, and this makes the end of the quotation almost identical to that in the Book of Mormon.

. . . **from whence no traveler can return**; . . . (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 1:14)

. . . **from whence no traveller returns**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, 1825, p. 464)

The reader will notice how similar the two quotations are. While it is possible that this could be a coincidence, there is additional evidence which seems to show that Joseph Smith used Priest’s work in writing the Book of Mormon.

### Vapor of Darkness

On page 524 of Priest’s *Wonders of Nature*, we find material concerning the plague of darkness which came upon the Egyptians (see Exodus 10:21-23). This was reprinted from *Clarke’s Commentary*, vol. 1, pages 343-344. We find the following parallels between this material and a story found in the Book of Mormon.

1. Both Priest’s book and the Book of Mormon mention that there was darkness which could be felt.

. . . the inhabitants . . . could **feel** the vapor of **darkness**; (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20)

**Darkness** which may be **felt**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 524)

2. Both accounts speak of a vapor or vapors, and this is very interesting since the book of Exodus says nothing about a vapor being involved.

. . . **vapor** of darkness; . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20)

Probably this was occasioned by a superabundance of aqueous **vapours** . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 524)

3. Both accounts speak of a mist. The Bible story says nothing about a mist.

. . . there was **thick** darkness And there was not any light seen, . . . so great were the **mists** of darkness. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:20, 22)

. . . aqueous vapours . . . were so **thick** as to prevent the rays of the sun from penetrating through them: an extraordinary **thick mist**, . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 524)

4. In both cases artificial light could not be used.

And there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood, so there could not be any light at all; (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:21)

. . . no artificial light could be procured, as the thick clammy vapours would prevent lamps, &c. from burning; . . . (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 524)

5. In both cases the darkness lasted three days.

. . . it did **last for** the space of **three days** . . . (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 8:23)

. . . the darkness with its attendant horrors, **lasted for three days**. (*The Wonders of Nature*, p. 524)

In our *Case*, vol. 3, pages 91-93, we present additional evidence to show that the author of the Book of Mormon was familiar with Josiah Priest’s book.

### Not Unique

We have seen that in Joseph Smith’s time many people believed that the Indians were “lineally descended from the ancient Hebrews.” A number of books were printed which endorsed this view. Thus it is plain to see that the Book of Mormon is not unique with regard to this matter.

Today, however, the idea that the Indians are Israelites has been almost abandoned. Most scientists feel that the Indian is “basically Mongoloid.” The Smithsonian Institution has issued a statement concerning the origin of the Indians and the Book of Mormon. The following is taken from that statement: “2. The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most clearly related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia.”

The reaction of Mormon scholars to scientific statements that the Indians are “basically Mongoloid” has been very interesting. Franklin S. Harris, Jr., stated: “The usual view then is that the Indians are of Mongoloid origin, which means straight hair, broad cheek bones, etc. We cannot deny that many American peoples are of Mongoloid type” (*The Book of Mormon Message and Evidences*, by Franklin S. Harris, Jr., p. 69).

The Mormon writer Ariel L. Crowley stated:

It is beyond any question true that some of the tribes of American Indians have a wholly or partially Mongolian ancestry. Any position to the contrary would be directly in the teeth of overwhelming evidence . . . no missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should say that all American Indians are descended from Israel. Neither is it proper to say that no American Indians are descended from Mongolian sources. . . .

It does the Church little credit for any of its members to quarrel with facts. (*About the Book of Mormon*, pp. 142, 145)

The following is found in a paper presented to the *Thirteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, April 1, 1961, by Joseph E. Vincent:

There is evidence of many times as many men having entered America by means of the Bering land bridge than came with Lehi and his family. But does the average Mormon credit the present day Indian as having come from any ancestor other than Lehi and his son Laman? No, most of them do not. . . . Why do our people believe or want to believe that all Indians are descendants of Laman when there is so much evidence to show that many more people came to our shores from Northern Asia than ever came with Lehi?

### “An Ignominious Death”

In our *Case*, vol. 2, pages 63-69, we show that the *Wayne Sentinel*, published in Joseph Smith’s neighborhood, may have furnished structural material for the author of the

Book of Mormon. While we do not have room to present all of the information here, we will mention one interesting item. In 1827 a man by the name of Jesse Strang was hung for a murder which he had committed in Albany, N.Y. The people in New York were very upset over the murder, and a crowd estimated at “thirty thousand persons” witnessed the hanging. At least five articles were printed concerning this affair in the *Wayne Sentinel*. We know that the Smith family was familiar with this newspaper, for on August 11, 1826, Joseph Smith’s father was listed as a delinquent subscriber. Almost two years before Joseph Smith’s father had run an advertisement in this paper (see *A New Witness For Christ in America*, vol. 1, p. 16).

In the Book of Mormon we find a story concerning a wicked man named Nehor (see Alma 1:2-15). This story is very similar to the story of Jesse Strang. Below is a list of parallels:

1. Both Strang and Nehor committed a murder.
2. In both cases the victim was a righteous man.
3. Neither Strang nor Nehor held to orthodox religious beliefs nor seemed to fear eternal punishment.
4. Both appeared before a very religious judge.
5. Both Strang and Nehor were found guilty and were sentenced to death.
6. Both were taken to the place of execution and acknowledged their sin.
7. Both accounts use the expression “ignominious death.”

In the *Wayne Sentinel* we read:

... he was about to **suffer** a painful and **ignominious death**. (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827)

In the Book of Mormon we read:

... he **suffered** an **ignominious death**. (Alma 1:15)

Although the word “ignominy” is found in Proverbs 18:3, the word “ignominious” is not found in the King James version of the Bible. It is interesting to note that the only place it appears in the Book of Mormon is in connection with the execution of Nehor. Because of the similarity of the two accounts, we feel that the story of Strang’s execution could have been the source for the story of Nehor in the Book of Mormon. (For a photograph of the *Wayne Sentinel* and more information concerning this matter see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 63-67.)

### Joseph Smith’s Father’s Dream

Both Joseph Smith’s father and Nephi’s father (in the Book of Mormon) are reported to have had many dreams. Lucy Smith, Joseph Smith’s mother, tells several dreams that her husband had in her book *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations*. This book was first published in 1853. One of Joseph Smith’s father’s dreams is recorded on pages 58-59 of this book. Lucy Smith stated that her husband had this dream in 1811:

In 1811, we moved . . . to the town of Lebanon, New Hampshire. Soon after arriving here, my husband received another very singular vision, which I will relate: . . . (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, p. 58)

Upon reading this dream one is struck by the similarity between it and Lehi’s dream in the Book of Mormon. Lehi’s dream is recorded in chapter 8 of 1 Nephi, and in chapter 21 of 1 Nephi his son, Nephi, has the same dream but expounds it in more detail. The following is a list of parallels between Joseph Smith’s father’s dream, as related in *Biographical Sketches*, and Lehi’s dream as related and further expounded by his son Nephi.

1. Both Joseph Smith’s father and Lehi state they were traveling.
 

And after I had traveled for the space of many hours . . . (1 Nephi 8:8)  
“I thought,” said he, “I was travelling . . .” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
2. Both mention a field.
 

. . . I saw in my dream, a dark and dreary wilderness I beheld a large and spacious field. (1 Nephi 8:4, 9)  
“ . . . I was traveling in an . . . open, desolate field, which appeared to be very barren.” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
3. Both dreams compare the field to a world.
 

And I also beheld . . . a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world. (1 Nephi 8:20)  
 . . . an open, desolate field, . . . My guide . . . said, “This is the desolate world; . . .” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
4. Both Joseph Smith’s father and Lehi have a guide.
 

And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he bade me follow him. (1 Nephi 8:5-6)  
“My guide, who was by my side, . . .” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
5. Both mention a broad road or roads.
 

. . . leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost. (1 Nephi 12:17)  
“The road was so broad and barren . . . Broad is the road, and wide is the gate that leads to death . . .” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
6. Both mention a narrow path.
 

And I also beheld a, straight and narrow path, . . . (1 Nephi 8:20)  
“Traveling a short distance further, I came to a narrow path. This path I entered, . . .” (*Biographical Sketches*, p. 58)
7. Both mention a stream of water.
 

. . . I beheld a river of water; . . .” (1 Nephi 8:13)  
“ . . . I beheld a beautiful stream of water . . .” (*B.S.* p. 58)
8. Both mention something extending along the bank of the stream.
 

And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river . . . (1 Nephi 8:19)  
“ . . . but as far as my eyes could extend I could see a rope, running along the bank of it, . . .” (*B.S.*, p. 58)
9. Both mention a tree.
 

And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, . . . (1 Nephi 8:10)  
“ . . . a tree, such as I had never seen before.” (*B.S.*, p. 58)
10. Both mention the beauty of the tree.
 

And I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; . . . (1 Nephi 11:8)  
“It was exceedingly handsome, insomuch that I looked upon it with wonder and admiration. Its beautiful branches . . .” (*B.S.*, p. 58)
11. Both trees bore fruit.
 

. . . whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. (1 Nephi 8:10)  
“ . . . it bore a kind of fruit, . . .” (*B.S.*, p. 58)
12. Both compared the whiteness of the fruit to snow.
 

. . . the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow. (1 Nephi 11:8) . . . the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. (1 Nephi 8:11)  
“ . . . as white as snow, or, if possible, whiter. . . the fruit which they contained, which was of dazzling whiteness.” (*B.S.*, p. 58)
13. Both Joseph Smith’s father and Lehi ate of the fruit.
 

. . . I did go forth and partake of the fruit . . . (1 Nephi 8:11)  
“I drew near, and began to eat of it, . . .” (*B.S.*, p. 58)



14. Both found the fruit to be very delicious.

... it was most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted. (1 Nephi 8:11)  
 "... and I found it delicious beyond description." (B.S., p. 58)

15. Both wanted their families to partake of the fruit.

... I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also;  
 ... (1 Nephi 8:12)  
 "As I was eating," I said in my heart, "I cannot eat this alone, I must bring my wife and children, that they may partake with me."  
 (B.S., p. 58)

16. Both families came and partook of the fruit.

... they did come unto me partake of the fruit also. (1 Nephi 8:16)  
 "... I went and brought my family, ... and we all commenced eating ... " (B.S., p. 58)

17. After eating the fruit both experienced great joy.

And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul with exceeding great joy; ... (1 Nephi 8:12)  
 "We were exceedingly happy, insomuch that our joy could not easily be expressed." (B.S., pp. 58-59)

18. Both mention a spacious building.

And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water, a great and spacious building; ... (1 Nephi 8:26)  
 "... I beheld a spacious building standing opposite the valley which we were in, ..." (B.S., p. 59)

19. Both indicate the building reached high into the air.

... it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth. (1 Nephi 8:26)  
 "... it appeared to reach to the very heavens." (B.S., p. 59)

20. Both buildings were filled with people.

And it was filled with people, ... (1 Nephi 8:27)  
 "It was full of doors and windows, and they were all filled with people ..." (B.S., p. 59)

21. In both buildings the people were finely dressed.

... their manner of dress was exceeding fine; ... (1 Nephi 8:27)  
 "... who were finely dressed." (B.S., p. 59)

22. In both cases the people in the building pointed the finger of scorn at those partaking of the fruit.

... they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; ... (1 Nephi 8:33)  
 "When these people observed us ... under the tree, they pointed the finger of scorn at us, ..." (B.S., p. 59)

23. Both state that they ignored the people in the building.

... but we heeded them not. (1 Nephi 8:33)  
 "But their contumely we utterly disregarded." (B.S., p. 59)

24. Both state the meaning of the fruit is the pure love of God.

Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?  
 And I answered him, saying Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; ... (1 Nephi 11:21-22)  
 "I ... inquired ... the meaning of the fruit that was so delicious. He told me it was the pure love of God, shed abroad in the hearts of all those who love him ..." (B.S., p. 59)

25. Both state two members of the family aren't present.

... I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also; ... (1 Nephi 8:17)  
 "... look yonder, you have two more, and you must them also."  
 (B.S., p. 59)

26. Both mention the fall of the building.

... the great and spacious building ... fell, and the fall thereof was exceeding great. (1 Nephi 11:36)  
 "... I asked my guide what was the meaning of the spacious building which I saw. He replied, 'It is Babylon, it is Babylon, and it must fall.'" (B.S., p. 59)

27. Both imply that pride was connected with the building or its inhabitants.

... the great and spacious building was the pride of the world;  
 ... (1 Nephi 11:36)  
 "The people in the doors and building windows are the inhabitants thereof, who scorn and despise the Saints of God because of their humility." (B.S., p. 59)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, admits that the two dreams are similar:

It is interesting that Joseph Smith, Sr., had almost the same dream, according to his wife, who took comfort in comparing the wanderings of her own family with those of "Father Lehi." (*Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites*, p. 49)

In a footnote on the same page, Dr. Nibley states: "The dream is not to be minutely examined, since it is only Mother Smith's memory of a dream reported to her 34 years before."

The non-Mormon writer Hal Hougey stated:

It is here proposed that Lehi's vision ... is not original at all, but had an earlier source. This source is a dream or vision which Joseph Smith, Sr., ... experienced ... in 1811, ... Having heard the dream recounted during his youth, Joseph simply incorporated it with a couple of minor changes into the Book of Mormon as a vision of Lehi. (*The Truth About the "Lehi Tree-of-Life" Stone*, by Hal Hougey, Concord, California, 1963, p. 19)

M. Wells Jakeman, a Mormon writer, made this statement in rebuttal to Mr. Hougey:

Now I agree with Mr. Hougey that the similarities between Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream and Lehi's dream of the tree of life found in the Book of Mormon are too many of an undisputed and arbitrary nature—as he points out in his booklet, p. 24—to allow for any other explanation than that they are connected. But that Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream is necessarily, in view of this connection, the origin of Lehi's vision, is only an assumption that Hougey makes ... it is just as logical to assume the reverse of his postulate, namely that Lehi's vision in the Book of Mormon is the origin of Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream; that is (as one possible explanation), that Joseph Smith, Sr., actually did not have his dream until after the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830 and his reading therein the vivid account of Lehi's vision of the tree of life, and that his wife Lucy misdated his dream in her book. ... Dr. Christensen of the BYU ... gives his reaction to Hougey's theory ... as follows:

I have not had the opportunity to check on Mr. Hougey's assertions with regard to this matter, but even so, what he has done is not to explain the Stela 5 Book of Mormon parallels but merely to divert the attention of the reader. I suppose it is possible for the Lord to give Tree of Life visions to as many different persons as he might wish, including the father of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

(*The Society For Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, Newsletter No. 104, p. 9)

In the same article Dr. Jakeman states that Lucy Smith "did not publish her book until 1853 ... " While it is true it was not actually printed until 1853, it was written before October 8, 1845 (see *History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 471).

Since we know that a great deal of the Book of Mormon

is plagiarized from the Bible, it should not surprise us to find that Joseph Smith would borrow from his father's dream. Fawn Brodie made this statement:

In his first chapters Joseph borrowed from his own family traditions. His mother for many years had cherished the details of her husband's dreams, and one of these the youth incorporated wholesale into his narrative. Lehi, father of the hero Nephi, was made to have a vision that paralleled the dream of Joseph's father in minute detail. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 58)

On page 43 of the same book, Mrs. Brodie made this interesting observation: "Like Joseph himself, Nephi had two elder brothers, Laman and Lemuel, and three younger, Sam, Jacob, and Joseph."

It is also interesting to note that Joseph Smith's grandfather wrote a book which may have had some influence upon the Book of Mormon (see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 111-112).

### Smith Probably Qualified

Dr. Hugh Nibley made this statement: "The fundamental rule of the comparative method is, that if things resemble each other there must be some connection between them, and the closer the resemblance the closer the connection." (*Improvement Era*, October 1959, p. 744)

In this chapter we have used the "comparative method" to show that the Book of Mormon is a product of the nineteenth century. We have shown that there are parallels to the Book of Mormon in a dream which Joseph Smith's father had and to the newspaper to which he subscribed. We have demonstrated that the Book of Mormon contains parallels to the Westminster Confession, which was not written until 1646 A.D. We have shown that the Apocrypha contains the word "Nephi" and other important parallels. We have shown that the Book of Mormon contains hundreds of parallels to the New Testament. It also seems to quote from Shakespeare, who was not born until 1564 A.D. The anti-Masonic controversy of the 1820's is reflected in the pages of the Book of Mormon. The religious controversies which were raging in Joseph Smith's time are found in the Book of Mormon. The idea that the Indians were "the lineal descendants of the Israelites" certainly came from the thinking of Joseph Smith's time. In addition to all this we have shown that there are important parallels between the Book of Mormon and Josiah Priest's book *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, which was first published in 1825 and available in Joseph Smith's own neighborhood.

Dr. Hugh Nibley states: "To the trained eye every document of considerable length is bound to betray the real setting in which it was produced" (*Since Cumorah*, p. 261). We feel that a careful examination of the Book of Mormon has revealed the true setting in which it was produced. That setting was not the ancient world, as Dr. Nibley has maintained, but rather the nineteenth century.

Some people have claimed that Joseph Smith could not have written the Book of Mormon because he did not have a good education. While it is true that Joseph Smith did not have a great deal of education, he was a very intelligent man and certainly had the ability to write a book.

Now that Wesley P. Walters has proven that the 1826 court record is authentic, we know that Joseph Smith was still working on his education when he was about twenty years old. On March 20, 1826, Joseph Smith testified that he "had been employed by said Stowel on his farm, and going to school" (*Fraser's Magazine*, February 1873, pp. 229-230). While this does not mean that Joseph Smith had advanced very far with his education, it does show that he had an interest in school. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts said that the "affairs of the family in the early years of its residence at Palmyra, required the services of even the lad Joseph . . . so that he was largely deprived even of the small opportunities afforded by the school system of the state; . . ." (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 36). Joseph Smith was probably trying to make up for his lost opportunities at Bainbridge.

In the past many Mormon writers have played down the idea that Joseph Smith could have learned much about the world or that he had access to many books. J. N. Washburn, for instance, made these statements:

Of absolutely first importance to this study, and to the Book of Mormon, is the matter of his education, his acquaintance with books, his knowledge of the world and its learning in his time.

The educational facilities of the backwoods a hundred some odd years ago were strictly limited when not actually non-existent.

What books did he know and read?

I have in my files a letter, dated April 1, 1944, from the New York State Library Board, which lists sixty-eight libraries "established in New York State during or prior to 1829." The list contains no mention of any library or library catalogue either in Palmyra or Manchester. I have been told, however, that there was a collection of a few dozen volumes in the latter community. (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 3-4)

The Mormon writer Milton V. Backman, Jr., has done a great deal of research with regard to this matter. His research shows just the opposite of what many Mormon writers have maintained in the past:

. . . on January 14, 1817, the inhabitants of Manchester organized a **library** which contained histories, biographies, geographies, religious treatises, and other popular works of that age. (*Joseph Smith's First Vision*, Salt Lake City, 1971, p. 32)

The early Genesee settlers' zeal for knowledge is not only reflected by the appearance of a growth of newspapers but also by their establishment of libraries and bookstores throughout western New York. A **library** was organized in the village of Palmyra during the winter of 1822-1823. In January, 1817, also, settlers of Manchester village established a public **library**.

While the Smith family resided in Palmyra, many works were available in the T. C. Strong bookstore. During the month of October, 1818, for example, approximately three hundred volumes were advertised in *The Palmyra Register*, . . .

While many works were available in Palmyra village, countless other books and pamphlets were being sold in Canandaigua, Geneva, West Bloomfield, and other surrounding communities. As early as 1815, a proprietor in West Bloomfield advertised that he had for sale **more than one thousand volumes**. Therefore, while the Smith family resided in western New York, many of the publications of that age were being circulated in the area, and the ideas of many eastern intellectuals and theologians were being disseminated among the settlers of the Finger Lake country. . . .

As the population increased, new schools were established throughout the towns of Palmyra and Farmington. . . . Within the thirty-four towns of Ontario County there were at that time [1820] 434 schools with 23,439 children being taught. . . .

In the summer of 1820 an academy was opened in Palmyra village where students studied Latin and Greek. . . .

Even though young Joseph was probably not an avid reader and received a meager formal education, he was a humble, inquisitive youth who sought knowledge concerning the world in which he lived and God's plan of salvation. (*Ibid.*, pp. 48-51)

From this it is apparent that Joseph Smith had access to a great deal of source material from which he could have written the Book of Mormon.

A document by Joseph Smith which was suppressed by the Mormon leaders for over 130 years throws important light on the question of the authorship of the Book of Mormon. This document was brought to light in a thesis by Paul Cheesman at Brigham Young University and published in our *Case*, vol. 1, pages 100-104. When we first saw this document we were impressed by the similarity of its style to that found in the Book of Mormon. For instance, Joseph Smith commenced his story by stating:

. . . I was born in the town of Sharon in the state of Vermont North America on the twenty third day of December AD 1805 of **goodly parents** . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts

Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," M.A. Thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1965, p. 127, line 15)

This sentence has a familiar ring to those who have read the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon begins as follows: "I, Nephi, having been born of **goodly parents**, . . ." (1 Nephi 1:1).

On line 24 of page 127, Joseph Smith uses the words "Suffice it to Say"; these words are similar to the words "For it sufficeth me to say," which are found in 1 Nephi 6:2. Joseph Smith uses the words "immortal Soul" on pages 127 and 128; these words are also found in the Book of Mormon, Mosiah 2:38. On line 6 of page 128 of the thesis Joseph Smith uses the phrase "grief to my soul." This is very similar to the phrase "grieveth my soul" found in the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 26:11. On the next line Joseph Smith uses the phrase "pondered many things in my heart." This is similar to the phrase "ponder somewhat in your hearts" found in the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 32:1.

Other examples could be cited, but this should be sufficient to convince the reader that the style found in this document is similar to that found in the Book of Mormon. One thing that is very interesting to note is that small portions of scripture are woven into this document in the same manner that we find in the Book of Mormon (see our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 101-104). This document certainly shows that Joseph Smith was capable of writing the Book of Mormon.

### Changes in the Book of Mormon

In 1965 we published a photographic reproduction of the first edition of the Book of Mormon showing that thousands of changes were made in the text since it was first published. We published this study under the title *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*. While most of the changes are related to the correction of grammatical and spelling errors, there are some that change the meaning of the text.

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe once stated: "The Book of Mormon, . . . has been published in large editions. It would not be possible to change any part of it without being discovered" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 251). The Mormon leaders seem to have a difficult time facing the truth with regard to the changes in the Book of Mormon. Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, made these statements at a conference held in 1961:

During the past week or two I have received a number of letters from different parts of the United States written by people, some of whom at least are a little concerned because they have been approached by enemies of the Church and enemies of the Book of Mormon, who had made the statement that there have been one or two or more thousand changes in the Book of Mormon since the first edition was published. Well, of course, **there is no truth in that statement**.

It is true that when the Book of Mormon was printed the printer was a man who was unfriendly. The publication of the book was done under adverse circumstances, and there were a few errors, mostly typographical—conditions that arise in most any book that is being published—but there was not one thing in the Book of Mormon or in the second edition or any other edition since that in any way contradicts the first edition, and such **changes** as were made were made **by the Prophet Joseph Smith** because under those adverse conditions the Book of Mormon was published. But there was no change of doctrine.

Now, these **sons of Belial** who circulate these reports evidently know better. I will not use the word that is in my mind. (*The Improvement Era*, December 1961, pp. 924-925)

Joseph Fielding Smith's statement is certainly far from the truth (see our publication *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*). As to his statement that the man who printed the first edition was unfriendly and allowed errors to creep into the book, the famous

Mormon Historian B. H. Roberts has already stated that the first edition of the Book of Mormon was "singularly free from typographical errors" and that the printer could not be blamed for the many mistakes that are found in the Book of Mormon:

That errors of grammar and faults in dictation do exist in the Book of Mormon (**and more especially and abundantly in the first edition**) must be conceded; and what is more, while some of the errors may be referred to inefficient proof-reading, such as is to be expected in a country printing establishment, yet such is the nature of the errors in question, and so **interwoven** are they throughout the diction of the Book, that they may **not be disposed of** by saying they result from inefficient proof-reading or referring them to the mischievous disposition of the "typos" or the **unfriendliness of the publishing house**. The errors are constitutional in their character; they are of the **web and woof of the style**, and not such errors as may be classed as typographical. **Indeed, the first edition of the Book of Mormon is singularly free from typographical errors.** (*Defense of the Faith*, by B. H. Roberts, pp. 280-281; reprinted in *A New Witness For Christ in America*, by Francis W. Kirkham, v. 1, pp. 200-201)

John H. Gilbert, the man who helped to print the Book of Mormon, claimed that the Mormons did not want him to correct the grammatical errors which were in the manuscript (see *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*, Introduction, p. 2). A photograph of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon which is published in the book *A New Witness For Christ in America*, vol. 1, page 216, proves that the printer was not responsible for the grammatical errors which appeared in the first edition. A comparison reveals that the 1964 edition differs from the 1830 edition in four places, and that in all four places the manuscript agrees with the 1830 edition and not the 1964 edition.

According to Joseph Smith's testimony there should not have been any reason to make changes in the Book of Mormon. He stated that when he and the witnesses went out to pray concerning it

we heard a voice from out of the bright light above us, saying, "These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and **they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct**, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear." (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 54-55)

On another occasion Joseph Smith stated that he "told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the **most correct of any book on earth**, . . ." (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 461).

For many years the Mormons taught that the Lord had given Joseph Smith a perfect translation of the Book of Mormon, and that all of the errors were errors which were made by the Nephites on the original plates. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

I will now give you a description of the manner in which the Book of Mormon was translated. Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that **appeared the writing**. One character at a time would appear, and under it was the **interpretation in English**. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, by David Whitmer, p. 12)

Martin Harris (another of the three witnesses) claimed that Joseph Smith received the translation directly from God, and that it was a perfect translation. George Reynolds quotes the following from a letter written to the *Deseret News* by Edward Stevenson:

"Martin explained the translation as follows: By aid of the seer stone, sentences would appear and were read by the prophet and written by Martin, and when finished he would say, 'Written,' and if **correctly written, that sentence would disappear and another appear in its place but if not written correctly it remained until corrected, so that the translation was just as it was engraven on the plates**, precisely in the language then used." (*Myth of the Manuscript Found*, 1883, p. 91)



Oliver B. Huntington recorded in his journal that in 1881 Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, taught that the Lord gave Joseph Smith the exact English wording and spelling that he should use in the Book of Mormon:

Saturday Feb. 25, 1881, I went to Provo to a quarterly Stake Conference. Heard Joseph F. Smith describe the manner of translating the Book of Mormon by Joseph Smith the Prophet and Seer, which was as follows as near as I can recollect the substance of his description. **Joseph did not render the writing on the gold plates into the English language in his own style of language** as many people believe, **but every word and every letter** was given to him by the gift and power of God. So it is the work of God and not of Joseph Smith, and it was done in this way. . . . **The Lord caused each word spelled as it is in the book to appear on the stones in short sentences or words**, and when Joseph had uttered the sentence or word before him and the scribe had written it properly, that sentence would disappear and another appear. **And if there was a word wrongly written or even a letter incorrect** the writing on the stones would remain there. Then Joseph would require the scribe to spell the reading of the last spoken and thus find the mistake and when corrected the sentence would disappear as usual. (Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, typed copy at Utah State Historical Society; photo of original in authors' files)

The anti-Mormon writers criticized the grammar of the Book of Mormon stating that God could not make the many grammatical mistakes found in the Book of Mormon. Finally, the Mormon Church leaders became so embarrassed about the grammar that they decided to abandon the idea that God gave Joseph Smith the English that is found in the Book of Mormon; their new idea was that God just gave Joseph Smith the idea and that he expressed it in his own words. The Mormon Historian B. H. Roberts made this statement:

If . . . it is insisted that the divine instrument, Urim and Thummim, did all, and the prophet nothing—at least nothing more than to read off the translation made by Urim and Thummim—then the divine instrument is responsible for such errors in grammar and diction as did occur. But this is to assign responsibility for errors in language to a divine instrumentality, which amounts to assigning such errors to God. But that is unthinkable, not to say blasphemous. Also, if it be contended that the language of the Book of Mormon, word for word, and letter for letter, was given to the prophet by direct inspiration of God, acting upon his mind, then again God is made responsible for the language errors in the Book of Mormon—a thing unthinkable.

Rather than ascribe these errors to Deity, either through direct or indirect means, men will reject the claims of the Book of Mormon; and, since the verbal errors in the Book of Mormon are such as one ignorant of the English language would make, the temptation is strong, in the minds of those not yet converted to its truth, to assign to the Book of Mormon an altogether human origin. . . .

**Are these flagrant errors in grammar chargeable to the Lord?** To say so is to invite ridicule. The thoughts, the doctrines, are well enough; but the awkward, ungrammatical expression of the thoughts is doubtless, the result of the translator's imperfect knowledge of the English language, . . . that old theory cannot be successfully maintained; that is, the Urim and Thummim did the translating, the Prophet, nothing beyond repeating what he saw reflected in that instrument; that God directly or indirectly is responsible for the verbal and grammatical errors of translation. To advance such a theory before intelligent and educated people is to unnecessarily invite ridicule, and make of those who advocate it candidates for contempt. . . .

It is no use resisting the matter, **the old theory must be abandoned.** It could only come into existence and remain so long and now be clung to by some so tenaciously because our fathers and our people in the past and now were and are uncritical. (*Defense of the Faith*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 1, pp. 278, 279, 295, 306-308)

B. H. Roberts claimed that since God did not give the English found in the Book of Mormon, the church leaders had a right to make changes in it:

Many errors, verbal and grammatical, **have already been eliminated** in the later English editions, and there is no valid reason why every-one of those that remain should not be eliminated, . . . There is no good reason why we should not have just as good a Book of Mormon in the English language as they now have in the French, the German, the Swedish and the Danish, . . . for in these translations, it has not been thought necessary to perpetuate the English errors; nor do I believe it necessary to perpetuate them in our English editions . . . the present writer **hopes that he will live to see those verbal and grammatical changes authorized.** (*Defense of the Faith*, vol. 1, pp. 300-301)

As we have already shown, President Joseph Fielding Smith claims that “such changes as were made were made by the Prophet Joseph Smith.” While it is true that Joseph Smith made most of the changes, many changes were made after his death. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, admits that Dr. Talmage made many of the changes in 1920:

The writer happens to know that Dr. Talmage was a stickler for good English and a close student of the text of the Book of Mormon. He knew as well as anyone the **imperfections** of the literary dress of the First Edition of the Nephite record and took a prominent part in **correcting many** of them in a later edition of the work (1920). (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, p. 190)

The four most important changes in the Book of Mormon are related to the doctrine of a plurality of Gods, and therefore we will deal with them in Chapter 9.

Another important change was made in Mosiah 21:28. In this verse the name of the king has been changed from Benjamin to Mosiah. In the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon we read as follows:

. . . king **Benjamin** had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings; . . . (Book of Mormon, 1830 edition, p. 200)

In modern editions of the Book of Mormon this verse has been changed to read:

. . . king **Mosiah** had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings; . . . (Book of Mormon, 1964 edition, Mosiah 21:28)

It would appear from chronology found in the Book of Mormon (see Mosiah 6:3-7 and 7:1), king Benjamin should have been dead at this time, and therefore the Mormon Church leaders evidently felt that it was best to change the king's name to Mosiah. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, made this comment concerning this change:

In Mr. Budvarson's photo reproduction (p. 21) of page 200 of the First Edition he takes pains to underline “king Benjamin” and points out that in later editions it was changed to read “king Mosiah.” (Cf. Mos. 21:28) Budvarson **is correct in this**; the prophet Joseph Smith did **change the reading** in the Second (1837) Edition despite the **fact that the original manuscript reads “king Benjamin.”** . . . The change raises an interesting question, Who was responsible for the reading, “king Benjamin,” in the first place? Was it an inadvertent slip of the tongue on the part of Joseph Smith as he dictated his translation to Oliver Cowdery, or did he translate correctly enough an original error on the part of Mormon, the abridger of the Book of Mormon? The **last** of these suggestions is probably the **correct one**, for the fact remains that the reading “king Benjamin” is an **out-and-out error, because the king had been dead for some time**, and his son Mosiah was his successor with a “gift from God.” (See Mos. 6:4-5; 8:13.) What we have here, Mr. Budvarson, is an example

of another human **error** that Joseph Smith was **glad to correct**. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, p. 203)

Five things should be noted concerning Dr. Sperry's statement. First, he admits that the king's name was changed from Benjamin to Mosiah. Second, Dr. Sperry admits that the "original manuscript reads 'king Benjamin.'" Third, he states that it "probably" read Benjamin on the original gold plates. Fourth, Dr. Sperry admits that the reading "king Benjamin" would have made a contradiction in the Book of Mormon because king Benjamin "had been dead for some time." Fifth, Dr. Sperry states that Joseph Smith deliberately altered this to eliminate the contradiction. It is very strange that Dr. Sperry would make such an admission. In other words, Dr. Sperry is admitting that the Mormon Church leaders deliberately falsified this verse to eliminate a contradiction. Dr. Sperry is not only admitting this, but he is also trying to justify their action. On page 191 of his book, Dr. Sperry states:

Our leaders are generally **well justified in making the changes** that have appeared in later editions of the Nephite sacred record. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, p. 191)

Another change involving the names of Benjamin and Mosiah is found in the book of Ether. On page 546 of the first edition of the Book of Mormon we read: "... for this cause did king **Benjamin** keep them, ..." In the 1964 edition (Ether 4:1) this has been changed to read: "... for this cause did king **Mosiah** keep them, ..."

A change has been made in the First Book of Nephi, evidently in an attempt to strengthen the Mormon claim that baptism was practiced by the people in the Old Testament. This verse is taken from Isaiah 48, and appears as follows in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon (p. 52):

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

In modern editions it has been changed to read:

Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, **or out of the waters of baptism**, who swear by the name of the Lord, ... (Book of Mormon, 1964 Ed., 1 Nephi 20:1)

Notice that the clause, "**or out of the waters of baptism**," has been added. Richard P. Howard's new book, *Restoration Scriptures*, page 117, plainly shows that these words did not appear in the original handwritten manuscript. Even Dr. Hugh Nibley admits that the clause did not originally appear in the Book of Mormon:

... the second edition of the Book of Mormon contains an addition not found in the first: "... out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism." It is said that Parley P. Pratt **suggested the phrase**, and certainly Joseph Smith approved it, for it stands in all the early editions after the first. Those added words are not only permissible—they are necessary. ... Isaiah did not have to tell his ancient hearers that he had the waters of baptism in mind, but it is necessary to tell it to the modern reader who without such an explanation would miss the point—for him the translation would be a misleading one without that specification. (*Since Cumorah*, p. 151)

While this clause concerning baptism was apparently added to the second edition of the Book of Mormon, the Mormon leaders must have been confused about it, for it does **not** appear in the 1888 printing of the Book of Mormon:

Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, who swear by the name of the Lord, ... (Book of Mormon, 1888, p. 50)

Thus we see that the clause concerning baptism was not in the original handwritten manuscript of the Book of Mormon, nor was it in the first edition. Even as late as 1888 the Mormon leaders were still uncertain about it, for it was not included in the edition printed that year.

Although Dr. Nibley tries to justify this change, he does not attempt to defend some of the changes. He states:

Sometimes the editors of later editions of the Book of Mormon have made "corrections" that were better left unmade. Thus one **officious editor** in his attempt to visualize and rationalize a practical system of ventilation for the Jaredite barges omitted a number of significant words from the first edition which if carefully analyzed seem to give a far better plan for air-conditioning than that found in Ether 2:17-20 of our present editions. And was it necessary to change the name of Benjamin (in the first edition) to Mosiah in later editions of Ether 4:1? Probably not, for though it is certain that Mosiah kept the records in question, it is by no means certain that his father, Benjamin, did not also have a share in keeping them. (*Since Cumorah*, p. 7)

The reader will notice that Dr. Nibley accuses some "officious editor" of deleting words from the Book of Mormon. It is hard for us to believe that anyone could change the text of the Book of Mormon without the full approval of the Mormon leaders.

It is interesting to note that even the signed statement by the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon has been altered. In the 1830 edition (last page) it read:

... Joseph Smith, Jr. the **author and proprietor** of this work, has shewn unto us the plates ...

In modern editions it has been changed to read:

... Joseph Smith, Jun., the **translator** of this work, has shown unto us the plates ...

In the first edition of the Book of Mormon, page 87, this statement appears:

... the mean man boweth down, ...

In modern editions (2 Nephi 12:9) this has been changed to read:

... the mean man boweth **not** down, ...

In the first edition, page 303, this statement is made concerning God:

... yea, I know that he alloteth unto men, **yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable**, according to their wills; ...

In modern editions (Alma 29:4) eight words have been deleted:

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

The deletion of the words stating that God's decrees are "unalterable" makes this portion of the Book of Mormon more in harmony with Mormon theology, for in a revelations given in 1831 the Lord was supposed to have told Joseph Smith the following:

Wherefore I, the Lord, command and **revoke**, as it seemeth me good; and all this to be answered upon the heads of the rebellious, saith the Lord.

Wherefore, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre, and give a **new** commandment unto my servant Thomas, ... (*Doctrine and Covenants* 56:4-5)

In the first edition of the Book of Mormon (page 328) the following appears:

... preserve these **directors**. ... these **directors** were prepared, that the word of God might be fulfilled, ...

In modern editions (Alma 37:21, 24) this has been changed to read:

... preserve these **interpreters**. ... these **interpreters** were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled, ...

The "interpreters" in the Book of Mormon were used for interpreting languages, whereas the "director" was a ball which was used as a compass—the Lord was supposed to make a spindle in the ball point in the direction the people should go. It is very interesting to note that the 1888 edition of the Book of Mormon reads the same as the first edition.

The first edition of the Book of Mormon plainly shows that it was written by a man who did not have a great deal

of education, although we must admit that the writer had ability and imagination. On page 31 of the first edition we read: “. . . neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that **state of awful woundedness** . . .” In modern editions (1 Nephi 13:32) this was changed to read: “Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that **awful state of blindness**, . . .”

On page 214 of the first edition we read: “My soul was **wrecked** with eternal torment; . . .” This has been changed to read as follows in modern editions (Mosiah 27:29): “My soul was **racked** with eternal torment; . . .”

On page 342 of the first edition we find: “. . . took the **remainder** part of his army and marched . . .” In modern reprints, Alma 43:25, this was changed to read: “. . . took the **remaining** part of his army and marched . . .” One of the most frequent mistakes in the first edition of the Book of Mormon is the use of the word “was” instead of the word “were.” The following are extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon in which the word “was” has been changed in later editions to “were”:

- . . . Adam and Eve, which **was** our first parents; . . . (p. 15)
- . . . and loosed the bands which **was** upon my wrists. . . . (p. 49)
- And great **was** the covenants of the Lord, . . . (p. 66)
- . . . and they were surrounded by the king’s guard, and **was** taken, and **was** bound, and **was** committed to prison. (p. 169)
- . . . and these interpreters **was** doubtless prepared . . . (p. 173)
- . . . and the seats which **was** set apart for the high priests, which **was** above all the other seats, . . . (p. 178)
- . . . the arms of mercy **was** extended towards them: for the arms of mercy **was** extended . . . (p. 189)
- . . . both Alma and Helam **was** buried in the water; . . . (p. 192)
- . . . the priests **was** not to depend . . . (p. 193)
- . . . those that **was** with him. (p. 195)
- . . . there **was** seven Churches . . . (p. 209)
- . . . there **was** many . . . (p. 209)
- . . . the sons of Mosiah **was** numbered . . . (p. 212)
- . . . I had much desire that ye **was** not in the state of dilemma . . . (p. 241)
- . . . they **was** angry with me, . . . (p. 248)
- . . . there **was** no wild beasts. . . (p. 460)

There are also many places where the word “were” has been changed to “was.” The following are extracts from the first edition:

- . . . but it all **were** vain: . . . (p. 142)
- . . . the promise of the Lord **were**, . . . (p. 359)
- . . . it **were** easy to guard them . . . (p. 375)
- . . . there **were** continual rejoicing . . . (p. 414)
- Behold I **were** about to write them . . . (p. 506)
- . . . and I **were** forbidden that I should preach unto them: . . . (p. 519)

Another common mistake in the first edition of the Book of Mormon is the use of the word “is” when it should read “are.” The following are extracts from the first edition in which the word “is” has been changed to “are” in later editions:

- . . . the tender mercies of the Lord **is** over all . . . (p. 7)
- . . . there **is** save it be, two churches: . . . (p. 33)
- . . . the words which **is** expedient . . . (p. 67)
- But great **is** the promises of the Lord . . . (p. 85)
- And whoredoms **is** an abomination . . . (p. 127)
- . . . his judgments, which **is** just; . . . (p. 150)
- Behold, here **is** the waters of Mormon; . . . (p. 192)
- . . . things which **is** not seen, . . . (p. 315)
- . . . here **is** our weapons of war; . . . (p. 346)

In the following extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon the word “much” has been changed to “many” in later editions:

- . . . and wild goats, and also **much** horses. (p. 145)
- . . . and destroy the souls of **much** people. (p. 217)

In the following extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon the word “had” has been deleted and the words “not ought” have been rearranged to “ought not” in later editions:

- . . . lest he should look for that he **had not ought** and he should perish. (p. 173)
- And he told them that these things **had not ought** to be; . . . (p. 220)
- . . . and that they **had not ought** to murder, . . . (p. 289)
- I **had not ought** to harrow up in my desires, . . . (p. 303)

Another common mistake in the first edition is the use of the word “a” where it was not necessary. In the following extracts from the first edition the word “a” has been deleted in later editions:

- As I was **a** journeying . . . (p. 249)
- And as I was **a** going thither, . . . (p. 249)
- . . . as Ammon and Lamoni was **a** journeying thither, . . . (p. 280)
- . . . he found Muloki **a** preaching . . . (p. 284)
- . . . **a** begging for his food. (p. 309)
- . . . had been **a** preparing the minds . . . (p. 358)
- . . . had obtained **a** possession of the city . . . (p. 373)
- . . . Moroni was **a** coming against them, . . . (p. 403)
- . . . the Lamanites **a** marching . . . (p. 529)

In the following extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon the word “for” has been deleted in later editions:

- . . . did gather themselves together **for** to sing, . . . (p. 196)
- . . . they did prepare **for** to meet them; . . . (p. 225)
- . . . their many struggles **for** to destroy them, . . . (p. 299)
- . . . **for** to buy and to sell, . . . (p. 422)
- . . . we depend upon them **for** to teach us the word; . . . (p. 451)
- . . . they did cast up mighty heaps of earth **for** to get ore, . . . (p. 560)

On page 260 of the first edition the following statement appears: “Behold, the Scriptures are before you; if ye will **arrest** them, it shall be to your own destruction.” In modern editions (Alma 13:20) this has been changed to read: “Behold, the scriptures are before you; if ye will **wrest** them it shall be to your own destruction.

A similar mistake is found on page 336 of the first edition: “. . . some have **arrested** the Scriptures, . . .” In modern printings (Alma 41:1) this has been changed to read: “. . . some have **wrested** the scriptures, . . .”

The following are extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon. The word “arriven” has been changed to “arrived” in later editions:

- . . . when they had **arriven** in the borders of the land . . . (p. 270)
- . . . wo unto this people, because of this time which has **arriven**, . . . (p. 443)

In the following extracts from the first edition the word “respects” has been changed to “respect” in later editions:

- . . . having no **respects** to persons . . . (p. 224)
- . . . without any **respects** of persons . . . (p. 268)

The following extracts are from the first edition of the Book of Mormon. The word “wrote” has been changed to “written” in later editions:

- And thus ended the record of Alma, which was **wrote** upon the plates of Nephi. (p. 347)
- . . . I have **wrote** unto you somewhat . . . (p. 377)
- . . . therefore I have **wrote** this epistle, . . . (p. 457)
- . . . I have **wrote** them to the intent . . . (p. 506)

The following are extracts from the first edition. The expression “exceeding afraid” has been changed to “exceedingly afraid” in later editions:



... they were **exceeding fraid**; . . . (p. 354)  
 ... they were **exceeding fraid**, lest there was a plan laid . . . (p. 392)  
 ... the Lamanites were **exceeding fraid**, . . . (p. 415)

On page 74 of the first edition this statement appears: “. . . my brother **hath** desired **me** that I should speak unto you.” In modern printings (2 Nephi 6:4) this has been changed to read: “. . . my brother **has** desired that I should speak unto you.”

The following are extracts from the first edition of the Book of Mormon. The word “began” has been changed to “begun” in later editions:

... it had sprang forth, and **began** to bear fruit. (p. 132)  
 ... they had **began** to possess the land of Amulon, and had **began** to till the ground. (p. 204)  
 ... they had **began** to settle the affairs . . . (p. 368)  
 ... had **began** his march . . . (p. 372)  
 ... the church had **began** to dwindle; . . . (p. 417)

On page 568 of the first edition this statement appears: “. . . the people upon **all** the face of the land were **a** shedding blood, and there was none to **constrain** them.” In modern printings (Ether 13:31) this has been changed to read: “. . . the people upon the face of the land were shedding blood, and there was none to **restrain** them.”

The following are extracts from the first edition. The word “done” has been changed to “did” in later editions:

... this he **done** that he might overthrow . . . (p. 140)  
 ... all this he **done**, . . . (p. 170)  
 ... this they **done** throughout all the land. (p. 220)  
 ... this he **done** that he might subject them . . . (p. 225)

On page 138 of the first edition this statement appears: “. . . and the **fruit** were equal; . . .” In modern printings (Jacob 5:74) this has been changed to read: “. . . and the **fruits** were equal; . . .”

The extracts that follow are from the first edition; the word “took” has been changed to “taken” in later editions:

... we have **took** of their wine, . . . (p. 379)  
 ... they had **took** them . . . (p. 402)  
 ... the people of Nephi, which had some years before gone over unto the Lamanites, and **took** upon themselves the name of Lamanites; . . . (p. 438)

The extracts that follow are from the first edition; the word “gave” has been changed to “given” in later editions:

... and had **gave** them power . . . (p. 380)  
 ... even as I have broken bread, and blessed it, and **gave** it unto you. (p. 490)

On page 141 of the first edition we read: “. . . neither **hath** been, nor **never** will be.” In the modern edition (Jacob 7:9) this has been changed to read: “. . . neither **has** been, nor **ever** will be.”

The extracts that follow are from the first edition; the word “no” has been changed to “any” in later editions:

... have not sought gold nor silver, nor **no** manner of riches of you; . . . (p. 157)  
 ... there shall be no other name given, nor **no** other way nor means . . . (p. 161)  
 ... they did not fight against God **no** more, . . . (p. 290)  
 ... nor murders, nor **no** manner of lasciviousness: . . . (p. 515)  
 ... neither were there Lamanites, nor **no** manner of Ites; . . . (p. 515)

On page 289 of the first edition this statement appears: “. . . or Omner, or Himni, nor **neither** of their brethren . . .” In the modern edition (Alma 23:1) this has been changed to read: “. . . or Omner, or Himni, nor **either** of their brethren . . .”

The two extracts that follow are from the first edition of the Book of Mormon; the word “an” has been deleted in later editions.

And behold, they would have carried this plan into **an** effect, . . . (p. 365)

... we were desirous to bring a stratagem into **an** effect upon them; . . . (p. 384)

On the title page of the first edition (which was supposed to have been translated from the gold plates) this statement appears: “. . . now if there **be fault, it be the mistake** of men; . . .” In the current printing this has been changed to read: “. . . now, if there **are faults they are the mistakes** of men; . . .”

## Lost Book of Lehi

The first edition of the Book of Mormon, published in 1830, contains a “Preface” by “The Author.” This “Preface” has been completely removed from later editions. It was apparently embarrassing to the Mormon leaders, for it told how Joseph Smith had lost the “Book of Lehi”:

### PREFACE.

To the Reader—

As many false reports have been circulated respecting the following work, and also many unlawful measures taken by evil designing persons to destroy me, and also the work, I would inform you that I translated, by the gift and power of God, and caused to be written, **one hundred and sixteen pages, the which I took from the Book of Lehi**, which was an account abridged from the plates of Lehi, by the hand of Mormon; which said account, some person or persons have stolen and kept from me, notwithstanding my utmost exertions to recover it again—and being commanded of the Lord that I should not translate the same over again, for Satan had put it into their hearts to tempt the Lord their God, by altering the words, that they did read contrary from that which I translated and caused to be written: and if I should bring forth the same words again, or, in other words, if I should translate the same over again, they would publish that which they had stolen, and Satan would stir up the hearts of this generation, that they might not receive this work: but behold the Lord said unto me, I will not suffer that Satan shall accomplish his evil design in this thing: therefore thou shalt translate from the plates of Nephi, until ye come to that which ye have translated, which ye have; and behold ye shall publish it as the record of Nephi; and thus I will confound those who have altered my words. I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work; yea, I will shew unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the Devil. Wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, I have, through his grace and mercy, accomplished that which he hath commanded me respecting this thing. I would also inform you that the plates of which hath been spoken, were found in the township of Manchester, Ontario county, New-York.

The Author.

Joseph Smith’s mother gave this information concerning the lost “Book of Lehi”:

Martin Harris, having written some one hundred and sixteen pages for Joseph, asked permission of my son to carry the manuscript home with him, in order to let his wife read it, . . .

Joseph . . . inquired of the Lord to know if he might do as Martin Harris had requested, but was refused. . . . Joseph inquired again, but received a second refusal. Still, Martin Harris persisted as before, and Joseph applied again, but the last answer was not like the two former ones. In this the Lord permitted Martin Harris to take the manuscript home with him, on condition that he would exhibit it to none, save five individuals . . . Mr. Harris had been absent nearly three weeks, and Joseph had received no intelligence whatever from him, which was altogether aside of the arrangement when they separated. . . . we saw him [Harris] walking with a slow and measured tread towards the house, . . . we sat down to the table, Mr. Harris with the rest. . . . Mr. Harris pressed his hands upon his temples, and cried out, in a tone of deep anguish, “Oh, I have lost my soul! I have lost my soul!”

Joseph, who had not expressed his fears till now, sprang from the table, exclaiming, “Martin, have you lost

that manuscript? . . .

“Yes, it is gone,” replied Martin, “and I know not where.”

“Oh, my God!” said Joseph, clinching his hands. “All is lost! all is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned—it is I who tempted the wrath of God. . . .” He wept and groaned, and walked the floor continually. . . . sobs and groans, and the most bitter lamentations filled the house. . . . Joseph . . . continued, pacing back and forth, meantime weeping and grieving, until about sunset, . . .

The manuscript has never been found; and there is no doubt but Mrs. Harris took it from the drawer, with the view of retaining it, until another translation should be given, then, to alter the original translation, for the purpose of showing a discrepancy between them, and thus make the whole appear to be a deception. (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, pp. 117, 118, 120-123)

Arthur Budvarson makes these interesting comments concerning the removal of the “Preface” which told of the loss of the “Book of Lehi”:

This “Preface” of the 1830 Edition (omitted in later editions) explains how, “one hundred and sixteen pages” of the original translation were stolen by “designing persons.”

This afforded a remarkable opportunity for Joseph Smith to have proven to the world that the work was true. All he needed to do was to reproduce an exact copy of the stolen pages, then perhaps even the thieves would have been converted! (The stolen pages were written in longhand and any alterations could have been easily detected.)

But Joseph had failed to make a copy of his writings, so it was not possible for him to make an exact duplicate. In order to get around this, he says that God commanded him that he “should not translate the same over again . . .”

This one incident alone (the above “Preface” by the “Author”) furnishes positive proof that the Book of Mormon is not a God-given, angel protected book! (*The Book of Mormon Examined*, La Mesa, Calif., 1959, pp. 13-14)

Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, has attempted to reply to Mr. Budvarson’s charges:

Now, there might be some logic to Mr. Budvarson’s allegations if Joseph Smith had translated the Book of Mormon in the mechanical fashion suggested by David Whitmer and dealt with in our previous chapter. But Joseph Smith did not simply read off a word-for-word translation dictated by a divine source. If the translation had been effected in that manner, he doubtless could have reproduced an “exact copy of the stolen pages” for the thieves who had purloined the manuscript. Since he did not make a mechanical translation, he was in the position of any translator who would find it impossible to reproduce exactly his original translation, amounting to one hundred and sixteen pages in longhand. Another translation could reproduce the sense of the original but would not duplicate it word for word. The Lord knew this, and therefore instructed the prophet to translate other plates that gave a somewhat parallel but more spiritual account than that contained in the hundred and sixteen pages of stolen material. Thus we see again how Mr. Budvarson’s case breaks down . . . he is making woefully extravagant claims. He is whistling in the dark—in the dark cemetery of his alleged “proofs.” (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, p. 196)

From Dr. Sperry’s statement it would appear that he has missed the whole point of Joseph Smith’s “Preface” to the first edition of the Book of Mormon. The “Preface” indicates that Joseph Smith could “bring forth the same words again,” but that if he did his enemies would alter the words in the stolen manuscript so that they would “read contrary from that which I translated . . .”

Although the “Preface” concerning the lost “Book of Lehi” has been deleted, the *Doctrine and Covenants* still contains a revelation which plainly shows that Dr. Sperry is wrong concerning this matter:

Now, behold, I say unto you, that because you delivered up those writings . . . into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them.

And you also lost your gift at the same time, and your mind became darkened. . . .

And, behold, Satan hath put it into their hearts to alter the words which you have caused to be written, or which you have translated, which have gone out of your hands. . . .

Behold, I say unto you, that you shall not translate again those words which have gone forth out of your hands;

For, behold, they shall not accomplish their evil designs in lying against those words. For, behold, if you should bring forth **the same words** they will say that you have lied and that you have pretended to translate, but that you have contradicted yourself.

And, behold, they will publish this, and Satan will harden the hearts of the people to stir them up to anger against you, that they will not believe my words. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 10:1, 2, 10, 30-32)

The revelation published in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and the “Preface” found in the first edition of the Book of Mormon both seem to teach exactly the opposite of what Dr. Sperry would have us believe.

M. T. Lamb devotes a great deal of space to this matter in *The Golden Bible*, pages 118-126. We do not have room to quote all of this material, but on page 119 this interesting comment appears:

The general belief was that she [Mrs. Harris] burned it. But the prophet Joseph evidently was afraid she had not, but had secretly hid it, for the purpose of entrapping him, should he ever attempt to reproduce the pages. **If the work was really of God, the manuscript could be reproduced word for word without a mistake. If, however, Joseph inspired it himself, his memory would hardly be adequate to such a task**, without numberless changes or verbal differences—and thus “give himself away,” since he loudly professed to be all the time aided “by the gift and power of God.”

## Making Up Names

In their attempt to show that the Book of Mormon is of divine origin some Mormon writers have claimed that it would have been impossible for Joseph Smith to have made up all the names in it. Jack H. West stated:

Another supporting evidence of our defense was that we find that of over 300 proper names in the Book of Mormon, 180 had never been heard of before this book came off the press. Supposedly, they were brand new names. The scientists tell us, first of all, that it is impossible for one individual to make up 180 brand new names. They say that if you tried to do all the research work necessary, and so forth, you would go stark crazy. . . . Did a whole group of men make up these 180 supposedly new names? Now we know that they didn’t because we have since run across tribe after tribe after tribe of Indians whose whereabouts we did not know in the year 1830 . . . And we say to some of these Indians, “How long have you called that mountain over there Nephiah?” And they say, “As long as we can remember . . .” And we thought it was a new name. . . . so it is with most of these 180 supposedly new names which came off the press in English print for the first time in 1830, with the publication of the Book of Mormon—they were names ages old, now generally known for the first time. (*Trial of the Stick of Joseph*, Brigham Young University Lecture Series, p. 45)

The claim that “most of these 180 supposedly new names” have been found among the Indians is certainly fantastic, but even more fantastic is the statement that “it is impossible for one individual to make up 180 new names.”

Most of the names appearing in the Book of Mormon are either derived directly from the Bible or are made by slightly changing or combining names found in the Bible. While we do not have room to make a complete study of the names found in the Book of Mormon, we will examine the names given to the various books found in the Book of

Mormon. They are listed as follows: First Book of Nephi, Second Book of Nephi, Book of Jacob, Book of Enos, Book of Jarom, Book of Omni, The Words of Mormon, Book of Mosiah, Book of Alma, Book of Helaman, Third Nephi, Fourth Nephi, Book of Mormon, Book of Ether, and the Book of Moroni. When we eliminate duplicates we arrive at the following list of names: Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Mormon, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, Ether and Moroni.

As we have already shown, the name Nephi is derived from the Apocrypha, 2 Maccabees 1:36, and Joseph Smith purchased a Bible which contained the Apocrypha.

The name Jacob is of course taken from the Bible (see Genesis 25:26).

The name Enos is also taken directly from the Bible (see Genesis 4:26).

Although the name Jarom does not appear in the Bible, we do find the name Joram (2 Samuel 8:10), and if the letters *o* and *a* were reversed we would have Jarom. Another simple way to obtain this name is to combine the first three letters of the name Jared (**Jared**) found in Genesis 5:15 with the last two letters of Edom (**Edom**) found in Gen. 25:30, and this would give us **Jarom**.

The name Omni is not found in the Bible, but if the letter *r* in Omri (1 Kings 16:16) is changed to *n* we have Omni. Another way to derive this name is to use only the first four letters from the word omnipotent (**omnipotent**) which is found in Revelation 19:6.

The word Mormon is not found in the Bible, but it can be made by adding the first three letters of Moriah (**Moriah**), found in Genesis 22:2, with the last three letters of Solomon (**Solomon**), found in 2 Samuel 5:14. Thus we would obtain **Mormon**.

Another source for the word Mormon has been suggested by Fawn Brodie. She feels that it might have come out of the anti-Masonic controversy. On page 64 of her book *No Man Knows My History*, she says that Joseph Smith might have “combined the first syllables of Morgan and Monroe” to make the name Mormon. We feel that this is a good suggestion and have dealt with this matter in our book *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, p. 155.

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith claimed that the name “Mormon” was composed from two words. He stated that the last part of the word—i.e., “mon”—is an “Egyptian” word which means “good,” and “with the addition of more, or the contraction, mor, we have the word **Mormon**; which means, literally, more good” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 194). One man who read our book, *Changes in Joseph Smith’s History*, made the following comments concerning this matter:

Smith claimed that the word “Mormon” was formed from the Egyptian word “mon” (which he said meant “good”) and the English word “more,” contracted to “mor” (together meaning “more good”). How can this be when there is no Egyptian word “mon” which means good. Even if there were such an Egyptian word, how could it get combined with an English word here on the American continent sometime before 400 A.D.? The English language did not develop until the middle ages and was totally unknown in the ancient middle east.

In a letter dated April 1, 1965, the same man wrote:

I might add a few words about Smith’s definition of the word “Mormon”. . . . the part I had reference to has been omitted from the present Church History, so I understand. While in the graduate department at John Hopkins University I made it a point to ask Dr. William F. Albright if there were any Egyptian word “mon” meaning “good,” or anything resembling it with such a meaning. Dr. Albright is one of the world’s leading authorities on the ancient near east and understood and offered courses in Egyptian. He assured me there was no such word. I wrote Dr. Sperry about this problem and he assured me he had “no off-the-cuff answer” for this problem. (see letter enclosed). At the time Smith gave his definition Champollion was just working out the system of Egyptian hieroglyphics, so as far as Smith knew no one could contradict him. However, it should have been obvious, even without a knowledge of Egyptian, that an Egyptian word could not be combined with an English word and appear here in America

(since it’s used in the Bk of Mormon) before 400 A.D., when there was no English language until centuries later.

The name Mosiah is not found in the Bible, but the name Josiah is found in 1 Kings 13:2. If we were to change the letter *J* to *M* we would obtain Mosiah. Another simple way to obtain this name would be to combine the first three letters of the name Moses (**Moses**), found in Exodus 2:10, with the last three letters of the name Isaiah (**Isaiah**), found in 2 Kings 19:2, and we would obtain the name **Mosiah**.

The name Alma is not found in the Bible, but it may have been derived by deleting some of the letters from the name Shalmaneser (**Shalmaneser**) found in 2 Kings 17:3.

Actually, the name Alma is well known in America. The newspaper published in Joseph Smith’s own neighborhood (*The Wayne Sentinel*, June 5, 1829, p. 2) tells of the marriage of “Miss **Alma** Parker.” (In the Book of Mormon, of course, the name Alma is given to a man.) There are a number of cities in America today that are named Alma (see the *National Zip Code Directory*).

Although the name Helaman is not found in the Bible, 2 Samuel 10:17 speaks of the river Helam. The name **Helaman** could easily be made by combining the name **Helam** with the last two letters in Haran (**Haran**), found in Genesis 11:26.

The name Ether is taken directly from the Bible (see Joshua 15:42)

The name Moroni is not found in the Bible, but it could be obtained by combining the first three letters of Moriah (**Moriah**), found in Genesis 22:2, with the last three letters from the name Benoni (**Benoni**), found in Genesis 35:18. Thus we would obtain **Moroni**.

It is interesting to note that there was an Italian artist named Moroni. In a letter to Ralph L. Foster, Rosalind Lawrence, of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts, stated that the “1829 exhibition of the Sarti Collection” at the Boston Atheneum contained “one painting by Moroni, his portrait of Galileo.” (Letter dated August 20, 1963; photographically reproduced in the *Book of Mormon on Trial*, by Ralph Leonard Foster)

From this brief study of the names in the Book of Mormon the reader can see that it would be easy to make hundreds of “new names” by simply changing a few letters on names that are already known or by making different combinations with parts of names.

Joseph Smith certainly had the ability to make up “new names.” George Reynolds gives this interesting information:

“While residing in Kirtland, Elder Reynolds Cahoon had a son born to him. One day when President Joseph Smith was passing his door he called the Prophet in and asked him to bless and name the baby. Joseph did so and gave the boy the name of **Mahonri Moriancumer**. . . .” (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 27, p. 282, as cited in *Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1966, p. 463)

It is interesting to note that when Joseph Smith purchased a Bible in the late 1820’s, he picked one that contained “**An alphabetical table of all the names of the Old and New Testaments with their significations; . . .**” (“A History of Joseph Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” by Reed C. Durham, Jr., p. 27).

If he used a list of Bible names and a little imagination, it would have been very easy for Joseph Smith to have produced the “new names” found in the Book of Mormon.

## Bible Prophecy

It is claimed that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon fulfills several prophecies that are contained in the Bible. One of these prophecies is found in the 29th chapter of Isaiah. This prophecy is concerning a “sealed book.” Mormons claim that the sealed book mentioned by Isaiah is the original plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. However, the interpretation given by Larry Jonas, in *Mormon Claims Examined*, seems to prove that this prophecy was fulfilled at the time of Christ:

The chapter indicates that the book (which is a figure



of speech standing for the message of the book) would not be understood by the learned but would be understood by the unlearned (see Isa. 29:18). This was the condition at the time of giving the New Covenant or Testament. In fact, Jesus speaks of the conditions where the leaders of the Jews who were the learned rejected him while we know that it was the unlearned who swelled the church (see Mark 7:9). To verify this interpretation of the learned and unlearned read Isaiah 29:13 where it speaks of those who draw near with their lips but have their hearts far from the Lord and would rather follow the precepts of men. Jesus makes this same statement in Matthew 15:8-9 and Mark 7:6-7 where he even says he is quoting Isaiah concerning that generation. As to the marvelous work which the Lord will do at which men will wonder (29:14), which will be accepted by the unlearned and rejected by the learned, see Matthew 21:42 where Jesus speaks of his own mission as being that marvelous work of God. The New Testament would have us understand that the gospel or New Covenant was the message to come forth which those “learned” hypocrites rejected and the unlearned received. Many New Testament passages quote Isaiah 29 in this connection as shown above. The Mormons would have us believe that the book is the Book of Mormon which the unlearned Joseph Smith gave the world but which the learned Professor Anthon of New York could not read when Martin Harris told him it was sealed. (*Mormon Claims Examined*, p. 72)

Another prophecy which the Book of Mormon claims to fulfill is found in John 10:16:

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

The Book of Mormon claims that these “other sheep” are the Nephites, as well as the lost tribes of Israel. In 3 Nephi 16:22 of the Book of Mormon it is stated that this prophecy does not apply to the Gentiles. A careful examination of the Bible and other passages in the Book of Mormon, however, reveals that this prophecy could certainly apply to the Gentiles. The Bible teaches that those who will follow the Lord are his sheep; this includes both Jews and Gentiles. In John 10:15 Jesus says, “. . . I lay down my life for the sheep.” Therefore, anyone who receives Christ as his Saviour must be one of his sheep. The Book of Mormon also teaches that the righteous are the sheep of the good shepherd. In Alma 5:39 we read:

And now if ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd, of what fold are ye? Behold, I say unto you, that the devil is your shepherd, and ye are of his fold: and now, who can deny this? Behold, I say unto you, whosoever denieth this is a liar and a child of the devil.

It would appear, therefore, that the Gentiles that receive Christ must be the sheep of the good shepherd. Now, if the Gentiles are the sheep of the good shepherd, what prevents them from being the “other sheep I have, which are not of this fold”?

In Ephesians 2:11-14 Paul seems to teach that the Gentiles were of a different fold, with “the middle wall of partition” between them and Israel:

Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

For he is our peace, who hath made **both one** and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Another prophecy which the Mormons claim the Book of Mormon fulfills (although the Book of Mormon itself makes no such claim) is found in Ezekiel 37:16-17:

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one *stick*, and write upon it, **For Judah**, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another *stick*, and write upon it, **For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim**, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

The Mormons claim that the Bible is the stick of Judah and that the Book of Mormon is the stick of Ephraim, or the stick of Joseph which is in the hand of Ephraim. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

In ancient times it was the custom to write on parchment and roll it on a stick. Therefore, when this command was given, it was the equivalent of directing that two books or records should be kept. (*A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, p. 67)

Larry Jonas made this interesting observation concerning this matter:

The first objection is that the Hebrew has a word for *scroll* and a separate word for *stick*. The word in Ezekiel 37 is the Hebrew for *stick* which can be translated *gallows, helve, plank, staff, stalk, stick, stock, timber, tree, and wood*, but never *scroll*! This can be seen in *Young's Analytical Concordance* by any who read English. (*Mormon Claims Examined*, p. 37)

Everett Landon, who at one time accepted the idea that the sticks represented the Bible and Book of Mormon, now feels that this teaching must be repudiated:

Those readers of this treatise who are aware of the belief that the two sticks discussed in Ezekiel 37 point to the Bible and Book of Mormon will find in our comments a departure from that viewpoint. . . . Having once believed the sticks did symbolize the said Scriptures, we differ in a spirit of considerable charity toward those who still so believe. . . . The words Ezekiel was to write were dictated to him by the Lord. We emphasize, he was to write upon two sticks, (or staves as stated in the Septuagint Bible). Not upon scrolls, plates, rolls, papyri, or in books or records. The traditional view of the sticks as books or records has been a stumbling block to many. Ezekiel understood fully what a “roll of a book” was, (Ez. 2:9) and did not need to mince words in saying “stick” if he actually meant “book,” or “record”. . . . Let Book of Mormon believers be not dismayed. In the Bible and the Holy Spirit we have ample proof of the Book of Mormon. (*The Book of Mormon Foundation*, January, February, March 1971, pp. 7- 8)

Now, even if we were to accept the Mormon idea that the sticks referred to by Ezekiel are books, still the Book of Mormon could **not** fulfill this prophecy. In order to fulfill this prophecy the Nephites (who were supposed to have written the Book of Mormon) would have to be descendants of Joseph through his son **Ephraim**. The Book of Mormon, however, makes **no such claim**, but on the contrary it says that the Nephites were descendants of Joseph through his other son, Manasseh. In Alma 10:3 we read as follows:

And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem **who was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph** who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.

With regard to the “sticks” mentioned by Ezekiel it is also interesting to note that the Book of Mormon was supposed to have been written on gold plates and not on “parchment” rolled up on a stick.

## Beyond the Book of Mormon

Joseph Smith once stated that “the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding its precepts, than by any other book” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 461).

Although the Book of Mormon is still the primary tool used to bring converts into the church, the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price* have taken its place as far as doctrine is concerned. Joseph Fielding Smith says that “the book of *Doctrine and Covenants* to us stands in a peculiar position above them all” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 198). In the chapters which follow we will show that many of the doctrines the Mormon leaders now teach are in direct contradiction to the Book of Mormon.

## Change in Book of Mormon to Cover Up Embarrassing Teaching About Skin Color

In a later chapter in this book (page 262), we point out that since its beginning the Mormon Church has taught that a dark skin is a sign of God's displeasure. This teaching comes directly from Joseph Smith's Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon teaches that about 600 B.C. a prophet named Lehi brought his family to America. Those who were righteous (the Nephites) had a white skin, but those who rebelled against God (the Lamanites) were cursed with a dark skin. The Lamanites eventually destroyed the Nephites; therefore, the Indians living today are referred to as Lamanites. The following verses are found in the Book of Mormon and explain the curse on the Lamanites:

And it came to pass that I beheld, after they had dwindled in unbelief they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations. (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 12:23)

And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity . . . wherefore, as they were white, and exceeding fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them. (2 Nephi 5:21)

And the skins of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression . . . (Alma 3:6)

The Book of Mormon stated that when the Lamanites repented of their sins "their curse was taken from them, and their skin became white like unto the Nephites" (3 Nephi 2:15). The Book of Mormon also promised that in the last days the Lamanites—i.e., the Indians—will repent and "many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people." (2 Nephi 30:6)

One of the most embarrassing things about the doctrine concerning the Indians is that they are not becoming "white" as the Book of Mormon prophesied. The anti-Mormon writer Gordon H. Fraser claims that the "skin color" of the Indians converted to Mormonism "has not altered in the least because of their adherence to the Mormon doctrines" (*What Does the Book of Mormon Teach?* p. 46).

It now appears that the Mormon leaders are trying to "dissolve" the doctrine that the Indians will turn white after turning to Mormonism. The church has just released its 1981 printing of the "triple combination" which contains the Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*. This new publication contains a very important change. Previous editions of the Book of Mormon had said that in the last days the Indians "shall be a **white** and delightsome people" (2 Nephi 30:6). In the new edition this has been altered to read that the Indians "shall be a **pure** and delightsome people."

The official church magazine, *The Ensign*, tries to justify this change by stating:

Most students of latter-day scriptures are aware that from the very first printing typographical errors have crept into the Book of Mormon. . . .

The Prophet himself attempted to correct some of these kinds of errors, but his many duties prevented him from completing the project; and even so, some of his corrections seem to have disappeared again in later editions. For example, the 1830 and 1837 printings of the Book of Mormon contained a prophecy that the Lamanites would one day become "a white and delightsome people" (2 Ne. 30:6). In the 1840

printing, which the Prophet edited, this passage was changed to read "a pure and delightsome people," but for some reason later printings reverted to the original wording. (*The Ensign*, October 1981, pp. 17-18)

It should be noted that church leaders are unable to produce any documentary evidence to support their claim that this was merely a correction by Joseph Smith of a typographical error. There were originally two handwritten manuscripts for the Book of Mormon—a copy which was written by Joseph Smith's scribes as he dictated it and a second "emended" copy that was prepared for the printer. Unfortunately, most of the first manuscript was destroyed through water damage. The Mormon scholar Stanley R. Larson informs us that this manuscript "does not exist for this section of the text . . ." ("A Study of Some Textual Variations in the Book of Mormon Comparing the Original and the Printer's Manuscripts and the 1830, the 1837, and the 1840 Editions," unpublished M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, April 1974, p. 283).

Fortunately, the second handwritten manuscript—the copy given to the printer to use to set the type for the first printing of the Book of Mormon—was preserved by Book of Mormon witness David Whitmer and is still in excellent shape. This handwritten manuscript does contain the portion printed as 2 Nephi 30:6. It uses the word "white," and therefore does not support the claim that Joseph Smith was only correcting a typographical error (see *Restoration Scriptures*, by Richard P. Howard, Independence, Missouri, 1969, p. 49). It should be remembered that both the first two editions of the Book of Mormon (1830 and 1837) used the word "white." It is especially significant that the 1837 edition retained this reading because the preface to this edition stated that "the whole has been carefully reexamined and compared with the original manuscripts, by elder Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of the Book of Mormon, assisted by the present printer, brother O. Cowdery, . . ." (*Book of Mormon*, 1837 edition, Preface, as cited in *The Ensign*, September 1976, p. 79).

Besides all the evidence from the original Book of Mormon manuscript and the first two printed editions, there is another passage in the Book of Mormon which makes it very clear that Joseph Smith believed that the Lamanites' skins could be turned "white" through repentance:

And their curse was taken from them, and their skin became white like unto the Nephites; (3 Nephi 2:15)

We have taken this quotation directly from the new "triple combination" to show that the Mormon Church is still bound by the belief that righteousness affects skin color even though church leaders have changed the verse appearing as 2 Nephi 30:6.

The fact that Joseph Smith believed that the Indians' skins would actually become white seems to also be verified by a revelation he gave in 1831. In the updated material for the chapter on polygamy we discuss this revelation and show that it was suppressed until 1974 when we printed it in *Mormonism Like Watergate?* Since that time the Mormon Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington and his assistant Davis Bitton published the important portion of it in their book, *The Mormon Experience*, page 195:

"For it is my will, that in time, ye should take unto you wives of the Lamanites and Nephites that their posterity may become white, delightsome and just, for even now their females are more virtuous than the gentiles."

Like Joseph Smith, President Brigham Young taught that the Indians would "become 'a white and delightsome people'" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 143). Mormon leaders from

Joseph Smith to the present time have continually used the Book of Mormon to prove that the Indians would become white if they turned to Mormonism. Spencer W. Kimball, who became the twelfth President of the Church on December 30, 1973, strongly endorsed that teaching. In the LDS General Conference, October 1960, Mr. Kimball stated:

I saw a striking contrast in the progress of the Indian people today . . . they are fast becoming a **white and delightful people**. . . . For years they have been growing delightful, and they are now **becoming white** and delightful, as they were promised. . . . The children in the home placement program in Utah are often lighter than their brothers and sisters in the hogans on the reservation.

At one meeting a father and mother and their sixteen-year-old daughter were present, the little member girl—sixteen—sitting between the dark father and mother, and it was evident she was several shades lighter than her parents—on the same reservation, in the same hogan, subject to the same sun and wind and weather. . . . These young members of the Church are **changing to whiteness** and to delightfulness. One white elder jokingly said that he and his companion were donating blood regularly to the hospital in the hope that the process might be accelerated. (*Improvement Era*, December 1960, pp. 922-23)

The reader will notice that Spencer W. Kimball used the Book of Mormon phrase, “a **white** and delightful people.” This, of course, is the very phrase that has now been changed to read, “a **pure** and delightful people.” After using the word “**white**” to prove his point in a conference address, one would think that President Kimball would be opposed to changing it to “**pure**.” *The Ensign*, however, seems to indicate that he approved of the change. It states that “every correction” in the triple combination “was approved by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, and the Brethren felt good about each of them” (October 1981, p. 18). We find it very difficult to find any evidence of inspiration in the whole matter.

In any event, the church now wants to suppress the Book of Mormon’s teaching concerning skin color. Ron Barker, of the Associated Press, questioned church spokesman Jerry P. Cahill concerning the matter:

Asked whether church members should assume that faithful Mormon Indians would one day become light complexioned, Cahill said they should assume that they will become a “pure and delightful people.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 30, 1981)

We can probably expect more revisions in Mormon books to cover up this embarrassing doctrine. Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, who has recently had to revise his book *Mormon Doctrine* to conform to the change on the anti-black doctrine, will undoubtedly have to revise his section on the “Lamanite Curse.” On pages 428-29 of the 1979 printing of *Mormon Doctrine* we find the following:

. . . a twofold curse came upon the Lamanites: . . . “they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations.” (1 Ne. 12:23.) So that they “might not be enticing” unto the Nephites, “the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them.” (2 Nephi 5:20-25; Alma 3:14-16.) . . .

During periods of great righteousness, when groups of Lamanites accepted the gospel and turned to the Lord, the curse was removed from them. . . . the curse was removed from a group of Lamanites converts and they became white like the Nephites. (3 Nephi 2:15-16.) . . .

When the gospel is taken to the Lamanites in our day and they come to a knowledge of Christ and of their fathers, then the “scales of

darkness” shall fall from their eyes; “and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightful people.” (2 Ne. 30:6.) Finally, before the judgment bar of God, all who have been righteous, Lamanites and Nephites alike, will be free from the curse of spiritual death and the skin of darkness. (Jacob 3:5-9)

We believe, of course, that Apostle McConkie has the right to alter his book in any way he desires. His changes concerning the anti-black doctrine are certainly a step in the right direction. When it comes to the Book of Mormon, however, we wonder how the Mormon leaders can justify altering words that were supposed to have been translated by the power of God.

## Restoring God’s Unalterable Decrees

On page 91 of this book, we pointed out that in the first edition of the Book of Mormon this statement is made concerning God:

. . . yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, **yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable**, according to their wills; . . . (p. 303)

In modern editions eight words have been deleted from Alma 29:4:

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

Critics have pointed out this problem for a number of years. Finally, in the new printing of the Book of Mormon in the “triple combination” the Mormon leaders have fixed up this portion to agree with the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon:

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

*The Ensign*, October 1981, page 18, reports that “about two hundred” changes were made in the printing in the “triple combination.” It is claimed that “By far the majority of the changes involve minute matters of grammar or style, such as changing a singular noun or verb to the plural form.” With regard to these recent changes, it is interesting to note that in 1977 Stan Larson pointed out “the most extensive omission made anywhere in the text of the Book of Mormon” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1977, p. 23). Thirty-five words which appeared in the original manuscripts of the Book of Mormon had been accidentally omitted in all the editions printed by the church. This mistake has finally been corrected in the printing in the “triple combination.” Alma 32:30 formerly had only thirty-two words, but in the new printing it contains sixty-seven.

One other thing that should be noted concerning this new printing of the Book of Mormon is that the addition of many footnotes has in most cases changed the page numbers on which most verses appear. This will make it very hard for those who have the new printing to find references which use the old system of page numbering. For example, on page 91 of this book we quote a verse and give the reference as follows, “page 74, verse 9.” In the new printing this verse appears on page 81. In both printings, however, the book and chapter identification remains the same—i.e., 2 Nephi 12:9.

## Gold Plates

On page 59 of this book we discussed the question as to whether the Book of Mormon witnesses actually saw the gold plates. Marvin S. Hill, of the church’s Brigham Young University, examined this same problem in an



article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

... there is a possibility that the witnesses saw the plates in vision only. . . . There is testimony from several independent interviewers, all non-Mormon, that Martin Harris and David Whitmer said they saw the plates with their "spiritual eyes" only. . . . This is contradicted, however, by statements like that of David Whitmer in the *Saints Herald* in 1882, "these hands handled the plates, these eyes saw the angel." But Z. H. Gurley elicited from Whitmer a not so positive response to the question, "did you touch them?" His answer was, "We did not touch nor handle the plates." . . .

So far as the eight witnesses go, . . . Stephen Burnett quotes Martin Harris that "the eight witnesses never saw them. . . ." Yet John Whitmer told Wilhelm Poulson . . . that he saw the plates when they were not covered, and he turned the leaves. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1972, pp. 83-84)

Marvin Hill refers to a letter written by Stephen Burnett. This document has been suppressed by the Mormon Church until just recently. In this letter we find the following:

... when I came to hear Martin Harris state in public that he never saw the plates with his natural eyes only in vision or imagination, neither Oliver nor David & also that the eight witnesses never saw them & hesitated to sign that instrument for that reason, but were persuaded to do it, the last pedestal gave way, in my view our foundation was sapped & the entire superstructure fell in heap of ruins, I therefore three week since in the Stone Chapel . . . renounced the Book of Mormon . . . after we were done speaking M Harris arose & said he was sorry for any man who rejected the Book of Mormon for he knew it was true, he said he had hefted the plates repeatedly **in a box** with only a tablecloth or a handkerchief over them, **but he never saw them** only as he saw a city through [sic] a mountain. And said that he never should have told that the testimony of the eight was false, if it had not been picked out of \_\_\_ [him/me?] but should have let it passed as it was . . . (Letter from Stephen Burnett to "Br Johnson," dated April 15, 1838, Joseph Smith papers, Letter book, April 20, 1837—February 9, 1843, pp. 64-66, typed copy).

Mormon apologist Richard Anderson dismisses Burnett's letter and says that "both Hyrum Smith and John Whitmer published direct personal statements that they had 'handled' the plates. That should settle Burnett's barb at the Eight Witnesses, for evidence is obviously better firsthand than thirdhand" (*Investigating The Book of Mormon Witnesses*, Salt Lake City, 1981, p. 159).

### Question of Visions in Kirtland Temple

On page 60 we indicated that a statement in Joseph Smith's *History* concerning David Whitmer seeing angels was conspicuously absent in a report of the meeting published in the church's *Messenger and Advocate* in 1836. Since the 1972 edition of this book, we have found this entry in Joseph Smith's diary for March 27, 1836: "Presdt David Whitmer also saw angels in the house" (*Joseph Smith's 1835-36 Diary*, published by Modern Microfilm Company, p. 44). This entry was also copied into the original manuscript of Joseph Smith's *History* (see *Manuscript History*, Book B-1, p. 723). It is certainly strange that this incident appears in Joseph Smith's diary but is not mentioned in the report printed in the *Messenger and Advocate*. In any case, David Whitmer later claimed no angels appeared and that "the story sensationally circulated, and which is now on the records of the Utah Mormons as an actual happening, was nothing but a trumped up yarn."

In doing research on the problem of whether David Whitmer claimed to see "angels in the house," we ran across something that calls into question the authorship of an important statement attributed to Joseph Smith under the date of March 27, 1836. On page 60 of this book, we quoted the following from the *History of the Church*:

Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 428)

An examination of the original manuscript of Joseph Smith's *History* (*Manuscript History*, Book B-1, p. 723) reveals that this material is not included. It is found, however, in the Addenda, pp. 3-4, Note J. This seems to show that it was not written by Joseph Smith, but was probably added after his death (see the chapter "Changes in Joseph Smith's History," pp. 127-133 of this book, for evidence that a large part of Joseph Smith's *History* was not written until after his death). It is also interesting to note that no mention of this is found in Joseph Smith's diary under this date, and it was not included in the *Messenger and Advocate* account (vol. 2, p. 281). It could be possible that "Oliver Cowdery's Sketch Book" is the source for the entry in the *History of the Church*. According to Leonard J. Arrington, this is "a Cowdery diary covering three months in 1836." Dr. Arrington has published this document in its entirety in *BYU Studies*. The very last entry in this "Sketch Book" reads as follows:

Sunday, the 27th attended on the dedication of the Lord's house. For the particulars of this great event see my account written by myself, and printed in the March No. of *The Messenger and Advocate*, signed C. In the evening I met with the officers of the church in the Lord's house. The Spirit was poured out—I saw the glory of God, like a great cloud, come down and rest upon the house, and fill the same like a mighty rushing wind. I also saw cloven tongues, like as of fire rest upon many, (for there were 316 present.) while they spake with other tongues and prophesied. ("Oliver Cowdery's Sketch Book," as printed in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1972, p. 426)

If this is the source for the entry in the *History of the Church*, it raises some interesting questions. To begin with, it does not mention that Joseph Smith declared to the congregation that "the Temple was filled with angels" as we find in the statement attributed to the Mormon Prophet in the *History of the Church*, and also lacks the statement that "The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place." Also, because it is the last entry in the "Sketch Book," it is very difficult to determine just how long after the event it was recorded. Since the first part of the entry says "see my account written by myself, and printed in the March No. of *The Messenger and Advocate*, signed C.," we would assume that at least some time had elapsed between the "dedication" and the recording of the event. It is interesting to also note that the article in the *Messenger and Advocate* is not

“signed C.,” as the entry indicates. Perhaps the most puzzling thing about the matter, however, is that the account in the *Messenger and Advocate* contains nothing about the important meeting in the evening where the “glory of God” filled the house “like a mighty rushing wind.” As we have already indicated, Joseph Smith’s diary does not mention the event; it merely states: “met in the evening and instructed the quorums respecting the ordinance of washing of feet which we were to attend to on wednesday following” (*Joseph Smith’s 1835-36 Diary*, p. 44).

It is possible, of course, that the Church Archives contains some other document mentioning this great spiritual event, but it seems very unlikely that anything will be found to prove that Joseph Smith wrote the entry in the *History of the Church*.

### Martin Harris’ “Instability”

On page 58 of this book we quote an affidavit by G. W. Stodard which claims Book of Mormon witness Martin Harris was “first an orthodox Quaker, then a Universalist, next a Restorationer, then a Baptist, next a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon.” The Mormon writer Richard Anderson questions the accuracy of Stodard’s statement:

Palmyra sources do not yet prove that Martin was a Quaker, though his wife probably was. And no evidence yet associates Martin with the Baptist or Presbyterian churches. Note that the other two names are religious positions, not necessarily churches—philosophical Universalists dissent from traditional churches in believing that God will save all, and Restorationists obviously take literally the many Bible prophecies of God’s reestablished work in modern times. An early Episcopal minister in Palmyra interviewed Martin and reduced his five positions to two: “He had been, if I mistake not, at one period a member of the Methodist Church, and subsequently had identified himself with the Universalists.” Of course Martin could have been a Universalist and Restorationer simultaneously. (*Investigating The Book of Mormon Witnesses*, p. 169)

Although Richard Anderson questions that there were “five religious changes before Mormonism,” he is still willing to admit that Harris made

eight changes after his 1838 excommunication: except for Shakerism, “every affiliation of Martin Harris was with some Mormon group.” . . . His specific Ohio stages include the following:

(1) the Parrish-Boynton party (which he condemned for denying the Book of Mormon at the time he met with them); (2) an 1842 rebaptism by a Nauvoo missionary; (3) an 1846 English mission with a Strangite companion (where documents suggest that the Book of Mormon was really Martin’s message); (4) participation in McLellan’s attempts to set up Midwest leaders for the Church in 1847-48; (5) concurrent with one or more stages, sympathy for Shakerism without full participation; (6) support of Gladden Bishop in his program of further revelations based on the Book of Mormon; (7) continuation of his original “dissenter” status of stressing the Book of Mormon and early revelations of Joseph Smith—even when occasionally meeting with William Smith and others, he maintained this position for fifteen years after his 1855 conversations with Thomas Colburn; (8) his 1870 return to the Church in Salt Lake. (*Ibid.*, pp. 168-169)

On page 167 of the same book, Dr. Anderson admits that Martin Harris “displays a certain instability,” and on page 111 he refers to his “religious instability.”

### Borrowing From the Bible

On pages 73-79 we demonstrated that the New Testament provided a great deal of material for the Book of Mormon. Most Mormons are still not aware of this fact. For instance, in the April

1980 issue of *The Ensign*, page 71, Grace Jorgensen tells how she became converted to the Book of Mormon: “When I found a passage about charity (Moroni 7:44-47), I thought, Joseph Smith couldn’t have written that—these words were from God! . . . I am now a convert.” We certainly agree with Grace Jorgensen; Joseph Smith couldn’t have written these words. They are plagiarized from the writings of Paul in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians, chapter 13 (see p. 79, column 1, of this book for parallels).

### Roberts’ Secret Manuscripts Revealed

On pages 82-84 of this book we published evidence showing that B. H. Roberts, the famous Mormon historian and General Authority, prepared a list of parallels between the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. Some new evidence concerning B. H. Roberts’ interest in *View of the Hebrews* has recently come to light. It has been discovered that Roberts wrote a manuscript of 291 pages entitled, “A Book of Mormon Study.” In this manuscript 176 pages were devoted to the relationship of *View of the Hebrews* to the Book of Mormon. The manuscript was never published and remained in the family after his death. We were finally able to obtain a copy of this manuscript, and in 1980 we published it together with another manuscript by Roberts, “Book of Mormon Difficulties,” in a book entitled, *Roberts’ Manuscripts Revealed*.

Before our publication came out, a false rumor concerning Roberts’ “Book of Mormon Studies” was circulated—i.e., that B. H. Roberts tried to answer the objections which he himself had raised against the Book of Mormon in his shorter work of eighteen parallels. This idea is certainly far from the truth. After a careful examination of Roberts’ work we concluded that it not only fails to answer the objections to the Book of Mormon mentioned in the shorter work, but that it raises many new problems as well.

Truman G. Madsen, professor of philosophy at Brigham Young University, concedes that B. H. Roberts did prepare a manuscript entitled, “Book of Mormon Study,” but he maintains that Roberts was merely using “the ‘Devil’s Advocate’ approach to stimulate thought”:

Later, in March of 1922, Roberts prepared a draft of a written report to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. It included a further discussion of the linguistic problems and other points as well. The study of such books as those of Josiah Priest, Ethan Smith, and others led him to examine such questions as: What literary and historical speculations were abroad in the nineteenth century? Could Joseph Smith have absorbed them in his youth and could these influences have provided the ground plan for such a work as the Book of Mormon? Did Joseph Smith have a mind “sufficiently creative” to have written it? And what internal problems and parallels within the Book of Mormon called for explanation? In confronting such questions Roberts prepared a series of “parallels” with Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*; a summary of this analysis excerpted passages from Ethan Smith’s work and lined them up in columns with comparable ideas in the Book of Mormon. Examination of such questions was contained in a typewritten manuscript entitled “Book of Mormon Study.”

About this particular study, certain points must be kept in mind if it is not to be gravely misunderstood. First, it was not intended for general dissemination but was to be presented to the General Authorities to identify for them certain criticisms that might be made against the Book of Mormon. . . .

Second, the report was not intended to be balanced. A

kind of lawyer's brief of one side of a case written to stimulate discussion in preparation of the defense of a work, already accepted as true, the manuscript was anything but a careful presentation of Roberts' thoughts about the Book of Mormon or of his own convictions. . . .

Teachers who have used the "Devil's Advocate" approach to stimulate thought among their students, lawyers who in preparation of their cases have brought up what they consider the points likely to be made by their worthy opponents—all such people will recognize the unfairness of taking such statements out of context and offering them as their own mature, balanced conclusions. For ill-wishers to resurrect Roberts's similar "Devil's Advocate" probings is not a service to scholarship, for they are manifestly dated. And it is a travesty to take such working papers as a fair statement of B. H. Roberts's own appraisal of the Book of Mormon, for, as this paper abundantly demonstrates, his conviction of its truth was unshaken and frequently expressed down to the time of his death. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1979, pp. 440-442)

While there is no evidence that B. H. Roberts publicly repudiated the Book of Mormon, a careful reading of his manuscript, "A Book of Mormon Study," leads one to believe that he was in the process of losing faith in its divine origin. Although he may have started out merely playing the part of the "Devil's Advocate," we feel that he played the role so well that he developed grave doubts about the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. The following quotations from Roberts' manuscript should be of interest to the reader. In Part I, chapter 14, of his study B. H. Roberts summarized:

. . . was Joseph Smith possessed of a sufficiently vivid and creative imagination as to produce such a work as the Book of Mormon from such materials as have been indicated in the preceding chapters—from such common knowledge as was extant in the communities where he lived in his boyhood and young manhood; from the Bible, and more especially from the "View of the Hebrews," by Ethan Smith? That such power of imagination would have to be of a high order is conceded; **that Joseph Smith possessed such a gift of mind there can be no question. . . .**

A superabundance of evidence of Joseph Smith's power of imagination exists outside of the Book of Mormon. If the Book of Mormon be regarded as of merely human origin, then, of course, to those so regarding it, the rest of Joseph Smith's work falls to the same plane. . . .

In the light of this evidence, there can be no doubt as to the possession of a vividly strong, creative imagination by Joseph Smith, the Prophet, an imagination, it could with reason be urged, which, given the suggestions that are to be found in the "common knowledge" of accepted American Antiquities of the times, supplimented by such a work as Ethan Smith's "View of the Hebrews," **would make it possible for him to create a book such as the Book of Mormon is.**

In Part II, chapter 1, of B. H. Roberts' manuscript, we find this surprising observation:

If from all that has gone before in part I, the view be taken that the Book of Mormon is merely of human origin; that a person of Joseph Smith's limitations in experience and in education; who was of the vicinage and of the period that produced the book—if it be assumed that he is the author of it, then it could be said that there is much **internal evidence** in the book itself to sustain such a view.

In the first place there is a certain lack of perspective in the things the book relates as history that points quite clearly to an **undeveloped mind as their origin.** The narrative proceeds in characteristic disregard of conditions necessary to its reasonableness, as if it were a tale told by a child, with utter disregard for consistency.

These are not the words of an "anti-Mormon" writer, but the words of the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts—one of the greatest scholars the church has ever known. Roberts not only prepared the "Introduction And Notes" for Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*, but he also wrote the six-volume work, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. He is also noted for his many works defending the Book of Mormon.

The following is found in Part II, chapter 2, of Roberts' manuscript:

The same lack of perspective and of consistency is also manifest in the early movements of both Jaredite and Nephite colonies after arriving "to the promised land." Also **the same tendency to parallel incidents and characteristics** as we have noted in the formation of the two colonies, and the incidents of their wilderness journey and sea voyage. It may be asked, what of this parallelism? What does it amount to? If such a question should be asked the opponent of the Book of Mormon would answer with emphasize— "This of it. It supplies the evidence that the Book of Mormon is the product of **one mind**, and that, a very limited mind, unconsciously reproducing with only slight variation its visions." And the answer will be accepted as significant at least, if not conclusive.

In Part II, chapter 3, Roberts wrote:

There were other anti-Christ's among the Nephites, but they were more military leaders than religious innovators, yet much of the same character in spirit with these dissenters here passed in review; but I shall hold that what is here presented illustrates sufficiently the matter taken in hand by referring to them, namely that they are **all of one breed and brand**; so nearly alike that **one mind** is the author of them, and that a young and undeveloped, but piously inclined mind. The evidence, I sorrowfully submit, points some will contend to **Joseph Smith** as their creator. It is difficult to believe that they are the product of history, that they come upon the scene separated by long periods of time, and among a race which was the ancestral race of the red man of America.

In the next chapter B. H. Roberts maintains that

The allusions here to absurdities of expressions and incidents in the Book of Mormon, are not made for the purpose of ridiculing the book, or casting any aspersions upon it; but they are made to indicate what may be fairly regarded as just objects of criticism under the assumption that the Book of Mormon is of human origin, and that Joseph Smith is its author. For these absurdities in expression; these miraculous incidents in warfare; these almost mock—and certainly extravagant—heroics; . . . are certainly just such absurdities and lapses as would be looked for if a person of such limitations as bounded Joseph Smith undertook to put forth a book dealing with the history and civilization of ancient and unknown peoples.

On pages 84-85 of this book, we have shown that "Another book which Joseph Smith may have read before 'Translating' the Book of Mormon was written by Josiah Priest. It was entitled *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed*, and was published in 1825 at Albany, New York."

It is interesting to note that B. H. Roberts also felt that this book could have furnished structural material for the Book of Mormon:

A number of years ago in my treaties on the Book of Mormon under the general title "A New Witness for God," I discussed the subject "Did the Book of Mormon antedate works in English on American antiquities, accessible to Joseph Smith



and his associates.” . . . it was insisted upon that books sufficient for a ground plan of the Book of Mormon, and accessible to Joseph Smith, did not exist. . . .

The writer at the time being considered did not take sufficiently into account the work of Josiah Priest’s . . . Priest himself, indeed, published a book . . . *The Wonders of Nature and Providence*, copyrighted by him June 2nd, 1824, and printed soon afterwards in Rochester, New York, only some twenty miles distant from Palmyra, near which place the Smith family then began to reside. It will be observed that this book preceded the publication of the Book of Mormon by about six years. At the time I made for my *New Witnesses* the survey of the literature on American Antiquities, traditions, origins, etc., available to Joseph Smith and his associates, this work of Priest’s was unknown to me; as was also the work by Ethan Smith, *View of the Hebrews*—except by report of it, and as being in my hands but a few minutes.

In this book *The Wonders of Nature and Providence*, . . . Mr. Priest begins to argue at length that the Indians may be descendants of the Israelites . . . he quotes in all about forty writers, . . . who advocated in one way or another, that the American Indians are Israelites. . . . It is altogether probable that these two books, Priest’s *Wonders of Nature and Providence*, 1824; and Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews* . . . were either possessed by Joseph Smith or certainly known by him, for they were surely available to him, and of course, with all the collection of quoted matter. . . . some forty or fifty earlier authors in all being quoted. . . .

Moreover, on subjects widely discussed, . . . there is built up in course of years, a community knowledge of such subjects, usually referred to as “matters of common knowledge”. . . . Such “common knowledge” existed throughout New England and New York . . . the prevailing ideas respecting the American Indians throughout the regions named, were favorable to the notion that they were of Hebrew origin, . . . And with the existence of such a body of knowledge, or that which was accepted as “knowledge,” and a person of vivid and constructive imaginative power in contact with it, there is little room for doubt but that it might be possible for Joseph Smith to construct a theory of origin for his Book of Mormon, in harmony with these prevailing notions; and more especially since this “common knowledge” is set forth in almost hand-book form in the little work of Ethan Smith, . . . It will appear in what is to follow that such “common knowledge” did exist in New England; that Joseph Smith was in contact with it; that one book, at least, with which he was most likely acquainted, could well have furnished structural outlines for the Book of Mormon; and that Joseph Smith was possessed of such creative imaginative powers as would make it quite within the lines of possibility that the Book of Mormon could have been produced in that way. (“A Book of Mormon Study,” Part I, chapter 1)

In Part I, chapter 7, of the same manuscript, B. H. Roberts asked this question:

Could an investigator of the Book of Mormon be much blamed if he were to decide that **Ethan Smith’s book** with its suggestion as to the division of his Israelites into two peoples; with its suggestion of “tremendous wars” between them; and of the savages overcoming the civilized division—led to the fashioning of these same chief things in the **Book of Mormon**?

B. H. Roberts made this comment in Part I, chapter 13:

As to the first consideration, in this case, priority of production of Ethan Smith’s book, and priority of sufficient duration for it to become generally known in the vicinity where both books were produced—there is absolute certainty. For Ethan Smith’s book ran through two editions in New England before the Book of Mormon was published. As to the second consideration, in this case, the likelihood of Joseph Smith coming in contact with Ethan Smith’s book is not only very great, but amounts to a very close certainty. For being published in an adjoining county to the one in which their home had been for so long, and the interest in the subject being very general, not only in New England but in New York also, it would be little short of miraculous if they did not know of Ethan Smith’s book.

Further on in the same chapter, Roberts made these observations:

But now to return from this momentary divergence to the main theme of this writing—viz. did Ethan Smith’s “View of the Hebrews” furnish structural material for Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon? It has been pointed out in these pages that there are many things in the former book that might well have suggested many major things in the other. Not a few things merely, one or two, or a half dozen, but many; and it is this fact of many things of similarity and the cumulative force of them, that makes them so serious a menace to Joseph Smith’s story of the Book of Mormon origin. . . .

The material in Ethan Smith’s book is of a character and quantity to make a ground plan for the Book of Mormon: . . .

Can such numerous and startling points of resemblance and suggestive contact, be **merely coincidence**?

B. H. Roberts also felt that the Bible could have provided seeds for Joseph Smith’s fruitful imagination:

Matthew and Zechariah, then, could well be thought of as furnishing material for the Book of Mormon signs of the Birth of Messiah.

So also as the Book of Mormon signs of Messiah’s death and resurrection. . . . The three hours darkness, expanded to three days of darkness; the evidently momentary earthquake of Matthew, to three hours of earth quaking; the local rending of rocks in Matthew, to the rending of a continent; and the fear of a Roman Centurion and those that were with him, to the terror of a whole people.

With these things as suggestions as to signs for Messiah’s birth and death and resurrection, and one of conceded vivid, and strong and constructive imaginative powers to work them all out, need not be regarded as an unthinkable procedure and achievement. (*Ibid.*)

On pages 64-65 of this book, we demonstrated that the great revivals which swept New York in the 1820’s are reflected in the Book of Mormon. B. H. Roberts also considered this to be a possibility:

It is clearly established now that these scenes of religion frenzy, were common in the vicinage where Joseph Smith resided in his youth and early manhood. . . . Joseph Smith himself came in contact with these emotional phenomena in his own experience after their rebirth in the early decades of the 19th century. The Question is, **did his knowledge of these things, lead to the introduction of similar ones into the Book of Mormon narrative?** I think it cannot be questioned but what there is sufficient resemblance . . . to justify the thought that the latter might well have suggested, and indeed become the source of the former. (*Ibid.*, Part II, chapter 5)

In Part II, Chapter 6, of his manuscript, B. H. Roberts observed:

There can be no doubt but what the style of preaching, exhortation, warning, praying, admonition together with the things emphasized and the ends aimed at in such work of the Christian ministry as came to the attention of Joseph Smith, was all largely and deeply influenced by those first and greatest evangelical popular preachers of Protestant Christianity, John Wesley, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and Dr. Thomas Coke, et al.

Roberts gives lengthy extracts from some of the religious writings that would have been available to Joseph Smith. One quotation from the “Eighteen Sermons” by George Whitefield, published in 1808, contains this statement: “. . . Methinks I see . . . the Judge sitting on his throne, . . .” This reminds us of Alma’s statement in the Book of Mormon, Alma 36:22: “. . . methought I saw . . . God sitting upon his throne, . . .”

After a careful examination of B. H. Roberts’ manuscript, “A

Book of Mormon Study,” we have come to the conclusion that he has done an excellent job of compiling the evidence to show that Joseph Smith could have written the Book of Mormon from the material available to him. In an article published in *The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, vol. III, no. 3, pp. 123-24, Wesley P. Walters commented concerning the uncovering of Roberts’ manuscripts:

Two unpublished manuscripts surfaced recently in Salt Lake City, Utah, written by the noted Mormon historian, Brigham H. Roberts, and surprisingly proposing that Joseph Smith, Jr., could have composed the Book of Mormon himself. Written between 1922 and the time of Roberts’ death in 1933, they are undoubtedly the most objective look at the origins of the Book of Mormon ever made by a General Authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mr. Roberts admits that the Book of Mormon is in conflict with what is now known about the early inhabitants of America from twentieth-century archeological investigation. He argues that Joseph Smith, Jr., could have produced the book himself, given his highly imaginative mind and the “common knowledge” about the American aborigines current in his day, and he sets forth an abundance of evidence that the book is a product of the early nineteenth-century intellectual climate.

Whether Mr. Roberts wrote these works to summarize some of the main objections to the Book of Mormon’s divine origin, or whether he himself had come to doubt the book’s divinity seems difficult to determine. The letters that accompany the manuscripts suggest the former, **but the manuscripts themselves give the decided impression that Mr. Roberts had come to doubt the book’s divine origin.** One Mormon professor, after reading the manuscripts, remarked, “B. H. Roberts came about as near calling Joseph Smith, Jr. a fraud and deceit as the polite language of a religious man would permit.” Whatever the motive, the manuscripts deserve consideration on their own merit and present one of the strongest statements ever set forth by a recognized Mormon authority questioning the divine origin of the Book of Mormon.

## Hebraisms and Computers

On page 88 of this book we summarize the evidence showing that the Book of Mormon is a 19th century production. Since the publication of this book, Mormon scholars have tried desperately to find some evidence that the Book of Mormon is really a translation of an ancient document. Much has been made of supposed Hebraisms and chiasms in the text of the Book of Mormon. Edward Ashment, an Egyptologist who works for the Translation Department of the Mormon Church, does not seem to be very enthused about the results of this type of research. While he is unwilling to concede that the Book of Mormon is a forgery, he makes some very interesting admissions in an article published in *Sunstone*:

It is understandable, therefore, that to a large extent the Book of Mormon reflects the literary language of Joseph Smith and that **it does not closely reflect Egyptian and/or Hebrew.** It has been instructive to compare the Book of Mormon with ancient Egyptian and Hebrew texts in an effort to ascertain if their syntax and style match the very distinctive syntax and style of the Book of Mormon: incomplete sentences, an abnormally frequent use of circumstantial gerund phrases, numerous digressions which often develop into a chain of digressions before returning to the main text, and an extensive use of adverbs and conjunctions which frequently incorrectly function to draw relationships where none are possible according to context.

**Ancient Egyptian or Semitic texts known to this writer do not display those characteristics.** Instead, they tend to be “tightly” structured and concise (a necessary prerequisite for a period of time in

which writing materials were scarce and very expensive). Incomplete sentences are not characteristic (except in lacunae) nor is a high frequency of circumstantials. Numerous digressions of the type in the Book of Mormon do not occur, and the adverbs and conjunctions are used with a specific syntactic pattern intended. On the other hand, the salient characteristics of the syntax and style of the Book of Mormon also tend to be the prominent features of the other literary efforts of the prophet—viz., the 1832 history which he wrote and dictated, the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and the *Pearl of Great Price*. That fact tends to illustrate that the Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants*, *Pearl of Great Price*, and the 1832 manuscript history of the Church were all filtered through the same mind. . . .

Certainly one of the best ways to account for the hundreds of New Testament phrases which occur in the Old Testament portions of the Book of Mormon lies in a realization of the prophet’s intimate familiarity with biblical terminology from his early home environment. (*Sunstone*, March-April 1980, p. 13)

In footnote 32 in the same article, Ashment observes:

Unfortunately the most critical studies on the Book of Mormon text have emphasized possible “Hebraisms,” while there has been a dearth of research which adequately treats the influence of the King James Version on the prophet’s literary language; it is suggested that this alternative be more thoroughly explored because if [of?] its promising nature.

Some Mormon researchers have turned to a computer in an attempt to prove that the Book of Mormon is genuine. According to the *Provo Herald* for October 7, 1979, two BYU scholars made “wordprint comparisons” between the Book of Mormon and 19th century writings:

Wordprint comparisons between the Book of Mormon and the known 19th century writings of Joseph Smith and Mr. Spalding show conclusively that neither of these persons, authored the book, the scientists say.

In fact, their research indicates that the book was authored by at least 24 different writers, and possibly more, whose styles bear no resemblance to that of Joseph Smith, Mr. Spalding or other 19th century writers whom they examined . . .

One of the tests went so far as to indicate that “odds against a single author exceeded 100 billion to one,” the statisticians noted in the report.

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for December 1979 we made some preliminary comments about this study (a free copy of this issue can be obtained from Utah Lighthouse Ministry, P.O. Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110). We observed that the list of “24 Major Book of Mormon Authors Used in the Study,” seems to be somewhat padded (see *The New Era*, November 1979, p. 11). For instance, we find Isaiah listed as one of the authors. Since Isaiah is a book in the Bible and since the Book of Mormon itself acknowledges that it is quoting from Isaiah, we do not feel that it should be included in this study. If we are going to include Bible authors as part of the list of “Book of Mormon Authors,” we might as well add Moses, Matthew and Malachi (see Book of Mormon, pp. 161, 423-429, 446-448).

The BYU researchers stretch the matter even further by including the “Lord” as “quoted by Isaiah” as part of the “24 Major Book of Mormon Authors.” Also included in this list are the “Lord,” “Jesus” and the “Father.” It would appear, then, that the BYU researchers have created four “Book of Mormon Authors” out of the Father and the Son! On page 11 of their study in *The New Era*, the researchers admit: “Since the term

Lord can refer either to the Father or the Son, we separated the words attributed to the Lord from those attributed to the Father or to Christ.” From this it would appear that the list of “24 Major Book of Mormon Authors,” is a preconceived listing of authors rather than the results actually obtained from a computer.

Actually, we are very much in favor of computer studies with regard to the Book of Mormon. We would especially like to see a study showing the parallels between the King James Version and the Book of Mormon. If a computer could actually be programmed to sort out writing styles, it would, no doubt, show more than 24 different authors in the Book of Mormon. We would probably find Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Job, David, Solomon, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jonah, Micah, Malachi, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, Jude, etc. We feel, however, that it will be very difficult to make an accurate stylistic analysis of a book which plagiarizes from so many different sources.

In the *Messenger* we pointed out other weaknesses in the BYU computer study. One, for instance, is that a modern edition of the Book of Mormon was used instead of the original 1830 edition. Since there have been thousands of changes in the Book of Mormon, this could make a real difference. Dr. D. James Croft, Professor of Management Science, Graduate School of Business, University of Utah, has written an interesting critique of the methods used by the BYU researchers. In his article, which appeared in *Sunstone*, we find the following comments:

Unfortunately, close scrutiny of the study indicates that the encouraging conclusions of its authors may be premature and that several areas of the study seem vulnerable to criticism: . . . some authorities in the field of statistical stylistics have serious reservations about these notions concerning the stability, or even the existence, of measurable style. One of the foremost experts in the field of computer and statistical analysis of style is Richard W. Bailey at the University of Michigan. He has said:

The term “wordprint” is an unfortunate one since it reminds people of fingerprints. We know that fingerprints are valid; voiceprints are somewhat dubious; and we’re not sure if “wordprints” even exist.

The reason for Bailey’s pessimism is that there are several studies which show an author’s style is not statistically stable across time, subject matter, and literary form. . . . There are numerous studies which have shown there are distinct style differences between written and spoken works by the same author. This finding is particularly relevant for the Larsen study since some Book of Mormon authors are primarily historians (Mormon and Moroni) and use the written form, whereas others are orators (King Benjamin and Samuel the Lamanite) and use the spoken form of communication. Therefore, the possibility exists that some of the statistical differences the Larsen group found might be due to the contrast between written and spoken literary forms.

The major stylistics authority cited in the Larsen article, A. Q. Morton, also pointed out that spoken and written styles differ: . . . Morton demonstrated this point by showing that the rate of use of the definite article varied among the nine books of history by Herodotus despite an undisputed single author. Morton emphasized that the cases in which commonly used words provide valid tests of authorship are “Exceptional situations.” . . .

Thus, the very existence of measurable, unique author styles is questioned by people in the field of stylistics. The stability of these styles (if they exist) across time, subject matter, and literary form is a matter of intense debate. Since the Larsen study of the Book of

Mormon authors used common words as measures of wordprints and did not allow for style differences between the historians and the orators, its results are subject to the same uncertainty and debate. . . .

The fact that Larsen and his associates used edited manuscripts as raw data makes their study vulnerable to still another kind of potentially damaging criticism. It is understandable that the researchers used the current edition of the Book of Mormon since it is stored on computer-readable magnetic tapes . . .

While using the computer tapes to assign words in this fashion avoided some potentially subtle statistical problems, it introduced others. The major problem with using these tapes as the source for the words (and thus the wordprints) of Book of Mormon authors is that the current edition of the Book of Mormon is an edited version of the original 1830 edition. The critical question of whether any of the potential nineteenth-century authors actually wrote the Book of Mormon cannot be answered adequately unless unedited passages from the Book of Mormon are compared with unedited passages from the writings of candidate authors. . . .

There are enough editorial changes between the current edition of the Book of Mormon and the 1830 edition to make this a significant consideration. . . . The significant point for the Larsen study is the fact that most of these minor changes involve the commonly used, noncontextual words which the researchers used to establish their wordprints.

For instance, the word *that* was listed by the Larsen group as the fourth most commonly used word in the Book of Mormon. It occurs 5717 times and was used in most of the tests and results reported in the Larsen study. However there are over 250 places where *that* occurs in the 1830 edition but not in the present edition. . . .

An even bigger problem arises with the word *which*. This word is the eleventh most commonly used word in the present edition. It occurs 1716 times. But in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, *which* was often used in places where *who* or *whom* should have been used. There are over nine hundred changes of this type where *which* no longer appears. That is, the frequency of using *which* is underestimated by more than one-third when we use the present edition of the Book of Mormon rather than the 1830 edition. While this word was not used in all the tests reported in the Larsen study, those in which it was used cannot be considered valid. . . . Only tests using the 1830 edition will meet generally-accepted experimental design standards.

The data used to establish the word patterns of nineteenth-century authors had similar difficulties. Some of the passages of these authors were taken from the *Evening and Morning Star*, the *Messenger and Advocate*, and the *Times and Seasons*, all of which are edited sources. Only part of the passages used to determine Joseph Smith’s wordprints were taken from unedited works like his journal or personal letters. . . .

The problems of comparing one set of edited words (from the Book of Mormon) to another set of largely edited words (from dissimilar works of the nineteenth-century authors) with the expectation that statistically subtle (and arguably nonexistent) wordprints remain intact are substantial, at best. Larsen and his colleagues need to do significant work in addressing these issues. . . .

A number of experimental design problems which seriously weakened the study were left unresolved by the Larsen research group. In some cases, the Larsen group also overstated the possible conclusions pointed to by their statistical test results.

The first experimental design problem concerns the often-used Book of Mormon phrase “And it came to pass that. . . .” . . . the incidence of the six words in the phrase “And it came to pass that” is highly dependent on the literary form. An occurrence of any one of those six words in a passage of Book of Mormon material is correlated with an occurrence of the other



five words and gives an immediate indication that the author is likely to be a historian. Thus the words in that phrase should not be labeled as “noncontextual.” . . .

The magnitude of the bias that was introduced by the phrase “And it came to pass that” can be noted by examining the words which the researchers used in the Larsen study. The chart . . . shows the 38 words used for most of the test reported in the Larsen study. These words are arranged in the order of frequency with which they appear in the Book of Mormon. The researchers used only the first ten words from this list in many of their statistical tests; these top ten include four of the words in the “And it came to pass that” phrase. In other tests involving the entire set of 38 words, the fact that all six words from this phrase are among the 15 most frequently-used words means that some indeterminate portion of the difference in wordprints of authors found by the researchers is solely attributable to this phrase.

A sound research design must overcome this deficiency. Narrative passages and oratorical passages must be treated separately if the “And it came to pass that” phrase is not to bias the results. . . . Most past work in statistical analysis of style has been done with much less sophisticated statistical tools. Little work has been done with MANOVA and discriminant analysis. Thus we do not know very much about how these tools react when applied to word patterns of the same author and to word patterns of different authors. It may be that due to their sensitivity they can “find” statistically significant differences in the styles of a single author. Even the simple statistical techniques have found these kinds of differences in some works. Thus a statistical *difference* in the styles of two passages does not necessarily mean they were written by *different authors* . . .

The considerable problems in experimental design and in the way results were expressed raise questions about the validity of the conclusions drawn from the Larsen study. We do not know, of course, whether tightening the assumptions made about the notion of wordprints, using unedited materials, strengthening experimental design, and more carefully and cautiously drawing conclusions will alter the results. It may not. But as long as even one type of weakness remains, meaningful conclusions cannot be drawn. . . . any study of Book of Mormon authorship styles should deal with unedited materials. The 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon must be used . . . Original passages of writing, unedited for grammar or awkwardness, must be used to represent the work of any nineteenth-century authors to which Book of Mormon passages are compared. . . .

Results based on the next generation of wordprint studies may yet provide the encouraging support sought by faithful Church members. . . . At the present time, however, given the tentative nature of “Wordprints” and given the data and experimental design problems inherent in the Larsen study, it would be best to reserve judgment concerning whether or not it is possible to prove the existence of multiple authors of the Book of Mormon. (*Sunstone*, March-April 1981, pp. 16-18, 20-21)

In response to Croft’s critique, Wayne A. Larsen and Alvin C. Rencher state:

Many of Professor Croft’s points seem to invalidate, or at least blunt, the findings and implications of our study. But we feel that a closer examination of his arguments shows our major conclusions are still valid. (*Ibid.*, p. 22)

In the conclusion to their article, the BYU researchers say:

We do not believe our work, or any work in this area, will be unassailable. This is to ask for more than this science can give. Perhaps

editorial pressures and our own enthusiasm caused us to make a few statements that upon closer examination may need some revision. Like any beginning work, it is subject to revisions and reinterpretations as additional data emerge. Yet we believe our study is strong evidence in favor of multiple authorship in the Book of Mormon. (*Ibid.*, p. 26)

Edward H. Ashment, of the Translation Department of the Mormon Church, has voiced some serious reservations concerning the fantastic claims of the BYU researchers. In a letter to the editor of *Sunstone*, November-December 1980, page 6, Ashment observes:

The word-print analysis of the text of the Book of Mormon no more solves the problem of authorship than an earlier study in which Rencher was involved solves the authorship of the Isaiah text. . . . However exciting it may be, at best this study must be regarded as preliminary and as representing only one approach. The only conclusions that ultimately can be valid will result from holistic research.

We believe that computers may eventually prove to be very helpful in sorting out writing styles. At the present time, however, we are skeptical about this method. We feel that there are many factors that could affect such a study. Just as in the analysis of handwriting, we are concerned that the interpretation of the data can be affected by the person who studies it. We remember that many years ago a computer expert declared that all of the letters of Paul in the Bible were forgeries except for the book of Romans! We were, of course, not willing to accept such a startling claim just on the basis of a computer study, and we doubt that a Mormon would receive it without additional evidence. A recent article in the *Washington Post* speaks of “a credibility problem” with regard to the use of computers to determine authorship:

LONDON—A computer struck a blow for religious fundamentalism in a study of the Book of Genesis reported here by the *Guardian* newspaper the other day. But skepticism dies hard.

Vexing questions have been posed by the kind of people who write letters to newspapers. The upshot, as the reader will have already imagined, is that the computer has a credibility problem.

The original study was conducted in Israel by a team that included a biblical scholar, a statistician and a mathematician. They sought to resolve by high-tech methods a bitter dispute as to whether Genesis was written by many hands, as most modern scholars claim or, as the fundamentalists assert, by a single person, namely Moses.

The 20,000 Hebrew words of Genesis were fed into a computer, then tested against 54 different criteria on the issue of the one and the many. . . . The result was an overwhelming win for Moses. According to one of the team of scholars, it is 82 percent probable that Genesis was the work of a single author.

The Rev. Roger Tomes . . . was not satisfied. . . . He ran the exact same tests on two passages of Genesis generally considered to have been written by different authors.

The tests of the definite article, of the length of words and of the use of the conjunction “and” showed a high degree of common authorship. But Tomes ascribes that result not to single authorship but to the character of the Hebrew language. “There are,” he wrote, “some similarities in the more formal kinds of language behavior.”

But one test, richness of vocabulary, goes beyond the structure of the language to the character of the author. There, wide divergencies cropped up. One passage of 469

words used only 98 different bits of vocabulary. The second passage contained 112 different bits in a total of 287 words. Quite a difference, and Tomes could not resist a little crowing. “The case for single authorship,” he wrote, “has a formidable obstacle to overcome here.” . . . I saw Eric Silver, the author of the original *Guardian* article, here in London. I mentioned the letter from Tomes.

Silver, it developed, had harbored doubts about the computer all along. In preparing his story there had emerged a telling point that he had not included. The research team had also done an analysis on

Immanuel Kant. The same tests that disclosed that Genesis was 82 percent likely to have been composed by a single author were applied to the works of Kant. The probability that the works of Kant were written by a single person was, the analysis disclosed, only 7 percent.

In other words, just as there are some things in modern life beyond the reach of Genesis, so there are other matters to which computers are poor guides. But alas, just as there is religious fundamentalism, so there is computer fundamentalism. (*The Washington Post*, November 15, 1981)



## 6. Archaeology and the Book of Mormon

Some members of the Mormon Church have made fantastic claims about archaeologists using the Book of Mormon. For instance, we are informed that a letter which was written to Ernest L. English on May 3, 1936, was duplicated and "distributed to LDS church members by leaders (local) in Cleveland, Ohio in 1959." We quote the following from that letter:

The inquiry you made regarding the Book of Mormon is a commendable one and I will be pleased to mention the part which it has played in helping the government to unravel the problem of the aborigines.

The Book of Mormon was first brought to the attention of the Smithsonian Institution by James H. Fairchild, a New York editor. At first the account was not taken seriously, . . . It was recognized because it contained many excellent philosophical assertions, but apparently was not regarded as having any historical value until about 1884. . . . it was 1920 before the Smithsonian Institution **officially recognized** the Book of Mormon as a record of any value. All discoveries up to this time were found to fit the Book of Mormon accounts and so the heads of the Archaeological Department decided to make an effort to discover some of the larger cities described in the Book of Mormon records.

All members of the department were **required to study the account** and make rough-maps of the various populated centers. When I visited the Smithsonian Institute Library in 1933 I noticed that there were over thirty copies of the Book of Mormon on file. During the past fifteen years the Institute has made remarkable study of its investigations of the Mexican Indians and it is true that the Book of Mormon has been **the guide to almost all** of the major discoveries.

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

Because of many false statements, such as the one cited above, the Smithsonian Institution has been forced to publish a statement concerning these matters (see photograph of this statement below). In this statement we find the following:

1. The Smithsonian Institution has **never** used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see **no connection** between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the Book.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
Office of Anthropology  
Washington, D.C. 20560

### STATEMENT REGARDING THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Smithsonian Institution has received hundreds of inquiries in recent years regarding the use of the Book of Mormon as a guide to archeological researches. Answers to questions most commonly asked are as follows:

1. The Smithsonian Institution has never used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see no connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the Book.
2. The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most closely related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. Archeological evidence indicates that the ancestors of the present Indians came into the New World--probably over a land bridge known to have existed in the Bering Strait region during the last Ice Age--in a continuing series of small migrations beginning about 30,000 years ago.
3. Present evidence indicates that the first people to reach this continent from the East were the Norsemen who arrived in the northeastern part of North America around A.D. 1000. There is nothing to show that they reached Mexico or Central America.
4. There is increasing evidence of the spread of cultural traits to MesoAmerica and the northwestern coast of South America across the Pacific, beginning several thousand years before the Christian era. However, these appear to be the result of accidental voyages originating in eastern and southern Asia and show no relationship to ancient Egyptian or Hebrew cultures.
5. We know of no authentic cases of ancient Egyptian or Hebrew writing having been found in the New World. Reports of findings of Egyptian influence in the Mexican and Central American areas have been published in newspapers and magazines from time to time, but thus far no reputable Egyptologist has been able to discover any relationship between Mexican remains and those in Egypt.
6. There are two copies of the Book of Mormon (and part of a third copy) in the United States National Museum, and another copy

was sent by the Smithsonian library to the Library of Congress for deposit. Two of these were gift copies, and one was received by transfer from another government agency. One or two members of the staff have personal copies that were presented to them by Mormons.

### Suggested Reading

- Coe, Michael D.  
1962. Mexico. 245 pp., 75 pls., 32 figs., 8 maps, 1 table. Frederick A. Praeger, New York (Ancient Peoples and Places Series, vol. 29). (A well-written and authoritative summary of Mexican archeology.)
- Jennings, Jesse D., and Norbeck, Edward.  
1963. Prehistoric Man in the New World. 633 pp., illus. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. (The most recent and thorough survey of New World archeology, written by leading American archeologists.)
- Ferguson, Thomas S.  
1958. One Fold and One Shepherd. 460 pp., illus. Books of California, San Francisco. (A book presenting the Mormon point of view.)
- Hunter, Milton R., and Ferguson, Thomas S.  
1950. Ancient America and the Book of Mormon. 450 pp., 53 figs., Kolob Book Co., Oakland, California. (Another book presenting the Mormon point of view.)
- MacGowan, Kenneth, and Hester, Joseph A., Jr.  
1962. Early Man in the New World. Rev. ed. 333 pp., illus. Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New Jersey. (The Natural History Library). (Good general reading; also provides some Old World background.)
- Morley, Sylvanus G.  
1956. The ancient Maya. 494 pp., 102 pls., 57 figs. (3d ed., rev. by George W. Brainerd.) Stanford University Press, Stanford, California (Maya history: origin of their civilization, its rise, first florescence, first decline, renaissance and final decline, Spanish conquest.)
- Thompson, J. Eric.  
1954. The rise and fall of Maya civilization. 287 pp., 24 pls., 20 figs., map. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. (An important account of Maya civilization based upon archeological discoveries.)



Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., of the Smithsonian Institution, made this statement in a letter dated February 16, 1951:

In reply to your letter of February 11, 1951, permit me to say that the **mistaken** idea that the Book of Mormon has been used by scientific organizations in conducting archeological explorations has become quite current in recent years. It can be stated definitely that there is no connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the Book of Mormon.

There is no correspondence whatever between archeological sites and cultures as revealed by scientific investigations and as recorded in the Book of Mormon, hence the book cannot be regarded as having any historical value from the standpoint of the aboriginal peoples of the New World.

The Smithsonian Institution has never officially recognized the Book of Mormon as a record of value on scientific matters, and the Book has **never** been used as a guide or source of information for discovering ruined cities. (Letter dated February 16, 1951, photographically reproduced in *The Book of Mormon Examined*, by Arthur Budvarson, La Mesa, California, 1959, p. 37)

In a letter to Marvin Cowan, Frank H. H. Roberts stated:

There is no evidence whatever of any migration from Israel to America, and likewise no evidence that pre-Columbian Indians had any knowledge of Christianity or the Bible. (Letter dated January 24, 1963)

The University Archaeological Society at Brigham Young University published these comments concerning the statement from the Smithsonian Institution:

For as long as we can remember, and perhaps for a good while before that, the claim has been circulated among uniformed Latter-day Saints that some important non-LDS research organization “back east” has been using the Book of Mormon as a guide in its archaeological field work. However, when the question comes up as to just which institution is involved, no one seems able to identify it, although the Smithsonian Institution of Washington is sometimes mentioned as a possibility. A brief examination of this extraordinary claim will bring to light some of the difficulties it entails. In the first place the Book is **not**, in its present form, a suitable “guide” for archaeological field work: The ancient authors seem **not** to have had in mind the problems of geographical identification which face the modern archaeologist. . . . he approximate location of its principal cities, has yet been published. If Latter-day Saints themselves have **not** yet accomplished this task, how can Smithsonian or any other non-LDS archaeologists be expected to use the Book of Mormon as a guide for field work?

In a word, we believe this claim to be **false**. . . .

So many inquiries have nevertheless been sent to the Smithsonian Institution on this subject that the following printed statement has been used . . . to save time in answering letters: . . . [a copy of the statement follows]

. . . our reasons for urging Latter-day Saints to refrain from writing Smithsonian on this subject may be different from those of the Institution itself. It is simply that that organization, . . . is not set up to handle problems of this kind. Their scholars appear to have no special knowledge of the actual contents of the Book of Mormon, nor in fact any special competence in the methodology of historical archaeology, . . . they appear to have **no interest** in examining the claims of such a peculiar writing as the Book of Mormon, . . . it is unlikely that they could give suitable answers to inquiries on this subject.

We should rather like to suggest that questions . . . be addressed to the University Archaeological Society, an organization which was created to assist Latter-day Saints in this very field. (*University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, Brigham Young University, April 16, 1965, pp. 5-7)

George Crossette, of *National Geographic Magazine*, has made this statement concerning the idea that the Book of Mormon is used by archaeologists:

The National Geographic Society has been asked several times whether the Book of Mormon has been substantiated by archeological findings. We referred this question to Dr. Neil M. Judd, a noted archeologist at the Smithsonian Institution. His reply follows:

Neither representatives of the National Geographic Society nor, to my knowledge, archeologists connected with any other institution of equal prestige have ever used the Book of Mormon in locating historic ruins in Middle America or elsewhere.

(Letter dated October 21, 1965)

In his pamphlet *Archeology and the Book of Mormon*, Hal Hougey gives us the following information:

The numerous books and articles by Latter-day Saints over the years have shown that Mormons believe that the fruits of archeological research may properly be applied to verify the Book of Mormon. Dr. Ross T. Christensen, a Mormon anthropologist, agrees with this in the following quotations from the *Newsletter of the University Archaeological Society* which has its headquarters at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah:

. . . the Book of Mormon is in such a key position in relation to the Latter-day Saint religion as a whole that the entire structure of the latter must stand or fall with the verification or refutation of the former; and finally, that the Book of Mormon is of such a nature that its validity can be submitted to a thorough and objective scientific test. (*U.A.S. Newsletter*, no. 64, January 30, 1960, pp. 5-6)

Latter-day Saints have only recently entered seriously into the field of anthropology, . . . It was not until 1938 that the first Latter-day Saint earned a doctorate in anthropology (M. Wells Jakeman, at the University of California). In 1946 a Department of Archaeology was established at Brigham Young University. This department “was particularly dedicated to researchers bearing on the Scriptures upon which Latter-day Saints base their faith” (*Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2).

While there are today fewer Latter-day Saints with doctor’s degrees in anthropology than there are fingers on one’s right hand, these few have served to curtail the extravagant claims which Mormon missionaries have made. . . .

When Mormon missionaries make their extravagant claims about American archeology proving the Book of Mormon, we need only to refer them to the following statements by their own anthropologists:

The statement that the Book of Mormon has already been proved by archaeology is misleading. The truth of the matter is that we are only now beginning to see even the outlines of the archaeological time-periods which could compare with those of the Book of Mormon. How, then, can the matter have been settled once and for all? That such an idea could exist indicates the ignorance of many of our people with regard to what is going on in the historical and anthropological sciences. (Christensen in *U.A.S. Newsletter*, no. 64, January 30, 1960, p. 3)

Many times, Mormon missionaries have told their investigators that such late-period ruins as Monte Alban (periods 3-5), Yagul, and Mitla were built by the Nephites and that the archaeologists would confirm this. Both claims are untrue. However, the earliest periods of the area, Monte Alban 1 and 2, although as yet little known, are of Preclassic (i.e. Book of Mormon period) date. One may think of these earlier peoples as Jaredites or Nephites, but if so it must be on the basis of faith, not archaeology, for so far there is no explicit evidence that Book of Mormon peoples occupied this area [Oaxaca, in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec area of Mexico]. (Joseph E. Vincent in *U.A.S. Newsletter*, no. 66, May 7, 1960, p. 2)

Christensen chides his brethren with the following comment:

As for the notion that the Book of Mormon has already been proved by archaeology, I must say with Shakespeare, "Lay not that flattering unktion to your soul!" (Hamlet 3:4). (*U.A.S. Newsletter*, no. 64, January 30, 1960, p. 3)

What about the Mormon claim that non-Mormons have found the Book of Mormon helpful as a guide in locating ruins of cities in Central America? M. Wells Jakeman, Mormon anthropologist, answers this question:

It must be confessed that some members of the "Mormon" or Latter-day Saint Church are prone, in their enthusiasm for the Book of Mormon, to make claims for it that cannot be supported. So far as is known to the writer, no non-Mormon archaeologist at the present time is using the Book of Mormon as a guide in archaeological research. Nor does he know of any non-Mormon archaeologist who holds that the American Indians are descendants of the Jews, or that Christianity was known in America in the first century of our era. This in itself, of course, does not disprove the Book of Mormon; for not enough is yet known of the actual period of that record in ancient America, or of the origin of the American Indians, for a final judgment at this time, scientifically speaking. (*Ibid.*, no. 57, March 25, 1959, p. 4)

With the exception of Latter-day Saint archaeologists, members of the archaeological profession do not, and never have, espoused the Book of Mormon in any sense of which I am aware. Non-Mormon archaeologists do not allow the Book of Mormon any place whatever in their reconstruction of the early history of the New World. (Christensen in *U.A.S. Newsletter*, no. 64, January 30, 1960, p. 3)

We conclude, therefore, that the Book of Mormon remains completely unverified by archeology. The claims Mormon missionaries have made are fallacious and misleading. Many honest and sincere people who have no background or training in the field of archeology have been converted to Mormonism at least in part because of their false conviction that American archeology has verified the Book of Mormon record. (*Archeology and the Book of Mormon*, by Hal Hougey, Concord, Calif., pp. 3-7)

John L. Sorenson, a Mormon archaeologist who was assistant Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at BYU, made these comments concerning some of the Mormon books on archaeology and the Book of Mormon:

Various individuals unconnected with these institutionalized activities have also wrestled with the archaeological problem. Few of the writings they have produced are of genuine consequence in archaeological terms. Some are clearly on the oddball fringe; others have credible qualifications. Two of the most prolific are Professor Hugh Nibley and Milton R. Hunter; however, they are **not** qualified to handle the archaeological materials their works often involve.

... As long as Mormons generally are willing to be fooled by (and pay for) the uninformed, uncritical drivel about archaeology and the scriptures which predominates, the few L.D.S. experts are reluctant even to be identified with the topic. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, pp. 145, 149)

In a paper presented at the "Thirteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures," April 1, 1961, at the Brigham Young University, Clark S. Knowlton made the following observations:

Unfortunately many of our Mormon researchers have lacked the necessary training in archaeological techniques and data analysis to properly evaluate the archaeological materials that they were using. Others who were not well read in the literature of archaeology made rather serious errors in interpretation and analysis that might have been avoided if the writers had a greater familiarity with the writings of modern American archaeologists. This ignorance of the history, theory, techniques, and basic conclusions of American archaeology has caused many of our writers to fall into intellectual pitfalls. The several examples that follow are indicative of the many that exist.

Several writers have gone to great lengths to assemble lists of words taken from many different Indian languages. They have compared these word lists to similar lists in the Hebrew language. Through a comparison of these word lists they have hoped to prove a definite relationship between Hebrew and the Indian languages. Indian languages, however, differ enormously in matters of grammatical structure and sound system as well as in vocabulary. The matter of the relationships between them is still a subject of considerable debate and disagreement. By careful word selection from a group of Indian languages taken at random it is possible to compare word lists that might resemble similar lists from almost any European or Asiatic language. Such word lists have little value and prove nothing unless a thoroughgoing linguistic comparison is made of the grammatical structure, sound system, vocabulary, and the possibilities of historical contact of the two languages involved in the comparison.

The publication of magnificent volumes of photographs of the ruins of buildings and cities located in the area of high civilizations in the Americas is another example. These lavishly illustrated books are frequently written and published in an endeavor to prove that complex civilizations existed in the Book of Mormon period. Unfortunately, their photographs for the most part are of cities that were built after the Book of Mormon period had ended. They can thus have little bearing on the problem of the cultural characteristics of the Book of Mormon peoples.

There is also the human tendency to erect out of zeal for one's beliefs complex theories about the origin, the cultural relationships, the migratory routes, the areas of entry into the Americas, and the location of the civilizations mentioned in the Book of Mormon. There is not yet enough evidence from past or present archaeological work to firmly support many theories in this area. Before much along this line can be done there must be sent into the areas of possible Book of Mormon occupancy many properly equipped and staffed archeological expeditions.

And finally, there is the tendency to utilize only those writers or authors whose points of view support our own and to ignore completely those who differ from us. As many scholars in the nineteenth century speculated on the possible connections between the Ten Tribes of Israel and the American Indians and sought out evidence to support such relationships, their writings are abundantly used by some of our own writers. The writings of the majority of modern archaeologists who do not accept the present possibility of such connections are ignored. In several recent books by Mormon writers, the archaeologists and authorities quoted all lived before 1920. None who have worked in recent years are mentioned. It is as though archaeology came to an end before 1930.

Because of these factors, books and articles written by Mormons on the archaeology of the Americas or on the relationship of archaeological discoveries to the problems of the Book of Mormon find it difficult to receive a non-biased analysis by non-Mormon scholars. There is unfortunately prejudice in the field against publications in archaeology by members of our Church as all too often such works have contained unsupported speculations, wishful thinking, and theories resting on little evidence.

The problems created by the lack of knowledge among our people of the basic theories, techniques, conclusions, and practices of American archaeology can be remedied only by the development of a group of men who are both trained archaeologists and faithful members of the Church. . . .

Another weakness that has handicapped the formation of a genuine field of study of Book of Mormon archaeology is the tendency among many Mormon scholars and students in the area of Book of Mormon archaeology to divide into conflicting schools of thought. These competitive schools among us have been characterized by professional feuding, academic jealousies, personality conflicts, and maneuvering for control of publication outlets. (*Papers of the Thirteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, pp. 53-54)



### A Pagan People

M. T. Lamb once made this interesting observation concerning archaeology and the Book of Mormon:

The presentation in the previous chapter is only one point. We shall find a great many other representations of the Book of Mormon equally at fault, squarely and flatly contradicted by the facts of ancient American history.

For instance, what can be more clearly stated than the religious condition of this country, especially Central America, for a period of over two hundred years after Christ? A Christian civilization prevailed all over both continents.

... nothing could be wider from the truth, unless all ancient American history is a lie, and its ten thousand relics tell false tales.

It may be stated in a general way that there never has been a time upon this western hemisphere within the historic period, or within three thousand years past, when a uniform civilization of **any kind** prevailed over both continents.

But this will be considered hereafter. We are to learn now—

1st. That a Christian civilization has never existed in Central America, not even for a day.

2d. The people of Central America, as far back as their record has been traced (and that is centuries earlier than the alleged beginning of Nephite history), have always been an idolatrous people, as thoroughly heathen as any which the history of the world has described, worshipping idols the most hideous in form and feature that have ever been found upon earth, and accompanying that worship by human sacrifices as barbarous as the annals of history have recorded.

... A sad fatality, is it not, dear reader, that in the very region of country where the Book of Mormon fixes magnificent temples and sanctuaries erected by a Christian people for the worship of the

true God, there should be dug up out of the ruins of old temples and palaces such relics of the real religion of these ancient peoples? All the records that have come down to us make it certain that these horrid idols instead of the Lord Jesus were worshipped throughout Central America 2000 years ago. It would indeed be a bright page in Central American history if the assertions of the Book of Mormon were true. But no such bright spot can be discovered either in the Nahuatl or the Mayan records. For more than three thousand years it was one unbroken record of superstition and human slaughter. . . . The entire civilization of the Book of Mormon, its whole record from beginning to end is flatly contradicted by the civilization and the history of Central America. (*The Golden Bible; or, The Book of Mormon. Is It From God?*, by Rev. M. T. Lamb, New York, 1887, pp. 284-289)

### A Lost Civilization

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the BYU, tries to explain away the fact that archaeologists have not found any evidence that the Nephites or Jaredites ever existed:

Book of Mormon archaeologists have often been disappointed in the past because they have consistently looked for the wrong things. We should not be surprised at the lack of ruins in America in general. . . . In view of the nature of their civilization one should not be puzzled if the Nephites had left us no ruins at all. People underestimate the capacity of things to disappear, and do not realize that the ancients almost never built of stone. Many a great civilization which has left a notable mark in history and literature has left behind not a single recognizable trace of itself. We must stop looking for the wrong things. . . .

Proceed with Caution!: There is certainly no shortage of ruins on this continent, but until some one object has

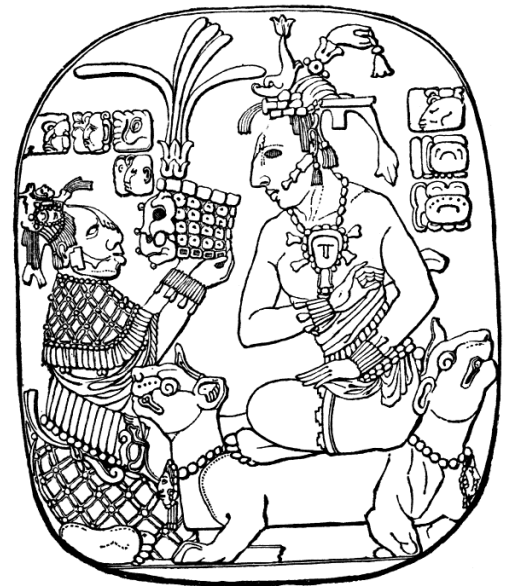


Copan Statue

Illustrations of Pagan Art in the New World from Lamb's *Golden Bible*.



Stucco Bas-Relief in the Palace.—  
(See J. T. S., page 384.)



Sculptured Tablet in the Palace.—  
(See J. T. S., page 387.)



been definitely identified as either Nephite or Jaredite it is dangerous to start drawing any conclusions. . . . The search must go on, but conclusions should wait. We are asking for trouble when we describe any object as Nephite or Jaredite, since, as Woolley says, “no record is ever exhaustive,” and at any moment something might turn up (and often does!) to require a complete reversal of established views. Aside from the danger of building faith on the “highly ambiguous materials” of archaeology and the “unavoidable subjective” and personal interpretations of the same, we should remember that archaeology at its best is a game of surprises.

A Disappointing Picture: People often ask, if the Book of Mormon is true, why do we not find this continent littered with mighty ruins? In the popular view the normal legacy of any great civilization is at least some majestic piles in the moonlight. Where are your Jaredite and Nephite splendors of the past? A reading of previous lessons should answer that question. In the Nephites we have a small and mobile population dispersed over a great land area, living in quickly-built wooden cities, their most ambitious structures being fortifications of earth and timbers occasionally reinforced with stones. This small nation lasted less than a thousand years. Their far more numerous and enduring contemporaries, the Lamanites and their associates including Jaredite remnants (which we believe were quite extensive) had a type of culture that leaves little if anything behind it.

. . . We have no description of any Book of Mormon city to compare with Homer’s description of Troy. How shall we recognize a Nephite city when we find it? (*An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, by Hugh Nibley, Salt Lake City, 1957, pp. 366, 370, 373)

M. Wells Jakeman, Professor of Archaeology at the BYU, differed sharply with Dr. Nibley and accused him of misrepresentation:

Unfortunately, the author’s discussion of the archaeological approach to the Book of Mormon is vitiated by an apparent attempt to implant an emotional judgment in the mind of his reader against this approach or the way it is being developed. Thus he refers disparagingly to those investigating this field as “people calling themselves archaeologists” (p. 366) and “these self-appointed archaeologists” (p. 363). He then—although not an archaeologist himself—proceeds to instruct the reader as to what archaeology is, and as to its true value for the Book of Mormon. . . .

The misrepresentations and misconceptions comprising the “instructions” on archaeology given in this appendix are too numerous to deal with completely here. . . .

Turning to the author’s “instructions” with respect to the special field of Book of Mormon archaeology . . . we find that his main “teaching” here is that Book of Mormon archaeologists “have consistently looked for the wrong things”; i.e., they have been looking for the cities of the Nephites as marked by the ruins of great stone buildings (pp. 366, 370-375). . . .

Unfortunately, in these “instructions” the author, instead of providing advice of real value to Book of Mormon archaeologists, merely reveals his own complete unawareness of the actual situation in this field. . . . the Nephite people . . . usually built their dwellings, temples, and palaces of timber or wood, and their fortifications of earth, rather than of stone (although stone appears to have been used occasionally, as also cement and probably brick). . . . Apparently the author did little reading in the actual field of Book of Mormon archaeology before penning his “Advice to Book of Mormon Archaeologists.” . . . that “the ancients almost never built of stone” must surely be an intentional exaggeration. . . .

Finally, we cannot pass by the author’s reference to “the lack of ruins in America in general.” This is truly an astonishing statement from one presuming to give instructions involving American archaeology! . . . That the Book of Mormon civilizations, thus being mainly nomadic, could have flourished in the New World and yet not left behind any archaeological or material evidence of their existence, is supported, according to the author, by the fact that “many a great civilization which has left a notable mark in [Old

World] history and literature has left behind not a single recognizable [archaeological] trace of itself” (p. 366; “that they existed there is not the slightest doubt, yet some of the greatest have left not so much as a bead or a button that can be definitely identified”—p. 371).

Two serious misconceptions are apparent in the above argument. First of all, the idea that the Book of Mormon peoples were mainly nomadic simply ignores the numerous indications in the Record to the contrary. . . . the Book of Mormon refers time and again to permanent settlements of its peoples—“cities,” “towns,” or “villages,” with grain fields round about—and only rarely to temporary settlements (tent encampments). . . . the Book of Mormon peoples, instead of having a “type of culture [namely nomadic] that leaves little if anything behind it,” as claimed by the author, in reality had cultures of mainly sedentary type, which—as proved by the results of archaeological excavation throughout the world—invariably leave behind extensive material remains!

The other serious misconception of the author . . . is his belief that nomadic hunting or herding cultures, . . . in his view, leave “little if anything” behind them . . . Now all students of archaeology will know that this claim is directly opposite to the fact. Even though ruins, or the remains of buildings, are not ordinarily left behind by nomadic cultures, the literature of archaeology is full of excavation reports and other descriptions of material remains marking the camp or cave sites of such cultures—in fact, remains often of kinds that last almost indefinitely, and therefore may easily survive from the time of the Book of Mormon cultures: stone and bone implements, food-refuse heaps . . . Consequently, even if the Book of Mormon peoples had been mainly nomadic—which we have seen they were not—a great deal in the way of material remains or archaeological traces of their existence would have had to be expected. . . . Archaeology also most surely has the final word with respect to the existence of an entire ancient culture itself. At least this is so in the case of an urban culture of many-centuries’ duration, featured by numerous permanent settlements, such as the civilizations of the Book of Mormon; it is inconceivable—and contrary to world-wide archaeological experience—that such civilizations could ever have existed without leaving some identifiable remains.

Indeed, a serious misrepresentation of the value of archaeological materials as sources of historical information must be charged to the author. (*The University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, BYU, March 30, 1957, pp. 1-7)

Dr. Hugh Nibley seems to realize that archaeology has not provided any real support for the story found in the Book of Mormon, and therefore in his most recent book he still maintains that archaeologists are looking “for the wrong things in the wrong places”:

Recently a Protestant journal of wide circulation reported with obvious satisfaction that there is “no non-Mormon archaeologist who holds that the Indians descended from the Jews, or that Christianity was known in the New World before Columbus.” That is hardly surprising. For years we have pointed out that such results are only to be expected as long as people insist on looking for the wrong things in the wrong places. How could an archaeologist, of all people, hope to prove “that the Indians descended from the Jews, or that Christianity was known in the New World before Columbus”? (*Since Cumorah*, Salt Lake City, 1967, p. 162)

On pages 243-244 of the same book, Dr. Nibley admits that there is no real archaeological evidence to prove that the Nephites ever existed:

From the first both Mormons and their opponents recognized the possibility of testing the Book of Mormon in a scientific way. The book described certain aspects of civilizations purporting to have existed in the New World in ancient times. Very well, where were the remains? A vast amount of time, energy, and patience has been expended in arguing about the interpretations of the scanty evidence that is available, but very little has been devoted

to the systematic search for more. Of course, almost any object could conceivably have some connection with the Book of Mormon, **but nothing short of an inscription** which could be read and roughly dated could bridge the gap between what might be called a pre-actualistic archaeology and contact with the realities of Nephite civilization.

The possibility that a great nation or empire that once dominated vast areas of land and flourished for centuries could actually get lost and stay lost in spite of every effort of men to discover its traces, has been demonstrated many times since Schliemann found the real world of the Mycenaeans. . . .

So it is with the Nephites. **All** that we have to go on to date is a written history. That does not mean that our Nephites are necessarily mythical, since the case of those Old World civilizations has taught us by now that the existence of written records which no one claims the credit of having invented, is in itself good if not the best evidence that a people really did exist. But as things stand we are still in the pre-archaeological and pre-anthropological stages of Book of Mormon study. Which means that there is nothing whatever that an anthropologist or archaeologist as such can say about the Book of Mormon. Nephite civilization was urban in nature, like the civilizations of Athens or Babylon, and was far more confined in space and time than either of them. It could just as easily and completely vanish from sight as did the worlds of Ugarit, Ur, or Cnossos; and until some physical remnant of it, no matter **how trivial**, has been identified beyond question, what can any student of physical remains possibly have to say about it? Everything written so far by anthropologists or archaeologists—even real archaeologists—about the Book of Mormon must be discounted, for the same reason that we must discount studies of the lost Atlantis: not because it did not exist, but because it **has not yet been found**. (*Since Cumorah*, 1967, pp. 243-244)

In an address to the Brigham Young University Archaeological Society, March 25, 1964, Fletcher B. Hammond frankly stated that

there does **not** yet appear any artifact that we Latter-day Saints can present to the world—and prove by any scientific rule—that such artifact is conclusive proof of any part of the Book of Mormon. The lack of certainty in Book of Mormon land marks justifies the conclusion that there must have been extensive land-changes in Mesoamerica during the last 1500 years; and such appears to be factual. (*Geography of the Book of Mormon*, by Fletcher B. Hammond, an address given March 25, 1964, BYU, p. 5)

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn remarked that he was “strongly of the opinion that at the present time there are not many external evidences to the divinity of the Book of Mormon. Much that is often cited as evidence is, in my mind, wishful thinking” (*Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 1954, p. 203).

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, admits that archaeology does not prove the Book of Mormon:

We have no authentic evidence that archaeologists have depended on what is written in the Book of Mormon to aid them in their scientific research. . . .

It is the personal opinion of the writer that the Lord does **not** intend that the Book of Mormon, at least at the present time, shall be proved true by any archaeological findings. (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 2, Salt Lake City, 1958, pp. 95-96)

## Mormon Scholars Face the Truth

Dee Green, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Weber State College, has written an article for *Dialogue*. This article is very critical of “Book of Mormon archaeologists.” This is very significant because Mr. Green was at one time deeply involved in archaeological work at Brigham Young University. In 1953-54 he served as Assistant Editor of the *University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, and in 1958-61 he served as Editor. In his article for *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Dee F. Green said:

Those volumes which most flagrantly ignore time and space and most radically distort, misinterpret, or ignore portions of the archaeological evidence are the popular Farnsworth volumes. Also inadequate, from a professional archaeologist’s point of view, are the well intentioned volumes by Milton R. Hunter and a number of smaller pamphlets and works by various authors. . . .

New World-Old World comparisons have been less popular but equally fraught with problems. The best known examples are the two volumes by Nibley which suffer from an overdose of “Old Worlditis.” In Near Eastern philology and history, Nibley has no peers in the Church—and probably few outside it—but he does **not** know New World culture history well, and his writing ignores the considerable indigenous elements in favor of exclusively Old World patterns. . . . Having spent a considerable portion of the past ten years functioning as a scientist dealing with New World archaeology, I find that nothing in so-called Book of Mormon archaeology materially affects my religious commitment one way or the other, and I do not see that the archaeological myths so common in our proselytizing program enhance the process of true conversion. . . .

The first **myth** we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology **exists**. Titles on books full of archaeological half-truths, dilettanti on the peripheries of American archaeology calling themselves Book of Mormon archaeologists regardless of their education, and a Department of Archaeology at BYU devoted to the production of Book of Mormon archaeologists do **not** insure that Book of Mormon archaeology really exists. If one is to study Book of Mormon archaeology, then one must have a corpus of data with which to deal. We do **not**. The Book of Mormon is really there so one can have Book of Mormon studies, and archaeology is really there so one can study archaeology, but the two are not wed. At least they are not wed in reality since **no** Book of Mormon location is known with reference to modern topography. Biblical archaeology can be studied because we do know where Jerusalem and Jericho were and are, but we do **not** know where Zarahemla and Bountiful (nor any location for that matter) were or are. It would seem then that a concentration on geography should be the first order of business, but we have already seen that twenty years of such an approach has left us **empty-handed**. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pp. 74, 76, 77, 78)

In a footnote on page 77 of the same article, Dee Green stated:

With the single exception of Ross T. Christensen, no individual ever educated in the former BYU Archaeology Department considers himself a Book of Mormon Archae[o]logist. In fact, most of those who graduated have not pursued careers in anth[r]opology nor its sub-discipline archaeology, and those few of us who have become professionals have consistently found our early, BYU training highly inadequate and the points of view expressed there largely uninformed and sterile.

While we found Dee F. Green’s admissions rather startling, they cannot begin to compare with the surprise we received on December 2, 1970, when we received a visit from Thomas Stuart Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson has devoted a great deal of his life trying to prove the Book of Mormon by archaeology and is recognized by the Mormon people as a great defender of the faith. He has written at least three books on the subject—one of them in collaboration with Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of the Seventy. On the jacket to his book, *One Fold and One Shepherd*, 1962, we find the following:

Thomas Stuart Ferguson, 47, President of the New World Archaeological Foundation, is a distinguished student of the earliest high civilizations of the New World. He, with Dr. A. V. Kidder, dean of Central American archaeologists, first planned the New World Archaeological Foundation in 1952. . . . He raised \$225,000 for the field work, incorporated the Foundation (being an attorney), assisted in the initial explorations in Central America and Mexico and has



actively directed the affairs of the Foundation since its inception.

John L. Sorenson gives this information:

... M. Wells Jakeman and Thomas Ferguson (and to some extent Milton Hunter), ... emphasized the documentary traditions and certain archaeological and geographical features of Mexico and Central America, placed in alignment with the Book of Mormon account. ... Ferguson produced a sort of landmark book, with Hunter's collaboration, and then went on to organize the New World Archaeological Foundation. His rationale, unlike that of Jakeman, was that work in archaeology necessary to clarify the place of the Book of Mormon account would have to be done in collaboration with non-Mormon experts, not in isolation from them. Thirteen years of changes in the NWAFF have seen it become converted into an element in the BYU structure and gain a respected position as a research agency in Mesoamerican archaeology, ... (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring, 1966, p. 145)

Thomas Stuart Ferguson really believed that archaeology would prove the Book of Mormon. In his book *One Fold And One Shepherd*, page 263, he stated:

The important thing now is to continue the digging at an accelerated pace in order to find more inscriptions dating to Book-of-Mormon times. Eventually we should find decipherable inscriptions in modified (reformed) Egyptian, in a modified or pure Hebrew or in cuneiform, referring to some unique person, place or event in the Book of Mormon.

In 1962 Mr. Ferguson wrote this statement concerning the Book of Mormon: "Powerful evidences sustaining the book are accumulating, not the least of which are the gold plates found in Iran" (*Improvement Era*, April 1962, p. 271).

The first indication we had that Mr. Ferguson was losing his faith in Mormonism was just after Joseph Smith's Egyptian Papyri were rediscovered. In 1968 he wrote us a letter saying that we were "doing a great thing—getting out some truth on the Book of Abraham."

Later we heard a rumor that he had given up Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham, but this hardly prepared us for his visit on December 2, 1970. At that time, Thomas Stuart Ferguson told us frankly that he had not only given up the Book of Abraham, but that he had come to the conclusion that Joseph Smith was not a prophet and that Mormonism was not true. He told us that he had spent 25 years trying to prove Mormonism, but had finally come to the conclusion that his work had been in vain. He said that his training in law had taught him how to weigh evidence and that the case against Joseph Smith was absolutely devastating and could not be explained away.

Mr. Ferguson was faced with a dilemma, for the Mormon Church had just given him a large grant (\$100,000 or more) to carry on the archaeological research of the New World Archaeological Foundation. He felt, however, that the New World Archaeological Foundation was doing legitimate archaeological work, and therefore he intended to continue this work. Dee F. Green also feels that the New World Archaeological Foundation does honest work:

What I have chosen to call the Back-Door Approach is characteristic of the Brigham Young University New World Archaeological Foundation, an organization begun in the middle 1950's by Thomas S. Ferguson. It was eventually taken over by the Church and based at BYU, with a special Church committee under the direction of Elder Howard W. Hunter given jurisdiction over its direction and finances. ... It was made quite plain to me in 1963 when I was first employed by the BYU-NWAFF that my opinions with regard to Book of Mormon archaeology were to be kept to myself, and my field report was to be kept entirely from any such references. I welcomed the instruction as refreshing after my earlier days at BYU when everything the archaeology department did had to be "scripturally" related. ...

Just how much the foundation is doing to advance the cause of Book of Mormon archaeology depends on one's point of view about Book of Mormon archaeology. There have been no spectacular finds (from the Book of Mormon point of view), no Zarahemlas discovered, no gold plates brought to light, no horses uncovered, and King Benjamin's tomb remains unexcavated. But the rewards to the

Church of the foundation's work, while a little elusive to the layman and the "seekers after a sign," will prove to be considerable in the perspective of history. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pp. 76-77)

From 1948 to 1961 the Department of Archaeology at Brigham Young University sent "five archaeological expeditions to Middle America," but no evidence for the Nephites was discovered. Since 1961 the church leaders apparently decided that it was better to give the money for field research in Mesoamerica to Thomas Stuart Ferguson's New World Archaeological Foundation. This seems to have been a real blow to the Department of Archaeology. Ross T. Christensen, of Brigham Young University, accuses the New World Archaeological Foundation of having "no apparent interest in the archaeology of the Scriptures" (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society For Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, June, 1970, p. 9). In the same article Dr. Christensen said:

In 1961, the New World Archaeological Foundation was attached to Brigham Young University as an agency for field research in Mesoamerica. This organization had been a creation of Thomas Stuart Ferguson ... the Foundation has served BYU as its exclusive agent for archaeological excavations in Mesoamerica using **LDS Church funds**, and **large appropriations** have been spent in field research characterized by "strict scientific objectivity" and in the printing of a publication series which is "free from any scriptural interpretations" ...

(1) Since the attachment of the New World Archaeological Foundation to BYU in 1961 there has existed no departmental program of field research in Mesoamerica. While individual faculty members may obtain their own grants and make their own arrangements—as individuals—no field program organized by the Department as such and directed to the solution of specific Book of Mormon problems has been possible.

(2) The archaeology of the Scriptures, which once occupied the center of the picture, indeed was the very purpose for which the Department was created in the first place, now seems to be **only a peripheral field**. This great study, for which Elder Widtsoe and President McDonald had such high hopes and which from 1946 to 1959 occupied first place in the hearts of faculty and students alike and elicited such enthusiasm from them, has now been relegated to the position of simply a private research interest on the part of two of the Department's five faculty members. ... it cannot be said that BYU now officially supports through its archaeology department any kind of research program in the archaeology of the Scriptures. In other words, even though the Department's original assignment in this field has never been explicitly annulled, still no genuine official support is now forthcoming. (*Ibid.*, pp. 7-8)

It would appear, then, that the Mormon Church is in an embarrassing position with regard to archaeology and the Book of Mormon. After the Archaeology Department at Brigham Young University failed to find any real evidence for the Book of Mormon in Mesoamerica, the church leaders gave "large appropriations" to support Thomas Stuart Ferguson's New World Archaeological Foundation. This organization also failed to find evidence to prove the Book of Mormon, and the man who organized it, hoping that it would prove Mormonism, ended up losing his faith in the church. It will be interesting to see if the Mormon Church will continue to support the New World Archaeological Foundation under these circumstances.

## Nephite Coins and Chariots

Although the text of the Book of Mormon never uses the word "coin," it does speak of the Nephites having a money system. In Alma 11:4 we read: "Now these are the names of the different **pieces** of their gold, and of their silver, according to their value." The chapter heading for Alma 11 calls these "pieces" of gold and silver "**Nephite coins**." It seems logical, therefore, that some of these coins should be found by archaeologists if the story in the Book of Mormon is true. Welby W. Ricks stated:



I have here the Nephite money system, . . . since this was the Nephite money system . . . it will be possible in some future time that some of these may be found, since these were their pieces of gold and silver. . . . It is likely, . . . that they had something stamped on them or written on them. If there were something written on them, it is likely they would have used some of their ancient writing system, hence, possibly, some Hebrew or Egyptian. . . .

It is possible, archaeologically, to find some of these, since they had such a system. It seems reasonable to me that some day they will be found. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, BYU, December 5, 1959, pp. 54-55)

Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, related the following:

. . . we must realize that for some of these things we must rely on **testimony alone**. I did have the opportunity of taking the testimony of two persons . . . who brought what was reported to be a Nephite coin to the offices of the First Presidency around the turn of the century. He had served in the Southern States as a missionary. He came back from the Southern States with what he believed to be a Nephite coin. His mission president, Ben E. Rich, had so identified it. . . . He was told also by his mission president to take it to the First Presidency when he returned home. He did so. I took the testimony from him and from his wife, had it recorded and then read it to them and had them sign it. They testify that such a coin was delivered to the Church. I was also told in that interview that they were shown a **bag of coins** of similar nature, by members of the First Presidency. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, BYU, December 5, 1959, p. 55)

We feel that if the Mormon leaders really had a bag of Nephite coins they would have made them available so that archaeologists could have examined them to determine their authenticity. The fact that they have not done this throws a shadow of doubt upon the whole story.

Actually, archaeologists claim that the “inhabitants of North and South America did not use coins before the time of Columbus.” (Letter from Carl F. Miller, Smithsonian Institution, dated February 5, 1962)

John L. Sorenson, who was Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Brigham Young University, made this observation concerning Nephite coins:

For example, can we expect to locate Nephite coins as “proof” of their presence? The answer is **no**. In the first place the Book of Mormon, thank goodness, never mentions coins—only money. (“Coins of the Nephites” occurs only in a chapter heading inserted in the course of publishing the scripture.) . . . No authentic “coin” has ever been found in America under convincing circumstances, and some reported finds can be shown to be either fakes or otherwise unbelievable. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, BYU, December 5, 1959, p. 26)

The Book of Mormon also claims that the Nephites had “chariots” (3 Nephi 3:22), but so far archaeologists have not found any in the New World. The Mormon writer Paul R. Cheesman stated:

In the New World, many miniature models of wheeled vehicles have been found, but **no** counterparts in the larger, more practical design have been discovered as yet. The absence of these larger artifacts has caused some archaeologists to think that the practical use of the wheel was not known. Their assumption demands a stone or metallic wheel. However, there may have been large, wooden wheels in use. If there were large, wooden-wheeled vehicles, they probably would have decomposed by now. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1969, p. 188)

In our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, page 68, we have some information concerning some gigantic stones which some Mormon writers claim were used as wheels. Jack H. West would have us believe that these stones, which were “**nine feet** in diameter,” were used on ancient “wagons,” and that these wagons carried up to “300 tons” (600,000 pounds) with “apparent ease.” He also claimed that they traveled great distances and over “rugged mountains” with these wagons.

Dr. Paul R. Cheesman, of Brigham Young University, does not seem to accept the idea of such gigantic wheels for he states:

No large utilitarian wheels have been found to date in pre-Columbian America. However, many wheeled toys have been found; and usually toys are made to resemble the real thing. (*The Instructor*, November 1968, p. 430)

## Anthion Transcript

In the Book of Mormon, Mormon 9:32-33, we read:

And now, behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech.

And if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record.

The anti-Mormon writer M. T. Lamb makes these observations concerning the idea of Hebrews writing in Egyptian:

The Book of Mormon sets out with four very improbable and really absurd statements.

I. The first is that Lehi and his family used the Egyptian language. . . .

There are a multitude of reasons that make such a statement altogether improbable. In the first place, Lehi had lived all his lifetime, . . . in the city of Jerusalem, surrounded constantly by those who spoke only the Hebrew language. Had he been an Egyptian by birth, and with loving tenderness clung to his native tongue, the above statement would have a very different look. But Lehi was a Hebrew, a pure Hebrew, was born and reared in the city of Jerusalem, with family relationships and social surroundings all Hebraistic. In the second place, the Jews hated the Egyptians with a bitter hatred, and it is therefore inconceivable that a trueborn Jew a real lover of his own people, loyal and patriotic as he professes to have been willing thus to insult his people, or that the Jews around him would have endured the insult. In the third place, the ancient Jew had an unusual veneration for his mother tongue, the sacred Hebrew. . . . the language in which God himself had spoken from Sinai; the language in which all their sacred books had been written . . . the language in which the daily services at the temple were conducted. . . . Now that such a man with such a venerated language could have accepted instead the Egyptian tongue, which was associated only with ignominy and dishonor, [is] the height of absurdity. . . .

2. The second statement is still more objectionable—that there were found in the possession of a man by the name of Laban, a relative of Lehi’s, and also a resident of the city of Jerusalem, certain brass plates upon which were engraven, in the Egyptian language, the five books of Moses, containing the law, the entire history of the Jews from the first down to Laban’s time, including the Psalms, and all the prophets who had written down to the same date, . . . In other words, these brass plates contained all of the Old Testament as we have it, that had been written up to that time, six hundred years before Christ. . . . All this engraven in the Egyptian language . . . This is more improbable and absurd than the first statement. (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 89-91)

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn admits that this is a real problem:

The point at issue is not that Father Lehi, the Jew, could read and understand Egyptian, though this is surprising enough . . .

No, the big question is how the scripture of the Jews (official or otherwise) came to be written in Egyptian. It is hardly enough to say that the Jews had a long and intimate association with Egypt. That was long before the days of most Hebrew scriptures. Nor does it help very much to remind ourselves that probably the Egyptian characters require less space than the Hebrew, since we have little knowledge of other Hebrew sacred writings preserved in that language. . . .

If I were to suggest what I think to be the most insistent problem for Book-of-Mormon scholarship, I should unquestionably name this one: account for the Egyptian language on the Plates of Brass, and the Brass Plates themselves! (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, p. 81)

It is interesting to note that Dr. Hugh Nibley feels that “reformed Egyptian” came from the Egyptian script known as demotic, and he states that demotic was “the most awkward, difficult, and impractical system of writing ever devised by man!” (*Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites*, Salt Lake City, 1952, p. 16). On page 15 of the same book Dr. Nibley says that “the Persian conquerors of Egypt learned Aramaic instead of Egyptian because the Egyptian script was too clumsy and hard to learn.”

However this may be, Joseph Smith claimed that he made a copy of some of the characters on the gold plates and that Martin Harris showed them to Professor Charles Anthon, in New York. Joseph Smith quoted Martin Harris as saying:

I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyric, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him.

He then said to me, “Let me see that certificate.” I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying, that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him, he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, “I cannot read a sealed book.” I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 20)

We do not think that Professor Anthon could have made the statement attributed to him in Joseph Smith’s history. Even Mormon writers question the accuracy of some of the statements in this report. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the BYU, states:

In relation to the last point, when Professor Anthon is reported to have said that the characters “were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyric, and Arabic,” we can readily believe that he might have said “Egyptian” and “Arabic,” but if he said “Chaldaic” and “Assyric,” what did he mean by those terms? Did he mean “Hebrew” and “cuneiform” or “cuneiform” and “Syriac” characters? Or, if he actually said the two words, was he only attempting in a general way to indicate a conglomerate of characters? The answers are not too important, but they illustrate our point that some minor matters relating to Martin Harris’ interview with Professor Anthon might not have been correctly reported. We must also keep in mind that Martin Harris was no linguist, and in his report to the prophet he might have unwittingly misinterpreted some of Professor Anthon’s statements concerning translation. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, by Sidney B. Sperry, Salt Lake City, 1964, pp. 55-56)

The most important question concerning Martin Harris’ visit to Charles Anthon, however, is whether Prof. Anthon said that the characters were “true characters” and that “the translation was correct.” In a letter dated February 17, 1834, Professor Anthon claimed that the “whole story” was false:

“The whole story about my pronouncing the Mormon inscription to be reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics is perfectly false. Some years ago, a plain, apparently simple-hearted farmer called on me with a note from Dr. Mitchell, of our city, now dead, requesting me

to decipher, if possible, the paper which the farmer would hand me. Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick—perhaps a hoax. . . . I have frequently conversed with friends on the subject since the Mormon excitement began, and well remember that the paper contained anything else but Egyptian hieroglyphics.” (Letter by Professor Charles Anthon, as quoted in *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 103)

B. H. Roberts admitted that the “statements of Professor Anthon and Martin Harris are very contradictory,” but he states that Professor Anthon wrote another letter in 1841 which contains a few statements that are not in harmony with the earlier letter (see *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 100-109). However this may be, in both letters Anthon stated that the characters were **not** genuine. Some Mormon writers are willing to admit that Anthon could not have claimed that the characters were correctly translated. Dr. Ross T. Christensen, of the B.Y.U., stated:

During this same year, Martin Harris took the “Anthon transcript” to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:63-65.) Professor Anthon, by the answer that he gave to Martin Harris (as told by Harris to Joseph Smith; and I assume that it was correctly told), demonstrated that he was willing to claim knowledge in the field of philology which I do not believe existed on the earth at that time. “. . . The translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian,” he told Harris. (verse 64.) I do not believe he knew what he was talking about; he could not have known whether it was a correct translation. For one thing, Egyptian writing had not yet been deciphered in 1828. For another thing, it was not Egyptian that he was dealing with—that is, not any of the forms of Egyptian now known to scholars. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, BYU, December 5, 1959, p. 10)

The Mormon scholar Stanley B. Kimball frankly admits that “Whatever they [Anthon and Mitchell] said respecting the correctness of the translations cannot be taken too seriously” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1970, p. 335). Dr. Kimball also made these comments concerning this matter:

It is entirely possible, of course, that they said nothing at all about the translation, but only remarked that the transcription was correct, for in 1828 neither Anthon, Mitchill (nor anyone else in the world for that matter) had seen much translated from the Egyptian. It is not difficult to understand how a man of Harris’ background could have mistaken transcription for translation. Perhaps Harris was so intent on fulfilling a scriptural prophecy that he heard only what he wanted to hear. . . .

In the case of Dr. Mitchill, aside from the above mentioned facts that he was in his youth a student of the classics and had at least a reading ability of several languages, no other possible evidence of a competence in Egyptian studies has come to light. . . . a ten-page bibliography of his writings indicates he never published anything regarding any language. It appears then that Mitchill could have given Harris only a very superficial opinion regarding the transcript. . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 335-336)

According to Mormon historians “a fragment of the transcript of the Book of Mormon characters” which was submitted to Professor Anthon is still in existence (see *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 100). On the next page the reader will find a photograph of the Anthon Transcript.

We know of three Egyptologists who have recently examined the Anthon Transcript. One felt that the characters resembled demotic. Another thought they looked like abbreviated hieratic, and the third stated that they were nothing but “doodlings.” It is possible, of course, that Joseph Smith copied the characters from some book containing material about Egypt. It should be remembered

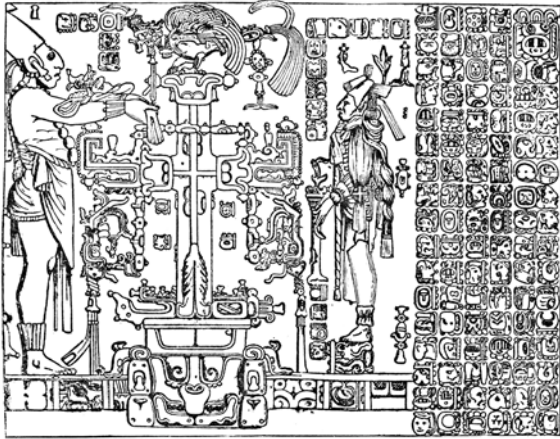






over ruined doorways and arches, upon the sides and backs of hideous looking idols carved in stone, upon marble slabs, on the sides of immense pillars, here and there through the ruins of magnificent palaces and monster heathen temples. . . .

We present the reader some very good specimens of these hieroglyphics copied from actual photographs.



Tablet of the Cross



Hieroglyphics on the Copan Statue

These same hieroglyphics have been preserved in other forms—for the ancient Mayas had books, real books, a large number of which were found in Central America upon its occupation by the Spaniards 300 years ago—but ruthlessly destroyed by the superstitious Catholic priests. An examination of the three that are now known to be preserved, shows the same characters that are found upon the stone tablets, idols, etc., as seen in the cuts—and represent the actual written language of the ancient Mayas—a people who are known to have occupied Central America, and been the sole occupants of a portion of that country at the very time, and covering the whole period, when, according to the Book of Mormon, the Nephites lived and flourished there.

We ask the candid reader carefully to examine these characters, and then look back again to page 261. [See page 106 of this book] Those are the characters Joseph Smith tells us were universally used in Central America 1,500 and 2,000 years ago—while the ruins, the engraved stones, the chiselled marble, tell us that these were the characters actually used in that locality, and at that time. Look at the two attentively—see if you can discover any likeness whatever between them. A woeful fatality, is it not? that there should not happen to be even one of Mr. Smith's characters that bears a family likeness, or the least particle of resemblance to the characters actually used by the ancient inhabitants of Central America!

. . . the Book of Mormon tells us of a civilization extending generally over both continents. In fact, of a period covering nearly 200

years, when the entire population of both continents were converted and actually enrolled as members of the churches everywhere organized. During all this happy time the arts of war were forgotten and the highest possible christian civilization was enjoyed. During all this period the people were not only rapidly increasing in numbers, but also in wealth, in the general prevalence of education. . . .

We should, therefore, certainly expect to find, in every portion of both continents, the same evidences of an ancient civilization as are found in Central America. We ought to find not only the remains of great cities, filled with the ruins of magnificent temples and palaces all through these “valleys of the mountains,” through the various states and territories and all over South America as well—but especially among these ruined temples and over the doorways of palatial residences we should find, in thousands of places, these reformed Egyptian characters engraved upon marble blocks and granite pillars, brass plates by the thousand, inscribed tablets of gold and silver, remnants of old parchment leaves with passages of scripture, histories of wars, lives of sages and philosophers, textbooks for schools, poetic effusions from many a Homer and Virgil, eloquent sermons, and prophecies by the cart load, scattered here and there amid the rubbish of ten thousand deserted and ruined cities all over both these broad continents.

But need we say that just the contrary of all this is found to be true. . . . It would therefore be sheer nonsense to imagine that the assertions of the Book of Mormon may after all have been true, but that through the lapse of time all traces of such a written language may have disappeared. Stone and marble, and gold and silver, and copper and brass are not liable to disappear in the brief period of 1500 years. (*The Golden Bible*, by M. T. Lamb, pp. 259-272)

In 1959 the Mormon archaeologist Ross T. Christensen frankly admitted that Joseph Smith's “reformed Egyptian” had not been found:

It was “reformed” Egyptian (cf. Mormon 9:32.), a form of writing which we have not yet identified in the archaeological material available to us. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, BYU, 1964 ed., p. 10)

Dr. John L. Sorenson, who was Assistant Professor of Anthropology at BYU, made this statement:

I do not believe that any neutral-but-interested jury would be convinced today by any evidence that is at hand that Zarahemla has been found, that **any** Egyptian writing has been found in the New World, that **any** Semitic language has been found in the New World, or any other of these specific kinds of proof. I do not believe that we have sufficiently convincing evidence—that is, convincing to those who do not already want to believe—of this nature. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, pp. 26-27)

As we have already shown, a set of gold plates inscribed with “mixed Anthon Transcript and Maya-like characters” was reported to have been found a few years ago. Archaeologists at the Brigham Young University, however, denounced these plates as forgeries:

Dr. Jakeman, as well as Dr. Ross T. Christensen also of the archaeology department, feel that these plates are **not** of ancient origin, because of the mixing, in the inscriptions, of symbols from at least two different writing systems widely separated in time. . . .

But even stronger indication that the plates are **not** of ancient origin or authentic, is the near-certainty that the Aztec symbols were copied from one of the two surviving Aztec hieroglyphic manuscripts. . . .

From a preliminary investigation, then, it would appear that these gold plates from Mexico are **forgeries**, and that a **serious fraud** has been committed. . . . (*University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, BYU, January 17, 1962, p. 4)

For more information on this matter see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 2, pp. 37-38.

According to the Mormons, many books and records were kept by the Nephites:

And now there are many records kept of the proceedings of this people, by many of this people, which are particular and very large, concerning them. . . . there are many books and many records of every kind; and they have been kept chiefly by the Nephites. (Book of Mormon, Helaman 3:13, 15)

The Book of Mormon also states that the Nephites wrote in Hebrew as well as in “reformed Egyptian” (Mormon 9:33). Therefore, we should expect to find a great deal of Hebrew as well as Egyptian writing in the New World. The statement issued by the Smithsonian Institution, however, contains this comment concerning Egyptian and Hebrew writing in the New World:

5. We know of no authentic cases of ancient Egyptian or Hebrew writing having been found in the New World. Reports of findings of Egyptian influence in the Mexican and Central American areas have been published in newspapers and magazines from time to time, but thus far no reputable Egyptologist has been able to discover any relationship between Mexican remains and those in Egypt.

John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, made this statement in a letter to Marvin Cowan:

From time to time there are allegations that picture writing has been found in America. For example, carved on the sides of rock canyons. In no case has a professional Egyptologist been able to recognize these characters as Egyptian hieroglyphs. From our standpoint there is no such language as “reformed Egyptian.” (Letter from John A. Wilson, dated March 16, 1966)

Richard A. Parker, Dept. of Egyptology at Brown University, made this statement: “No Egyptian writing has been found in this hemisphere to my knowledge” (Letter from Richard A. Parker to Marvin Cowan, dated March 22, 1966). In the same letter Richard A. Parker stated: “I do not know of any language such as Reformed Egyptian.”

Frank H. H. Roberts, of the Smithsonian Institution, made this statement in a letter dated Oct. 10, 1958:

To the best of my knowledge no authentic Hebrew or Egyptian writings have ever been found in the New World. A number of years ago the existence of an extensive Hebrew inscription was reported from New Mexico. It had been cut in the face of a cliff. Careful examination by linguists familiar with Hebrew writings indicated that the inscription was not genuine and probably was quite recent in age. I knew the late Dr. Breasted of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago very well and on several occasions heard him specifically state that he had never seen anything Egyptian in the New World. He was a recognized authority on Egypt and an outstanding scholar in Egyptian hieroglyphics. I was at the Maya city of Chichen Itza in Yucatan in 1932 when Dr. Breasted spent two weeks studying the ruins and inscriptions at that location as well as at several other cities in the area, and at the end of the period he was very emphatic about the total lack of evidence for any Egyptian influence. (Letter from Frank H. H. Roberts, as quoted in *True Archeological Data Versus Book of Mormon*, Utah Christian Tract Society, Calif., pp. 6, 7)

## Bat Creek Stone

On October 19, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* published the following:

NEW YORK—A Brandeis University professor said Sunday evidence has been discovered that Jews fleeing Romans in the Middle East came west and discovered America 1,000 years before Columbus.

Cyrus H. Gordon, professor of Mediterranean Studies at Brandeis, said the evidence is an inscription found in a burial mound in Tennessee in 1885.

The inscriptions [sic], he said, was found on a stone under one of nine skeletons in the mound, but when the inscription was photographed and published by the Smithsonian Institution in 1894, it was printed upside down and its significance went unnoticed. The stone is at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington. . . .

Upon studying the inscription, Gordon said, he discovered that its five letters are in the writing style of Canaan, the “promised land” of the Israelites somewhere between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean.

The fifth letter of the inscription, Gordon said, corresponds to the style of writing found on Hebrew coins of the Roman period. He translates the inscription to read “or the land of Judah.”

“The archeological circumstances of the discovery,” Gordon said, “rule out any chance of fraud or forgery and the inscription attests to a migration of Jews . . . probably to escape the long hand of Rome after the disastrous Jewish defeats in 70 and 135 A.D.” . . .

Gordon said the inscription was found in a burial mound at Bat Creek, Tenn., in 1885 by Cyrus Thomas, who worked with the Smithsonian.

“Various pieces of evidence point in the direction of migrations from the Mediterranean in Roman times,” Gordon said. “The cornerstone of the historic reconstruction is at present the Bat Creek inscription because it was found in an unimpeachable archeological context under the direction of professional archeologists working for the prestigious Smithsonian Institution.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 19, 1970)

The following is a picture of the Bat Creek stone.



Since Dr. Gordon claimed that Hebrew characters were inscribed on this stone, we felt that we should do some research with regard to its authenticity. In a letter dated Oct. 18, 1970, Dr. Gordon stated:

Cyrus Thomas published the inscription upside down and presumed it to be Cherokee, although the writing bears no resemblance to the Cherokee syllabary. It remained for Dr. Mahan to turn the published photograph of the inscription upside down and see that the characters were in the ancient script of Canaan.

We submitted a photograph of this stone to a noted Semitist. He claimed that there is “no stage of script in Hebrew or Aramaic to which these letters can belong as far as they are preserved.” Unfortunately, we feel that this answer was dictated more by a prejudice against Dr. Gordon’s work than by a careful examination of the stone in question. Our research seems to show that the characters are Semitic. In our work *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pages 84-91, we devote a great deal of space to this stone and the translation of the characters. We demonstrate that the inscription is written in ancient “Canaanite” characters, but we stated that this “does not necessarily mean that the inscription is genuine or that the stone was inscribed in ancient times.”

Cyrus Gordon’s suggestion that the inscription resembles characters on Jewish coins is very tempting, but we must also consider the fact that similar characters were used by other people such as the Phoenicians and Moabites.

It is interesting to note that Joseph Corey Ayoob knew of this stone long before Dr. Gordon made it famous. He feels that it is a Phoenician inscription and translates it as follows: “The Voice of Death” (*Ancient Inscriptions in the New World*, vol. 1, p. 14, 1964, Aliquippa, Pa.).

Because of the many forgeries committed in the past, scholars are very cautious with regard to the Bat Creek inscription. *Newsweek Magazine*, October 26, 1970, page 65, stated that Gordon’s endorsement of the inscription did not “immediately overcome the skepticism of many prominent archeologists, for there have been too many similar stones and artifacts uncovered and later proved to be fraudulent not to make other scientists suspicious.”



We consulted Frank Moore Cross, Jr., of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. His brief reply seems to indicate that he considers the inscription a forgery, although he is willing to admit that it is an imitation of Canaanite script: "I have examined this. Add it to the list of pseudo-Canaanite."

Joseph A. Fitzmyer, of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, said that the characters on the Bat Creek Stone looked like "very ancient Hebrew forms," but he was "very skeptical about the genuinity of the inscription" (see *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, p. 86).

In Appendix 2 to our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, we wrote the following concerning the Bat Creek Stone:

Now, even if we were to assume that the Bat Creek Stone is authentic, it does not necessarily prove that the person who owned it was a Jew or that there was a migration of Jews to America in ancient times. In this regard it is interesting to note that Joseph Smith owned some genuine Egyptian papyri, and it has been suggested that he may have given some fragments of this papyri to the Indians. Jay M. Todd, a Mormon writer, states:

During the Indians' stay, . . . the Prophet may have given them either pages from the *Times and Seasons*, which featured Book of Abraham facsimiles, or perhaps some actual papyrus fragments or both. . . . the Prophet may have wished to give the Indians a personal token, something of value or of antiquity to demonstrate his affection and bond with them. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 280)

Now, if some of the papyrus was discovered in a grave with an Indian, a person might assume that the Indian was really an Egyptian. Such a conclusion, however, would be entirely incorrect.

From his article in *Argosy*, it appears that Dr. Gordon is not certain whether the Bat Creek Stone originally came from America or from the Old World: "Then the geologists will tell us the geographical spread of the actual stone on which the inscription was carved. I would like to know whether it was made here or in the old country." (*Argosy*, January 1971, p. 27) If the stone was inscribed in the Old World it could have been brought here and obtained by the Indians after the time of Columbus, or the Indians could have found it in some ancient shipwreck. A great deal depends on when the stone was actually deposited in the mound. The archaeologist Cyrus Thomas felt that the burial was made sometime after 1821, but Dr. Gordon maintains that "the tomb could not have been of a recent time. (How long does it take for a tree's roots to penetrate five feet and grow thick enough to create an obstacle?) I would say that Thomas's interpretation of the text came about simply because he was brainwashed by the theories of the day, . . . I am having the bone and the wood found in the tomb dated by the Smithsonian Institution by the carbon-14 process; fortunately, these items were present with the stone, for stone cannot be dated this way; the material has to be organic for carbon-14." (*Argosy*, January 1971, p. 27) We have written to Smithsonian Institution for the results of the carbon-14 tests; but, unfortunately, they have decided not to make these tests. Nevertheless, they indicate they are doing some research with regard to the artifacts. In a letter dated January 15, 1971, George E. Phebus, Supervisor, Processing Lab., Department of Anthropology, made these comments:

Current research on the "Bat Creek Stone" is continuing. To date, the brass bracelets have been analyzed and the results are **not** favorable to Dr. Gordon's interpretation. The statement in *Argosy* that certain associated artifacts will be C-14 dated is in error. To do so it would require the complete destruction of these specimens and that is not desirable. Besides, a C-14 date would relate only to the burial and not necessarily date the stone. (Letter from George E. Phebus, Smithsonian Institution, dated January 15, 1971)

(*Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, p. 90)

Since writing the above, the Smithsonian Institution has issued a statement which seems to invalidate Cyrus Gordon's work with regard to the Bat Creek Stone. This statement shows that the burial was not made until sometime in the 18th or 19th century:

#### THE BAT CREEK STONE

The Bat Creek Stone was excavated in 1885 from the Bat Creek burial mound in Loudon County, Tennessee. . . . The specimen and associated material continue to be analyzed and two definite opinions now exist regarding the inscriptions. One, that they are not Cherokee and the other that they are not genuine Semitic writing, although some characters appear as if someone were copying a few Hebraic letters from the alphabet.

Recent tests by our Conservation Laboratory on the brass bracelets found in the same grave definitely established that they are 18-19th century trade goods and not [do?] not have the chemical composition of brass of the Roman or early Semitic periods. (Statement by the Smithsonian Institution, mailed November 24, 1971)

The fact that the bracelets "are 18-19th century trade goods" proves that the burial could not have been made prior to that time. Dr. Gordon has already admitted that the brass bracelets were found with the same skeleton with which the inscribed stone was found:

. . . he was the one who carried the message chiseled into the little stone under his head when he was buried here. He also had a number of objects, including two brass bracelets, . . . (*Argosy*, January, 1971, p. 24)

Thus even if the inscription were authentic, there is no evidence to show that it was brought to America before the time of Columbus.

In support of his ideas Dr. Gordon appeals to the fact that Roman and Hebrew coins have been found in America:

In the 1820's, John Haywood, . . . gathered material for his book . . . Haywood describes Roman coins found in Tennessee and the adjacent states. Moreover, on 17 April 1967, the New York Yiddish newspaper *The Day-Jewish Journal* ran an article on Hebrew coins of the Bar Kokhba Rebellion (the second Jewish rebellion in 132-135 A.D.) found by farmers around Louisville, Hopkinsville and Clay City, Kentucky.

We do not feel that the presence of Hebrew coins in America provides a great deal of evidence that the Jews were in America in ancient times. Those who have read our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, will remember that Josiah Priest reported that an Indian found "a Roman coin" in Missouri and that "a Persian coin" was discovered "near a spring on the Ohio, some feet under ground; . . ." (*American Antiquities*, p. 52). Since people save ancient coins, they could have come to America in recent times. The Jewish coins were, of course, struck in the Old World by the Jews, but when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the "soldiers ran through the streets plundering, burning and killing" (*The Coins of the Jewish War of 66-73 C.E.*, p. 38). On page 80 of the same book we find the following: "What was left of the Shekels and the other money fell into the hands of the Roman soldiers. . . . the Shekels were melted down or hacked into pieces to be sold to the traders by weight. . . . On the other hand, the Roman soldiers were not interested at all in the bronze Prutot, which were entirely worthless to them. So they left them on the spot or took a few as souvenirs to their future garrisons." On page 43 of the same book, we find this statement: "Specimens of Shekels were also brought from Palestine by Christian pilgrims of the Middle Ages and given to the treasuries of churches and monasteries; . . ." Thus we see that ancient Hebrew coins might be found in almost any part of the world.

Dr. Gordon had to admit that "Neither the Latin nor the Hebrew coins from our Southeast made any impression on archaeologists or historians, partly because the coins were not excavated by professionals" (*Before Columbus*, New York, 1971, p. 179). The reader will remember that the Mormon archaeologist John L. Sorenson made this statement in 1959: "No authentic 'coin' has ever been found in America under convincing circumstances, and some reported finds can be shown to be either fakes or otherwise unbelievable."

At any rate, Dr. Gordon's conclusions with regard to



the Bat Creek inscription and Hebrew coins found in America cannot be used to support the claims of the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon states that the Nephites and Mulekites came over to America about 600 B.C., and it never mentions anyone coming from Jerusalem after that time. Dr. Gordon, however, would have us believe that the Bat Creek inscription is related to script found on Jewish coins dated “between 70 A.D. and 135 A.D.” He also states that “coins of the Bar Kokhba Rebellion, 132-135 A.D., have been found” in America. Now, since these coins were originally made in Palestine during the Bar Kokhba Rebellion, this would plainly show that they could not have been brought to the New World prior to 132-135 A.D. Therefore, if a person accepts Gordon’s ideas concerning the coins, he is forced to the conclusion that the “Near Eastern visitors in Tennessee” were **not** Nephites.

If the Mormons were to accept Cyrus Gordon’s claim that there were “Near Eastern visitors in Tennessee almost 2,000 years ago,” it could actually weaken their case for the Nephites. For instance, if there is any relationship between the language or customs of the Hebrews and the Indians (as the Mormons claim), Dr. Gordon’s theory could explain this, and there would be no need for the Nephites. The Mormons claim that a “White and Bearded God”—i.e., Quetzalcoatl—appeared to the Nephites, and that this was in reality “the appearance of the resurrected Lord to the Ancient Americans” (*Christ in Ancient America*, p. 48). If Gordon’s theories were to be accepted, however, Quetzalcoatl might be nothing more than a Jew who fled from the Romans after the death of Christ.

The Book of Mormon states that “there shall none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord” (2 Nephi 1:6). Dr. Gordon, however, feels that there were many visitors:

It isn’t only the Phoenicians, or Canaanites, or Minoans, or Greeks, or Romans—there have been many, many people who have been visiting America since the earliest times. In fact, our earliest visitors apparently were the Japanese from the Island of Kyushu. Pottery of a very early type has been discovered on the coast of Ecuador, associated with a carbon-14 date of about 3,000 B.C. (*Argosy*, January 1971, p. 27)

Cyrus Gordon feels that the “Near Eastern visitors in Tennessee” were only a “small, but I think an influential, minority, . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 26). He states that the Bat Creek inscription is the “cornerstone” of his theory, because “it was found in an unimpeachable archaeological context under the direction of professional archaeologists working for the prestigious Smithsonian Institution” (Letter dated October 18, 1970). He admits, however, that “Dr. Mahan ransacked the scientific literature from beginning to end in order to find such an inscription” (*Argosy*, January 1971, p. 27).

Now, if the Book of Mormon were a true history we would expect to find hundreds, if not thousands, of inscriptions written in Hebrew or reformed Egyptian. Dr. Gordon stated that the Bat Creek Stone was the only such inscription found in an “unimpeachable archaeological context.” It would appear now, however, that even this inscription is of no real value as evidence since it was not buried until the 18th or 19th century.

From statements published in the *Deseret News* it would appear that Dr. Gordon is trying to gain favor with Mormon scholars:

In archaeology, if two points of mutual interest tie in from different parts of the world, then that’s a fact establishing the relationship of the two areas or periods.

That’s what Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon, . . . told the 20th annual symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures at Brigham Young University Oct. 10.

Dr. Gordon was emphasizing that if it takes only one point of contact to make a fact, then the Book of Mormon has a thousand points in its favor.

“I am speaking academically and am not qualified to speak on the Book of Mormon itself. If I were to do that I would study it for three years before commenting. But there are many points in archaeology in its favor,” he said. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, October 17, 1970)

This is certainly a strange statement to be coming from a non-Mormon scholar. We feel that if Dr. Gordon really believed that the Book of Mormon might be true he would immediately begin a serious study of it. If the Book of Mormon were true, it would be the very key to understanding the ancient ruins in the New World—the very ruins Dr. Gordon is so interested in.

Although Dr. Gordon is a well known scholar, some scholars feel that he has become overzealous in his attempt to establish contacts between the Old and New World. We wrote to William F. Albright, who was one of the world’s most noted archaeologists, concerning the Bat Creek Stone. In his reply he stated:

Cyrus Gordon has been involved in several such discoveries and attempted rehabilitation of well-known old forgeries. . . .

The Paraibo find on which Cyrus Gordon gained so much publicity has been shown by Johannes Friedrich of West Berlin and Frank Cross of Harvard, writing in the scholarly review *Orientalia* (Rome, 1968), to be an unqualified forgery from the time of Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, when Oriental studies gained a brief popularity in Brazil, owing to the Emperor’s great interest in them. (Letter from William F. Albright to Jerald Tanner, dated December 7, 1970)

The Paraiba text, mentioned by Dr. Albright is a purported inscription telling that the Phoenicians came to America about 500 years before the time of Christ. In Appendix 2 of our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pages 80-83, we give evidence which indicates that this text is a forgery, and that Dr. Gordon made a mistake when he endorsed it.

## Fraudulent Inscriptions

Some Mormon archaeologists seem to be using caution with regard to purported discoveries. Welby W. Ricks, who was President of the University Archaeological Society at BYU, related the following:

Many requests have come to me from time to time for information about a certain inscription on stone found near Los Lunas, New Mexico, which contains extracts from the Ten Commandments in a Phoenician script, which type of writing was in existence in Palestine during Lehi’s day around 600 B.C. To find such a script on stone in the New World is indeed interesting, but upon translation for it to contain the Ten Commandments seems almost incredible.

To Latter-day Saints such a discovery would appear to agree with the Book of Mormon. But to accept such evidence at face value, i.e., without investigation, could be embarrassing to this Society as well as to the Latter-day Saint Church, especially if it were later shown to be fraudulent. Because of the position of the Church, we must exercise every caution, even greater-than-objective scholarship, if possible, to make sure any purported Hebrew (or Phoenician) writing found in the New World is genuine. . . .

It was in October, 1953, that a group of us—Dr. Milton R. Hunter, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, Dr. Hugh Nibley, Mr. (now Dr.) John L. Sorenson and myself—got together and made a trip to New Mexico to investigate the inscription. (*Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, BYU, 1964, p. 94)

Welby W. Ricks goes on to tell of their investigation of the purported inscription (see *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 19-20), and concludes by stating:

To conclude, I should like to list the evidences which make me believe the inscription is fraudulent:

(1) The characters in the stone were too fresh. They did not have any patination. If they had been of ancient date there would have been some patination, and certainly there would have been some in those inscriptions on top of the mesa. One might argue that the Ten Commandments

stone could have been covered up for centuries by sand, but the Phoenician inscriptions on top must surely be related to the one below. They also were without patination.

(2) The finding of the words, “Eva and Hobie, 3-13-30,” nearby, cut in the same size, depth, and freshness, is sufficient to create suspicion as to the origin of the Phoenician inscription.

(3) The finding of the dust of freshly cut stone still in the grooving suggests very recent origin.

(4) The making by the McCartys of an inscription in Phoenician characters on each of two stones to test for patination seems strange, indeed.

(5) The obvious lying about finding another inscription, “Temple of Toni”; the finding of the entrance at one time and not another; the finding of gold in the temple and not taking any out to prove it; and, above all, not being able to find it again—all this is fantastic beyond human limits of comprehension.

(6) The admission by Bill McCart that they were doing this to get money to sponsor a search for treasure in the malpais (lava remains) area, where there was supposedly the possibility of finding Spanish gold.

For these reasons and others I am fully convinced that the Ten Commandments stone found near Los Lunas, New Mexico, is a **fraud**. Its age does **not** go back into ancient times. It is probably from thirty to fifty years old, perhaps even dating to as late as March 13, 1930. (*Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, pp. 99-100)

Denis Brogan gives this interesting information concerning some “records” which were reported to have been found in Arizona:

My favourite story of the mythology of American discovery was the discovery in 1927 in Arizona, . . . of the records of a Roman-Jewish colony near Tucson. The colonists were Jews who had fled from Jerusalem in AD 70, and had, for some obscure reason, kept their records in the language of their conquerors. Arizona tourist agencies and chambers of commerce welcomed this discovery. After a couple of months, someone wrote in to the *New York World*, pointing out that all the Latin quotations in the inscriptions came from the pink section of *Le Petit Larousse*. (*Antiquity*, Cambridge, England, March 1968, pp. 17-18)

For more information on this matter see our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 20-21).

The Mormon archaeologist Ross T. Christensen claims that the “amount of evidence which points in the direction of authentication” of the Book of Mormon is “impressive,” but he seems to be puzzled by the lack of evidence for “reformed Egyptian” and Hebrew writing:

. . . the spirit of caution is urged, for the reason that there are a number of points where correspondence [between the Book of Mormon and the Old World] should have been found but to this date has not been. There seems to be no fully adequate explanation for the lack of such traits in the New World, required by the Book of Mormon, as Old World plants, smelted iron, and Near Eastern forms of writing. (*Progress in Archaeology*, BYU, 1963, p. 147)

Welby W. Ricks tries to explain away the absence of Hebrew writing in the following manner:

The Book of Mormon informs us that one of its peoples (the Nephites) had a knowledge of Hebrew script, which by the close of the Record had been somewhat modified. It naturally follows that evidence of Hebrew-like writing should be found in ancient America.

It has been well over a hundred years since the Book of Mormon was published, yet rather few finds of supposed Hebrew writings have been reported. This may be due, in part, to the hatred of the Lamanites for the Nephites. The Lamanites may have confiscated and destroyed many valuable Nephite records. Or, perhaps only the priests and a small educated class kept records. (*Progress in Archaeology*, p. 210)

We do not feel that this is an adequate explanation for the lack

of either Hebrew or reformed Egyptian, and we must agree with M. T. Lamb when he states:

We have found that the entire ancient history of this western world is flatly against the claims of the Book of Mormon. Mr. Smith has preserved a specimen of the characters found by him, as he professes, in the hill Cumorah, and which he would have us believe were the ancient characters in common use upon this continent 1500 years ago—but a large number of the real characters in use in Central America at that time have fortunately been preserved in imperishable marble, proving Mr. Smith’s characters a fraud. (*The Golden Bible*, p. 319)

While there is no archaeological evidence to support the idea that Nephites lived here, this does not completely close the door between the Old and New World. It is possible that some ships may have arrived in the New World before Columbus. Ross T. Christensen claims that there is a current in the Atlantic Ocean which might cause a ship to drift “from the Old World across the Atlantic to the West Indies.” Thor Heyerdahl recently drifted to the New World with a papyrus raft which was named after the Egyptian god *Ra*.

William F. Albright, a noted archaeologist, made this statement in a letter dated January 4, 1971:

Now, I would not for a moment doubt that there were involuntary visitors to the New World long before Columbus. I am perfectly willing to accept the certain movements across the Behring Strait and the Aleutian Islands and the recently demonstrated probability of derivation of a unique Ecuadorian pottery type from Japan very early. It is very likely that there were other visitors to Middle and South America from Pacific islands and highly probable that there were visitors from Europe and North Africa at many different periods. In such matters, one swallow does not make a summer, and there is certainly no evidence for any wholesale migration. (Letter from William F. Albright, dated January 4, 1971)

The Mormon scholar Carl Hugh Jones states that the Japanese pottery may create a “new problem” for Mormon archaeologists:

. . . there is ample evidence to support the statement that there was contact between Japan and Ecuador about 3000 BC. . . . If the professional archaeologist is now willing to let a boatload of Japanese reach the New World around the time of the rise of the ancient American civilizations, he may also be willing to accept boatloads of Mesopotamians and Israelites.

However, if the Jomon and the Book of Mormon peoples survived a voyage to the New World, so possibly did others. So now there is a new problem to contend with: we must identify and separate the landings made by Book of Mormon peoples from those of others. We can no longer state that any sudden appearance of traits of advanced culture, such as pottery, can be attributed entirely to the arrival of the Jaredites or Lehites. Thus the picture of the New World origins long held by Latter-day Saint students of archaeology—i.e., that the early hunters and gatherers came from Siberia by way of Bering Strait but the ancient civilizations developed entirely from the Book of Mormon colonies that came from the Near East in transoceanic migrations—must now be modified. We must now accept the probability that there were other transoceanic voyagers to the New World bringing with them ideas and artifacts from other advanced cultures of the Old World. . . .

To a Latter-day Saint, the Valdivia-Jomon transpacific-contact theory makes the problem of the origin of the ancient civilizations of the Americas more complex, but at the same time offers a validity test which can be used to confirm Book of Mormon connections, once they become apparent. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, BYU, September 8, 1969, pp. 5-6)

### Kinderhook Plates

On May 1, 1843, the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* reprinted the following from the *Quincy Whig*:



It appeared that a young man by the name of Wiley, a resident in Kinderhook, dreamed three nights in succession, that in a certain mound in the vicinity, there was treasures concealed . . . he came to the conclusion, to satisfy his mind by digging into the mound. . . . a company of ten or twelve repaired to the mound, . . . After penetrating the mound about 11 feet, they came to a bed of limestone, that had apparently been subjected to the action of fire, they removed the stone, which were small and easy to handle, to the depth of two feet more, when they found **six brass plates**, secured and fastened together by two iron wires, but which were so decayed, that they readily crumbled to dust upon being handled. The plates were so completely covered with rust as almost to obliterate the characters inscribed upon them; but after undergoing a chemical process, the inscriptions were brought out plain and distinct.

By whom these plates were deposited there must ever remain a secret, unless some one skilled in deciphering hieroglyphics, may be found to unravel the mystery. Some pretend to say, that Smith the Mormon leader, has the ability to read them. If he has, he will confer a great favor on the public by removing the mystery which hangs over them. We learn there was a Mormon present when the plates were found, who it is said, leaped for joy at the discovery, and remarked that it would go to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon—which it undoubtedly will. . . .

The plates above alluded to, were exhibited in this city last week, and are now, we understand, in Nauvoo, subject to the inspection of the Mormon Prophet. The public curiosity is greatly excited, and if Smith can decipher the hieroglyphics on the plates, he will do more towards throwing light on the early history of this continent, than any man now living. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, pp. 186-187)

At the top of the next column is a photograph of drawings which the Mormons made of the Kinderhook plates. We are showing only one side of each plate (see *History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 374-376).

In a letter written from Nauvoo, dated May 2, 1843, Charlotte Haven stated:

. . . Mr. Joshua Moore, . . . brought with him half a dozen thin pieces of brass, . . . in the form of a bell . . . They were recently found, he said, in a mound . . . When he showed them to Joseph, the latter said that the figures or writing on them was similar to that in which the Book of Mormon was written, and if Mr. Moore could leave them, he thought that by the help of revelation he would be able to translate them. So a sequel to that holy book may soon be expected. (*Overland Monthly*, December 1890, p. 630)

If Joseph Smith had not been murdered in June of 1844 it is very possible that he might have published a “translation” of the Kinderhook plates. On May 22, 1844, just a month before his death, the *Warsaw Signal* published the following statement:

Jo. had a facsimile taken, and engraved on wood, and it now appears from the statement of a writer in the *St. Louis Gazette*, that he is busy in translating them. The new work which Jo. is about to issue as a translation of these plates will be nothing more nor less than a sequel to the Book of Mormon; . . .

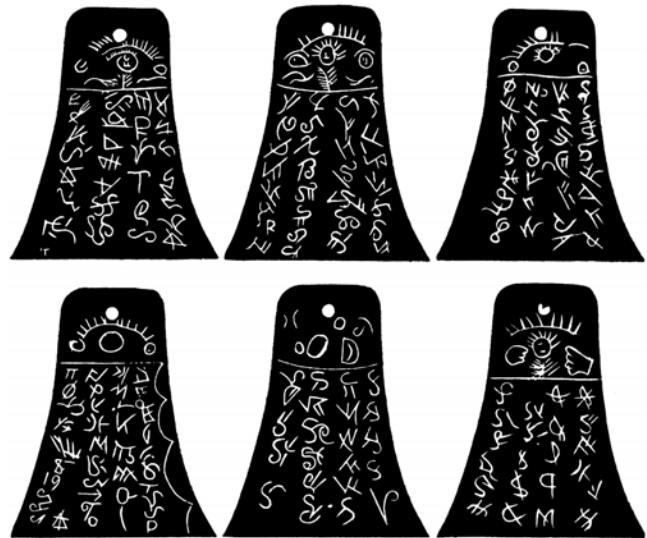
It is certainly possible that the Church Historian’s office has Joseph Smith’s unpublished work on the Kinderhook plates.

According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith did accept these plates as authentic and even claimed that he had translated a portion of them:

Monday, May, 1.—. . . I insert fac-similes of the six brass plates found near Kinderhook, . . .

I have **translated** a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham, through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of heaven and earth. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 372)

On January 15, 1844, this statement appeared in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons*:



Why does the circumstance of the plates recently found in a mound in Pike county, Ill., by Mr. Wiley, together with ethnology and a thousand other things, go to prove the Book of Mormon true?—Ans. Because it is true! (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 406)

A number of the citizens of Kinderhook certified that the plates were taken from the mound by R. Wiley:

We the citizens of Kinderhook, . . . certify and declare that . . . while excavating a large mound, in this vicinity, Mr. R. Wiley took from said mound, six brass plates of a bell shape, covered with ancient characters. Said plates were very much oxidated—the bands and rings on said plates mouldered into dust on a slight pressure. The above described plates we have handed to Mr. Sharp for the purpose of taking them to Nauvoo.

ROB'T WILEY,	W.P. HARRIS,
G.W.F. WARD,	W. LONGNECKER,
FAYETTE GRUBB,	IRA S. CURTIS,
GEO. DECKENSON,	W. FUGATE.
J.R. SHARP.	

(*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 186)

Unfortunately for the Mormon position, it was later discovered that the plates were forgeries, made for the purpose of tricking Joseph Smith. W. Fugate, one of those who signed the certificate, wrote the following in a letter to James T. Cobb:

Mound Station, Ill.  
June 30, 1879

Mr. Cobb:

I received your letter in regard to those plates, and will say in answer that they are a **humbug**, gotten up by Robert Wiley, Bridge Whitton and myself. . . . None of the nine persons who signed the certificate knew the secret, except Wiley and I.

We read in Pratt’s prophecy that “Truth is yet to spring out of the earth.” We concluded to prove the prophecy by way of a joke. We soon made our plans and executed them. Bridge Whitton cut them out of some pieces of copper; Wiley and I made the hieroglyphics by making impressions on beeswax and filling them with acid and putting it on the plates. When they were finished we put them together with rust made of nitric acid, old iron and lead, and bound them with a piece of hoop iron, covering them completely with the rust.

Our plans worked admirably. A certain Sunday was appointed for the digging. The night before, Wiley went to the Mound where he had previously dug to the depth of about eight feet, there being a flat rock that sounded hollow beneath, and put them under it. On the following morning quite a number of citizens were there to assist in the search, there being two Mormon elders present (Marsh and Sharp). The rock was soon removed but some time elapsed before the plates were discovered. I finally picked



them up and exclaimed, "A piece of pot metal!" Fayette Grubb snatched them from me and struck them against the rock and they fell to pieces. Dr. Harris examined them and said they had hieroglyphics on them. He took acid and removed the rust and they were soon out on exhibition. . . . Sharp, the Mormon Elder, leaped and shouted for joy and said, Satan had appeared to him and told him not to go (to the diggings), it was a hoax of Fugate and Wiley's, but at a later hour the Lord appeared and told him to go, the treasure was there. . . . a man assuming the name of Savage, . . . took them to Joe Smith. The same identical plates were returned to Wiley, who gave them to Professor McDowell, of St. Louis, for his Museum.

W. Fugate

(*The Kinderhook Plates*, by Welby W. Ricks, reprinted from the *Improvement Era*, September 1962)

At the time of the Civil War the Kinderhook plates were lost. M. Wilford Poulson, a former teacher at the BYU and a student of Mormon history, told us that he found one of the original Kinderhook plates in the Chicago Historical Society Museum, but it was mislabeled as one of the original gold plates of the Book of Mormon. The plate which he found has been identified as number 5 in the facsimiles found in the *History of the Church*. Except for an acid blotch on one side, the plate is in excellent condition. Mr. Poulson did a great deal of research concerning the Kinderhook plates and was convinced that they were made in the 1840's as W. Fugate claimed.

Welby W. Ricks, who was President of the BYU Archaeological Society, had another opinion concerning these plates. In September, 1962, he announced:

A recent rediscovery of one of the Kinderhook plates which was examined by Joseph Smith, Jun., reaffirms his prophetic calling and reveals the false statements made by one of the finders. . . .

The plates are now back in their original category of genuine.

What scholars may learn from this ancient record in future years or what may be translated by divine power is an exciting thought to contemplate.

This much remains. Joseph Smith, Jun., stands as a true prophet and translator of ancient records by divine means and all the world is invited to investigate the truth which has sprung out of the earth not only of the Kinderhook plates, but of the Book of Mormon as well. (*The Kinderhook Plates*, by Welby W. Ricks, reprinted from the *Improvement Era*, September 1962)

Mr. Ricks based his conclusion on the fact that "two non-LDS professional engravers" examined the plate and made an affidavit in which they stated that the plate "was engraved with a pointed instrument and not etched with acid." The reader will remember that W. Fugate claimed that the hieroglyphics were formed "by making impressions on beeswax and filling them with acid and putting it on the plates." Mr. Ricks feels that this contradiction is of such a nature that it invalidates Fugate's entire story. We cannot agree with Mr. Ricks concerning this matter for there is additional evidence which proves that the plates were forgeries.

During the summer of 1965 George M. Lawrence, a Mormon physicist, was given permission to examine and make "some non-destructive physical studies of the surviving plate." Mr. Lawrence has kindly allowed us to quote from his study, which he has recently revised. In the Summary he states:

The plate is not pure copper. It may be a low zinc brass or a bronze. The dimensions, tolerances, composition and workmanship are consistent with the facilities of an 1843 blacksmith shop and with the fraud stories of the original participants. The characteristics of the inscription grooves can be reproduced in great detail using the simple acid-wax technique, contrary to the judgement of the engravers. ("Report of a Physical Study of the Kinderhook Plate Number 5," by George M. Lawrence)

Mr. Lawrence originally submitted his study to the Brigham Young University Archaeological Society, but since they seemed reluctant to print it he allowed us to make public some of his research (see our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 28-29).

Mormon scholars will eventually have to come to grips with this problem, and John A. Wittorf has made a move in this direction. Although he still wants to maintain Joseph Smith's reputation as a translator, he cites George Lawrence's study and discusses the implications if the plates "are ultimately demonstrated to be fraudulent":

. . . a report of a physical examination of the plate in 1965 by George M. Lawrence, a Mormon physicist, contained the conclusion that:

The plate is neither pure copper nor ordinary brass. It may be a low zinc brass or a bronze. The dimensions, tolerances, composition and workmanship are consistent with the facilities of an 1843 blacksmith shop and with the fraud stories of the original participants. . . .

In view of present archaeological evidence, neither brass nor bronze appears to have been known in North America until European times. It is thought that the first bronze in the New World was probably made in Bolivia about AD 700. . . . In light of the known use of metal in North America, brass or bronze plates in an Illinois mound, bound together with what was reported to be a rusted iron ring, should be regarded **with suspicion**. However, this would not preclude the possibility of their having been brought into North America from elsewhere. . . .

Joseph Smith's behavior with regard to the Kinderhook plates is quite interesting when viewed in perspective. He made no attempt to purchase these artifacts on behalf of the Church, as he did in the case of the papyri from which the Book of Abraham was translated; he forwarded no specific claims for the plates with respect to the Book of Mormon, although he evidently approved of John Taylor's *Times and Seasons* editorial on the plates as evidence for the authenticity of the Book; and he left no indication that he was planning to utilize them for the production of another work of scripture as the *Quincy Whig*, with its headline "Material for Another Mormon Book," apparently expected him to do.

Accepting the find as **genuine**, Joseph had facsimile drawings of the plates made, presumably for future study. The **brevery of his translation** of "a portion of the plates" precludes the possibility that—if the plates are ultimately demonstrated to be fraudulent—his abilities as a translator of ancient scripts and languages can be called into question. His interpretation may have resulted from the recognition of resemblances between several characters on the plates and those on the Egyptian papyri, with which he had been laboring. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, BYU, October 1970, p. 7)

Although we are happy to see John A. Wittorf's honesty with regard to the Kinderhook plates, we cannot agree with him when he states that Joseph Smith's reputation as a translator will not be affected. We feel that Joseph Smith's work on the plates casts serious doubt upon his ability as a translator of "ancient scripts and languages." He definitely stated that he "translated a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of heaven and earth" (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 372). Now, in order to obtain this much information from the plates it would have been necessary to have translated quite a number of the characters, and a man who could make such a serious mistake with regard to the Kinderhook plates is just the type of man who would pretend to translate the Book of Abraham from Egyptian papyri which he knew nothing about. Since Joseph Smith's "translations" of both the Book of Abraham and the Kinderhook plates are concerned with descendants of Ham, it is obvious that he had the Negro question in mind.

Bruce Owens, another Mormon scholar, has been able

to shed some additional light on the Kinderhook plates. Mr. Owens wrote to the Smithsonian Institution concerning these plates, and on Nov. 14, 1968, he received a letter in which the following appeared:

In speaking of the Kinderhook plates, Mallery says (p. 760), speaking about them, that they were “. . . reported to bear a close resemblance to Chinese. This resemblance seemed not to be extraordinary when it was ascertained that the plate had been engraved by the village blacksmith, copied from the lid of a Chinese tea-chest.” (Letter from George Metcalf of the Smithsonian Institution, dated November 14, 1968)

Mr. Owens became interested in the idea that the characters might have been “copied from the lid of a Chinese tea-chest,” and submitted the facsimiles of the Kinderhook plates to scholars. On January 10, 1969, he received a letter from Charles T. Sylvester, of the Embassy of the United States of America, Taipei, Taiwan, which contained this information:

According to Professor Li Hsueh-chih of Academia Sinica and National Taiwan University the language on the inscriptions which you sent is that of the Lo tribe that lives in Yunnan Province in the southwest of mainland China. Unfortunately, Professor Li said that he could identify the writing but could not read the inscription . . .

On March 19, 1969, Bruce Owens received a letter from Kun Chang, Department of Oriental Languages, University of California, Berkeley. In this letter we find this statement: “The inscriptions enclosed seem to be the ideographs used by the Lolo tribes in Yunnan.”

It is very likely that the men who made the Kinderhook plates had access to a tea-chest. According to Joseph Smith’s mother, her husband received a tea-chest before they moved to Palmyra:

. . . the only thing which had been brought for Mr. Smith from China was a small chest of tea, which had been delivered into his care, for my husband. (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, Liverpool, 1853, p. 50)

From the research done by Bruce Owens and George Lawrence it is plain to see that the Kinderhook plates are fraudulent, and that they were made for the purpose of deceiving Joseph Smith, just as W. Fugate claimed.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed that the fact that Mr. Fugate waited 36 years to tell that the plates were made as a joke invalidates his story:

The fact that Fugate’s story was not told until thirty-six years after the event, and that he alone of all those who were connected with the event gives that version of it, is rather strong evidence that his story is the hoax, not the discovery of the plates, nor the engravings upon them. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 379, footnote)

Welby W. Ricks uses the same argument in his article printed in the *Improvement Era* in an attempt to undermine the story.

Actually, there is evidence that the hoax was exposed many years before Fugate made his affidavit and that at least one other witness to the plates declared them a fraud. Dr. Wyl gives this information:

Now just hear what was told me by a Mormon elder, an eye and ear witness:

A “class of elders,” eleven or twelve, of whom I was one, was assembled in the Endowment House in 1858. Apostle Orson Pratt told us that he had been reading a work in which an account was given of the Kinderhook Plates. An archaeological society had heard of the plates and they wanted to get a reliable account of them. They sent down to Kinderhook, Ill., two men to investigate the matter. These men had been there for two or three weeks without result. At last they learnt the names of the parties concerned, and that the plates were made by a blacksmith; they were told so by the artist himself. Pratt told the “class” that he was well convinced that the plates were a fraud.

(*Mormon Portraits*, 1886, p. 211)

W. P. Harris was one of the nine witnesses to the plates, and he also made a separate statement telling how he cleaned them,

etc. (see *History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 374-377). In 1855 (24 years before Fugate’s affidavit) Harris wrote a letter in which he stated that the plates were not genuine and that Bridge Whitten had already acknowledged his part in the hoax:

Barry, Pike Co., Ill.  
April 25, 1855.

Mr. Flagg,

Dear Sir: . . . I was present with a number at or near Kinderhook, and helped to dig at the time the plates were found that I think you allude to. Robert Wiley, then a merchant of that place, said that he had had a number of strange dreams . . . on Sunday the discovery was made. . . . I washed and cleaned the plates and subsequently made an honest affidavit to the same.

But since that time, Bridge Whitten said to me that he cut and prepared the plates and he (B. Whitten) and R. Wiley engraved them themselves, and that there was nitric acid put upon them the night before that they were found to rust the iron ring and band. And that they were carried to the mound, rubbed in the dirt and carefully dropped into the pit where they were found.

Wilbourn Fugit appeared to be the chief, with R. Wiley and B. Whitten. Fugit lives at Kinderhook and B. Whitten at Alton, Illinois, to both of which you can refer. (Letter from the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, 1912, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 271-273, as quoted in *The Book of Mormon?* by James D. Bales, pp. 95-96)

Thus we see that Mr. Fugate was not the only one who exposed the hoax. At least 24 years before Fugate made his affidavit one of the witnesses had stated that it was a hoax.

B. H. Roberts asks why they did not disclose the hoax during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. The reasonable answer is that they were waiting for Joseph Smith to translate the plates, but he was murdered about one year after the plates were found and never published a translation. The statement that he had “translated a portion of them” and found them to contain a history of a “descendant of Ham” was not published until after the Mormons came to Utah.

Even B. H. Roberts had to admit that Joseph Smith’s statement that “the find was genuine, and that he had translated some of the characters” may “not have been known at the time to the alleged conspirators to deceive him . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 379). They were obviously waiting for Joseph Smith to produce another book of “scripture” from these plates.

## Falsification of History

In order to support the story of the Kinderhook plates Mormon historians have made at least two serious changes in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*.

In his affidavit Mr. Fugate claimed that there were “two Mormon elders present (Marsh and Sharp)” at the time the plates were found, and that “Sharp, the Mormon Elder, leaped and shouted for joy . . .” The fact that at least one Mormon was present and that he leaped for joy was printed in the *Times and Seasons*—a Mormon publication:

**We learn there was a Mormon present when the plates were found, who it is said, leaped for joy at the discovery**, and remarked that it would go to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon—which it undoubtedly will. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 187)

Evidently the Mormon historians could see that the fact that a Mormon was present would cast doubt upon the authenticity of the discovery; therefore, when they reprinted this statement in Joseph Smith’s *History* they falsified it so that no one would know that a Mormon was present or that he leaped for joy. In the *History of the Church* the statement has been changed to read: “A **person** present when the plates were found remarked that it would go to prove that authenticity of the Book of Mormon, which it undoubtedly will” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 378).

The original certificate by the witnesses included a statement about Mr. Sharp taking the plates to Nauvoo. Fugate says the Mormon elder who leaped and shouted for joy was named Sharp. In the *Times and Seasons* the end of the certificate reads: “The above described plates we



have handed to Mr. Sharp for the purpose of taking them to Nauvoo” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 186). In the *History of the Church* this statement concerning Mr. Sharp taking the plates to Nauvoo has been entirely deleted without any indication (see *History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 377). The fact that Mormon historians had to falsify Joseph Smith’s *History* to remove references to Nauvoo and Mormonism from the original accounts throws another shadow of doubt upon the authenticity of the story of the Kinderhook plates.

### “Childish Forgeries”

We feel that the work George M. Lawrence has done on the Kinderhook plate proves it to be a modern production. Although the ancient inhabitants of the New World were very skilled in working with metals (see *Scientific American*, April 1966, pp. 72-81), we do not feel that they could meet the close tolerances which Mr. Lawrence has found on the Kinderhook plate:

The plate is about 2-7/8” high, weighs 0.621 oz. and has an area of 4.66 sq. inches. The diameter of the hole in the top is 0.126” and is round within 0.001”. The metal around the hole bulges, suggesting that the hole was punched.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the plate upon visual examination is its good thickness uniformity and local surface flatness. The thickness of the plate was measured at about 50 points on the surface to an accuracy of 0.0002”. The plate has a slight taper, thinning slightly toward the bottom. One may describe the thickness as 0.030”±0.001 except for the last 1/4” of taper at the bottom, where the plate thins approximately 0.002”.

The metal of the plate is fine grained and homogeneous as are modern metals. It has no spring when flexed, like annealed copper. Except for scratches, the surface is smooth as if the plate had been rolled or ground rather than hammered or cast. There is no evidence of corrosion except for the nickel-sized etch blotch on the “reverse” side. This region is quite irregular, is about 0.01” deep, and cuts into the surface along a sharply defined boundary. The sharp edge is characteristic of acid attacking a greasy or waxy surface, whereas acid on a clean metal surface produces feathered edges.

I conclude from the local flatness, the small thickness variation, the basic surface smoothness, and the taper, that the plate was cut from sheet which had been rolled, probably in a direction perpendicular to the length of the plate. The nominal size of the hole and thickness were perhaps 1/8” and 1/32,” respectively. (“Report of a Physical Study of the Kinderhook Plate Number 5,” p. 2)

We do not feel that it would have been possible for an ancient inhabitant of America to have made a plate that is so flat, and we agree with Mr. Lawrence that the plate must have been cut from a rolled sheet of metal. Mr. Lawrence informs us that “Brass was first rolled in the U.S. in Connecticut in 1832.” Notice that Mr. Lawrence finds the plate to be approximately .030 of an inch thick. This is only a thousandth or two off from 1/32.” From this we conclude that the Kinderhook plates were cut from a standard sheet measuring 1/32 of an inch thick. Notice also the hole through the top of the plate measures .126 of an inch. This is only one thousandth over 1/8 of an inch.

The reader will remember that George M. Lawrence’s study led him to conclude that “The dimensions, tolerances, composition and workmanship are consistent with the facilities of an 1843 blacksmith shop and with the fraud stories of the original participants.” The evidence from the Kinderhook plate itself, then, indicates that it is a fraud.

James D. Bales gives this information concerning the Kinderhook plates:

The plates are referred to in the *Fourth Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 247 as the work of a village blacksmith. . . .

James H. Breasted, Orientalist, Historian, Egyptologist, and Professor of Egyptology in the University of Chicago—from 1905 and a number of years thereafter—stated in a letter to R. B. Neal, on April 20, 1914 that the “Kinderhook Plates are, of course, childish forgeries, as the scientific world has known for years.” . . .

What does this all add up to? Does it merely mean that one of the “finds” which the Latter Day Saints believed supported the Book of Mormon does not support it, and that there is no real blow dealt to the prophethood of Joseph Smith? Not at all, for as Charles A. Shook well observed . . . “**Only a bogus prophet translates bogus plates.**” Where we can check up on Smith as a translator of plates, he is found guilty of deception. How can we trust him with reference to his claims about the Book of Mormon? If we cannot trust him where we can check him, we cannot trust him where we cannot check his translations. . . . Smith tried to deceive people into thinking that he had translated some of the plates. The plates had no such message as Smith claimed that they had. Smith is thus shown to be willing to deceive people into thinking that he had the power to do something that could not be done. (*The Book of Mormon?* by James D. Bales, 1958, pp. 95, 97-99)

### Newark Stones

On April 10, 1870, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these statements:

Thirty years after the Book of Mormon was put in print, . . . one of the great mounds south of the great lakes near Newark, in Ohio, was opened. . . . they found a large stone that appeared to be hollow; . . . another stone was found inside of it, . . . On the stone taken from the inside was carved the figure of a man . . . over the head of this man were the Hebrew characters for . . . the ancient name of Moses; while on each side of this likeness, and on different sides of the stone, above, beneath, and around about were the Ten Commandments that were received on Mount Sinai, written in the ancient Hebrew characters. . . . And what does this discovery prove? It proves that the builders of these mounds, . . . must have understood the Hebrew characters; . . .

I have seen that sacred stone. It is not a hatched up story. . . . This, then, is external proof, independent of the Scriptural proofs to which I have alluded, in testimony of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. . . . several other mounds in the same vicinity of Newark were opened, in several of which Hebrew characters were found. Among them was this beautiful expression, buried with one of their ancient dead, “May the Lord have mercy on me a Nephite.” It was translated a little different—“Nephel.” . . . The Nephites . . . when they were burying one of their brethren in these ancient mounds, they introduced the Hebrew characters signifying “May the Lord have mercy on me a Nephite.” This is another direct evidence of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, which was brought forth and translated by inspiration some thirty-five years before this inscription was found. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, pp. 130-131)

At first, many people felt that the Newark Stones were authentic, but now they are regarded as forgeries. In the *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, April 1908, we find the following:

Professor Warren K. Moorehead . . . has this to say concerning the Newark discovery:

Some writers have misrepresented and distorted field testimony to uphold theories previously formed. . . . we need but call the attention of our readers to the famous “Holy Stone” of Newark. An enthusiastic archaeologist resided many years ago at Newark, Ohio. . . . believed the lost ten tribes of Israel to be the ancestors of the mound-building tribes. After opening mound after mound and finding no evidence whatever in support of his hypothesis, he became desperate. He purchased a Hebrew Bible and primer, and shortly afterwards there was discovered . . . a slab, on one side of which was a likeness of Moses, and on the reverse an abridged form of the ten commandments. . . . No one doubted the genuineness of the affair until after the man’s death. In cleaning up his office the administrator



found in a small rear room bits of slate with attempts at carving Hebrew characters upon them. They also found a fair copy of the wood-cut of Moses used as a frontispiece in the testament.

The influence of this over-zealous deceiver has gone throughout the length and breadth of our land, and one may still hear at lectures upon American archaeology statements concerning the Indian's descent from the Jew, basing such assertions upon the testimony of the supposed "Holy Stone of Newark," which, as is above shown, was simply a counterfeit. . . .

The testimony thus produced we believe is sufficient to convince any reader that these alleged religious relics of a prehistoric people were frauds. . . . It might be added in closing that many other stones have been found in various mounds bearing alleged inscriptions which the respective finders claim are evidences that the Mound Builders, whoever they were, had a written language. But in almost every instance these so-called findings are proven to have been unauthentic or of such a dubious environment as to have no value as proof. . . . (*Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications*, vol. 17, no. 2, April 1908, pp. 214, 215, 218)

Even though the evidence is overwhelmingly against the authenticity of these artifacts, the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe and Franklin S. Harris, Jr., used these purported discoveries as proof for the Book of Mormon. In fact, they even used Orson Pratt's translation which contains the word "Nephite":

Near Newark, Ohio, about 1860, an abstract of the Ten Commandments was found. . . .

About 1865 a number of Hebrew characters were found buried in mounds near Newark, Ohio, one of which was this expression, buried with one of their ancient dead, "May the Lord have mercy on me a Nephite." (Translated Nephel.) (Roberts 3:56.) (*Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon*, 1937, pp. 111-112)

In our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pages 32-33, we give additional evidence to show that the Newark Stones are forgeries and that the translation "Nephite" cannot be accepted. Actually, the word "nephel" appears as word No. 5309 in the "Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary" found in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, and it is defined as follows: "something fallen, i.e. an abortion:—untimely birth." This word is used in Job 3:16: "Or as an hidden **untimely birth** I had not been; as infants which never saw light." From this it is apparent that the inscription should be translated, "May the Lord have mercy on me, an **untimely birth**." There is nothing to support the false translation, "May the Lord have mercy on me a **Nephite**." As in the case of the Kinderhook plates, the Mormon leaders gave a false translation of a bogus artifact.

Most Mormon scholars no longer believe in the authenticity of David Wyrick's "Holy Stones." Stanley B. Kimball, in fact, completely repudiates them:

One of my correspondents advised me regarding the "Wyrick Holy Stones" . . . currently at the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum, Coshocton, Ohio, and stating that "These fraudulent artifacts are believed to be authentic by the Mormons." These interesting stones are indeed on view in this museum. It seems, however, that they are **fakes** planted around 1860 in a desperate effort by someone to prove that the mound-building Indians of Ohio were in some way connected with the lost ten tribes of Israel. The allegation that Mormons believe them to be authentic is gratuitous. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 539)

## Tree Of Life Stone

In 1965 the Mormon-owned *Deseret News* announced that the *El Paso Times* had published an article which seemed to show that the Book of Mormon had been proven by archaeologists. We obtained the article from the *El Paso Times*. It was entitled, "Chiapas Find of Relevance to Document," and read as follows:

The Book of Mormon, a companion volume of scripture to the Bible in the Latter-Day Saints Church, is purported to be an ecclesiastical and historical record of the American continent translated from gold plates.

Archaeologists have conceded the possible existence of such a record, and a recent archaeological find in Mexico has been interpreted of relevance to its authenticity.

A large carving unearthed in Chiapas, Mexico, has been interpreted and offers the first sound evidence of the near-eastern origin of its carvers—an origin set in the Book of Mormon.

In the evaluation of the carving strict adherence was made to a rule laid down by Dr. Alfred L. Kroeber, a non-Mormon authority on the Anthropological Theory and formerly of the University of California. The procedure requires five to ten complex similarities between questioned archaeological sites to prove a historical connection.

The carving is a portrayal of an ancient event concerning the Tree of Life. Six persons are seated by and discussing the tree. The near-east clothing style is clear, as well as are other evidences of Old World origin.

Three name glyphs on the carving have been translated as "Lehi," "Sariah," and "Nephi," prominent names in the Book of Mormon, and the study shows a detailed symbolization of a crucial scene in the book termed "Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life." It may be one of the most important finds in the history of archeology, some think. (*El Paso Times*, July 4, 1965)

At first sight this article appears to be very impressive. Careful research, however, shows that this article cannot be used as evidence for the Book of Mormon. To begin with, this seems to be nothing but old Mormon propaganda rewritten. Long before the *El Paso Times* published this article we were given a sheet, which was printed at the Gila Printing & Publishing Co., Safford Arizona, which told that "Maurice W. Connell, of the University Archaeological Society" was lecturing "to individuals and groups" in the Bisbee area. This sheet contains too many parallels to the article in the *El Paso Times* to be explained away. For instance, this sheet states:

The three name glyphs on Stela 5 have been translated as "Lehi," "Sariah," and "Nephi," which are three names prominent in the Book of Mormon. . . . study of this carving. . . . shows a very detailed and accurate symbolization of a particularly crucial scene in the Book of Mormon, termed "Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life." This . . . ranks as one of the most important and astounding finds in the history of archaeology.

The article in the *El Paso Times* uses almost identical wording:

Three name glyphs on the carving have been translated as "Lehi," "Sariah," and "Nephi," prominent names in the Book of Mormon, and the study shows a detailed symbolization of a crucial scene in the book termed "Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life." It may be one of the most important finds in the history of archeology, some think. (*El Paso Times*, July 4, 1965)

From this it is plain to see that the article from the *El Paso Times* was nothing but a rehash of old Mormon propaganda (for additional parallels see *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 34-35).

When we wrote to *The El Paso Times* for information regarding this article, we were informed that it was submitted to the newspaper by missionaries of the Mormon Church and that one of the missionaries said that his sources were articles from the Brigham Young University:

The article "Chiapas Find of Relevance To Document," was published in the July 4, 1965 edition of *The El Paso Times*.

The material, in somewhat elongated form, was submitted to our religion desk by Robert Elder and Vaughn Byington, missionaries of the Church of Christ of Latter-Day Saints assigned to El Paso wards.

The information was written by Mr. Byington, who said his sources were articles obtained at the Department of Archaeology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. (Letter from Joseph Rice, Religion Editor, *The El Paso Times*, dated November 3, 1965; a photograph of this letter is found in *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, p. 36)

While some Mormon archaeologists have felt that this

stone can be used as evidence to prove the Book of Mormon, non-Mormon archaeologists seem to see no connection. In a letter to Marvin Cowan, George Crossette, of *National Geographic Magazine*, stated:

The National Geographic Society along with the Smithsonian Institution sponsored archeological work in Mexico where “Stela 5, Izapa” was found. Information on Stela 5 has not appeared in the *National Geographic*. No one associated with our expedition connected this stela in any way with the Book of Mormon. (Letter from George Crossette, Chief, Geographical Research, *National Geographic Magazine*, dated April 27, 1965, to Marvin W. Cowan)

M. Wells Jakeman, of the Department of Archaeology at BYU, has been chiefly responsible for the idea that the carving is connected with the Book of Mormon.

### Lehi, Sariah and Nephi?

Notice that the article in *The El Paso Times* stated that “Three name glyphs on the carving have been translated as ‘Lehi,’ ‘Sariah,’ and ‘Nephi,’ prominent names in the Book of Mormon, . . .” We feel that this claim is not based on facts. The idea that Book of Mormon names have been translated from the carving probably stems from some of M. Wells Jakeman’s statements concerning this carving. On December 5, 1959, Dr. Jakeman said:

Incidentally we have here in the Izapa carving, in view of this conclusion, the first actual portrayal of a Book of Mormon event, and the first actual recording of Book of Mormon names, yet discovered on an ancient monument of the New World. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, p. 53)

As we examine Dr. Jakeman’s work, we find that he has not actually translated any Book of Mormon name from “Stela 5,” but has only symbolically interpreted some elements on the stone. Below is a photograph of Jakeman’s drawing of the stone.



Some prominent Mormon scholars do not accept Jakeman’s work. Dr. John L. Sorenson, for instance, does not agree with Dr. Jakeman. Dr. Sorenson has served as Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Brigham Young University and was Editor of the *University Archaeological Society Newsletter* from August 15, 1951 to July 1, 1952. Writing in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Dr. Sorenson stated:

Jakeman’s paper carries trait-list comparison to its logical conclusion . . . Obviously comparison remains a key methodological



STELA 5,  
Izapa, Chiapas,  
Mexico

device in the conduct of research in history and the sciences, but the uncontrolled use of trait comparison leads to absurd conclusions. Particularly, it leads to overambitious interpretations of shared meaning and historical relationship, as in Jakeman’s previous **pseudo-identifications** of “Lehi” (and other characters from the Book of Mormon) on an Izapan monument. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, p. 148)

From a statement made on December 5, 1959, it was plain that Dr. Sorenson rejected Jakeman’s work on the “Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone”:

We have wanted to find Nephi’s name or some Egyptian writer or something of this very specific kind. We have wanted to find when Zarahemla burned; we have wanted to find the ashes; we have wanted to find the very roads that Nephi walked over. The point that I would like to make is that it is extremely unlikely that we will find **any** of this so that we can convincingly lead others to believe that it is what we think it is. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, p. 25)

Dr. Jakeman once stated that a “prominent member of the faculty of Brigham Young University” had privately distributed a leaflet in which “he ridicules my interpretation” of “Stela 5.” A recent issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* makes it clear that Dr. Hugh Nibley was the one who attacked Jakeman’s work. Dee F. Green quotes Dr. Nibley as saying:

Science does not arrive at its conclusions by syllogisms, and no people on earth deplore proof demonstration by syllogism more loudly than real archaeologists do. Yet Mr. Jakeman’s study is nothing but an elaborate syllogistic stew. The only clear and positive thing about the whole study is the objective the author is determined to reach. With naive exuberance, he repeatedly announces that he has found “exactly what we would expect to find.” Inevitably there emerges from this dim and jumbled relief exactly what Mr. Jakeman is looking for. (Dr. Nibley’s review of Jakeman’s publication on Stela 5, as quoted in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, p. 75)

These statements by Mr. Nibley are very significant, since most Mormons regard him as the greatest scholar in the Mormon Church.

Dee F. Green, who was deeply involved with the BYU Archaeological Society, has also come out against Dr. Jakeman’s work:

A final warning should be issued against Jakeman’s Lehi Tree of Life Stone, which has received wide publicity in the Church and an over-enthusiastic response from the layman due to the publication’s **pseudo-scholarship**. The question which should really be asked about Izapa Stela 5 is “Did the artist or artists have Lehi’s vision in their minds when the stone was sculptured?” a question which, I submit, cannot be answered short of talking with the artist. The next question, then, is what



are the probabilities that the artist had Lehi's vision in mind when he carved the stone. I don't know the answer to that one either, but then, neither does Jakeman, and his publication is more of a testimony as to what is not known than [than?] to what is known about Stela 5. As Nibley pointed out in his own inimitable style, Jakeman **errs at every turn** in the publication. The basis of Jakeman's evidence is his own hand-drawn version from a photograph of the stone. He makes unsupported assumptions about the canons of ancient art; he fumbles over elements of the dream which are not included and items on the stone which have no place in the dream; he displays ignorance of his linguistic data and most unfortunately reverses the scholarly method by presenting his data with a rash of "evidentlys," "probablys," "appears," and "apparentlys"—but offers his conclusions as unarguable facts. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pp. 74-75)

It appears, then, that some of the most prominent Mormon scholars cannot accept Dr. Jakeman's work on "Stela 5."

For a great deal of additional information which proves that "Stela 5" is nothing but a pagan object which could not possibly have had anything to do with the Book of Mormon see our book *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pages 34-52. We also recommend Hal Hougey's study *The Truth About the "Lehi Tree-of-Life" Stone*.

## Geography

M. T. Lamb made these statements concerning the Book of Mormon:

We read in the Old Testament far back, three and four thousand years ago, the names of cities—such as Damascus, Jerusalem, Babylon, Nineveh, Samaria, Sycar, Gaza, Tyre and Sidon—we read the names Persia, Egypt, Ethiopia. In the New Testament we find such names as Ephesus, Smyrna, Antioch, Athens, Corinth, Rome—we read of the island of Cyprus and Malta, of the countries of Syria, Italy and Spain—and we pick up our modern school geographies to find all these names more or less fully preserved.

In fact this is one of the plain evidences of the authenticity and truthfulness of the Bible record. . . .

The very opposite of this proves true of the Book of Mormon, for although we read from it all this list of cities and countries professedly in existence in this country only 1500 years ago, a date at least 300 years later than the latest date in the New Testament, and though we learn, farther, from the same book that the people inhabiting this country have not changed—that the Lamanites of old who remained sole masters of both continents 1500 years ago are the Indians of to-day, yet our readers will examine their geographies in vain to find even one of these old names preserved among the Indian names of today, or the names found upon this continent three hundred years ago when first occupied by Europeans. (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 276-277)

M. T. Lamb gives us a list of "Names of Ancient Cities and Countries" in the New World. They are: Carchah, Champoton, Chichen Itza, Chimalhuacan, Chiquimula, Cholula, Culouacan, Hapallanconco, Huehuetan, Hueyxalan, Guatulco, Itzalane, Izamal, Mazatepec, Mayapan, Metlaltoyuca, Mazapan, Nachan, Nimxab, Ococingo, Olman, Quiyahuyztlan, Quemedá, Quauhnauc, Quauhatochco, Tamoancan, Tepeu, Tlaachicatzin, Tlapallanconco, Tlaxicoluican, Tepetla, Tonacatepetl, Totzapan, Teotihuacan, Tlacopan, Toxpan, Tulan, Tulancingo, Txintzurtzan, Tzequil, Xalisco, Xibalba, Xlcalanco, Xochicalco, Xumiltepec, Yobaa, Zacatlan, and Zihcohuatl. M. T. Lamb also gives a list of "names of the cities and lands or countries mentioned in the Book of Mormon as existing in this country." After asking the reader to compare the two lists, Mr. Lamb stated:

Is it not strange, dear reader, that not even one solitary name from the Book of Mormon has been unearthed by all the researches

of the past, and that we are left without a solitary evidence of the truthfulness of this Book—on the contrary are brought face to face with the most incontestable and unanswerable evidences of its fraud. For this is not simply a negative testimony to the effect that the names given in the Book of Mormon have not yet been found, after the most careful research by scholars. The testimony is vastly stronger than this: it is that this Mormon list of names never had an existence, in fact—that they are absolutely a myth; and therefore the Book that contains them a fraudulent fiction. . . .

Still stronger, if possible, is the testimony from the names of men. Look among the Jews all over the world to-day, and you find perpetuated in their families the old Bible names Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Samuel, David, Solomon, Daniel, and such like. And so, if the Indians are the real descendants of the ancient Lamanites, we should certainly find the greater portion of those old Book of Mormon names of men everywhere perpetuated among the Indian races of to-day. How could it be otherwise? There is no change possible or conceivable by which those old honored names could be entirely obliterated from the race. During the one thousand years of their recorded history as given in the Book of Mormon, the old familiar names of Lehi, Nephi, Laman, Lemuel and others are constantly recurring; they held on to them with reverential pertinacity. If the Book of Mormon were a true record, we should find these names in abundance among various Indian races scattered over both continents. Has any one ever discovered or even heard of, by tradition or otherwise, one Book of Mormon name among the Indians, unless that name were borrowed from the vocabulary of the modern Gentile nations? . . . the conclusion is inevitable: Either, the statements of all the scholars who have during the past three hundred years been patiently investigating ancient American history—the entire traditionary history of the various native races in Central America, the testimony of the preserved writings of the ancient Mayas, and the testimony of the Indian names of today—are all wrong—or the Book of Mormon is a fable and its list of names a myth. There is no other possible conclusion; no middle ground. Both cannot be true. Either the Book of Mormon or the entire testimony drawn from American antiquities is false. If the one is true, the other cannot be. (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 278-280, 283)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts seemed to be unable to explain the absence of Book of Mormon names among the American Indians:

It is objected to the Book of Mormon that there nowhere appears in native American languages Book of Mormon names. . . . The absence of Book of Mormon names in the native language, is held to be fatal testimony against the claims of the Book of Mormon by this writer.

One recognizes here a **real difficulty**, and one for which it is quite **hard to account**. It must be remembered, however, that from the close of the Nephite period, 420 A.D., to the coming of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, we have a period of over one thousand years; and we have the triumph also of the Lamanites over the Nephites bent on the destruction of every vestige of Nephite traditions and institutions. May it not be that they recognized as one of the means of achieving such destruction the abrogation of the old familiar names of things and persons? (*New Witnesses For God*, Salt Lake City, 1951, vol. 3, p. 518)

B. H. Roberts suggests that "the name 'Nahaus' and the adjective derived from it, 'Nahuatl,' are probably variations of the names 'Nephi' and 'Nephite,' . . ." He then gives a few other weak parallels, and finally concludes by stating:

But after all this is said it is still a matter of regret that more of the Nephite names, both of men and countries, have not survived in the native American languages. Still the field of knowledge of American antiquities has not yet been thoroughly explored, and when its buried cities and monuments shall be more thoroughly known all the evidences that can be demanded along these lines will doubtless be produced. (*New Witness For God*, vol. 3, p. 521)

Mormon writers are not only faced with the problem



of trying to explain the absence of Book of Mormon names, but they have the additional problem of not being able to identify sites mentioned in the Book of Mormon. The Mormon writer Joseph E. Vincent admitted that the exact location of Book of Mormon sites is unknown:

At one time when I was a member of a ward bishopric, one of the counselors said to me: "Why is it we have accurate maps of Palestine and not of the Book of Mormon Lands? Why do we know so well where Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth are and do not know where Zarahemla, Bountiful, and Cumorah are? Does that mean that actually those places are fictitious as the non-Mormons say they are?" My answer was: "No, they are certainly not fictitious, . . ."

First let us look and see what we do not know about the Holy Land. We do know where Jerusalem was. We know where Herod's palace and the Temple were. . . . But do we know for sure where Nazareth was? We do not. . . . we do not know where Calvary was, nor where the Holy Sepulchre was. Actually two different sites have been identified as Calvary or Golgotha, and two distinct tombs have been identified as the tomb of Joseph.

Although we have been in continuous contact with the Holy Land, we do not know these very important locations. Is it not easy to understand then, why we do not know the exact location of the Book of Mormon sites when we have actually been out of contact with the Book of Mormon people since Lehi left Palestine in 600 B.C.? We have actually been out of contact with them for 2600 years. You can **lose track of a lot of things in 2600 years.** (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, Brigham Young University, April 13, 1963, p. 61)

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn made these comments regarding the Book of Mormon:

Culminating about 1888, with the publication of the large octavo volume, there was a practice of locating, in footnotes, all the major features of the Book-of-Mormon setting. From that time, fortunately, the number of such notes has steadily dropped off until the present edition contains **none at all**. This shows how careful we in our time are to approach this whole problem, and it is a commendable caution. . . .

A yet more deplorable practice has been to attempt to label present-day locations with Book-of-Mormon names. To the best of my knowledge there is not a single place—ruin, city, or land—to which we can point and say with certainty and say that it is such-and-such a one in the record. (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, by J. N. Washburn, pp. 209-210)

In 1954 Dr. M. Wells Jakeman made the startling announcement that the Book of Mormon city of Bountiful had "very probably been found" (*U.A.S. Newsletter*, August 23, 1954, pp. 4-6). In the *U.A.S. Newsletter*, Number 46, December 17, 1957, we find this statement: "Aguacatal has been identified by Dr. Jakeman, . . . as almost certainly the city Bountiful of the Book of Mormon. . . ." The June 4, 1958, issue of the "Newsletter" reported that Dr. Ross T. Christensen was going to lecture "on 'Uncovering the Ancient Walled City of Bountiful.'" In the July 16, 1958, issue of the "Newsletter" we find this statement: "Dr. Jakeman is presently preparing a special window display featuring the excavations being conducted by BYU at the ancient walled city of Aguacatal, Campeche, Mexico (identified as Bountiful of the Book-of-Mormon)." On July 1, 1959, the "Newsletter" contained this statement:

Digging the Ruins of Bountiful. The city Bountiful of the Book of Mormon, . . . is a location of key importance in Book of Mormon geography. To discover its exact location should make it possible in turn to identify the river Sidon, locate the Nephite capital Zarahemla, and eventually work out the entire scheme of Book of Mormon geography. . . .

In 1948 Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, chairman of the BYU Department of Archaeology, located a ruined city now called Aguacatal in western Campeche, in the southern Gulf Coast region of Mexico, which exactly met the qualifications for identification as this city Bountiful of the Book of Mormon. . . . (*U.A.S. Newsletter*, July 1, 1959, pp. 4-5)

Mormon archaeologists have done a great deal of work at Aguacatal, but they have been unable to prove that it is the city Bountiful. In fact, Dee F. Green states that their own work proves that it is **not** Bountiful:

After excavating at Aguacatal in 1961 and conducting the only study yet made of the artifacts and data recovery Ray Matheny, then a graduate student at BYU, privately demonstrated that Aguacatal is **not Bountiful**. The *UAS Newsletter* has never recognized Matheny's contribution. Jakeman has also identified the site of El Cayo on the Usumacinta River in Southern Mexico as Zarahemla. Others who have visited the site find it too small, and some preliminary archaeological testing shows its main occupation to be too late in time for such an interpretation. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, p. 73, n. 4)

On the same page Dee F. Green refers to the "one **abortive** attempt to identify the Book of Mormon city Bountiful, . . ." On December 1, 1969, Dr. Jakeman responded to Green, but his statement plainly shows that he does not have evidence to prove that Bountiful has been discovered:

Another failure of the writer in the field of Book of Mormon archaeology, according to our critic, is an "abortive attempt to identify the Book of Mormon city Bountiful." This is a premature judgment. The project of archaeological identification referred to has never been terminated; for a number of ancient sites in the district fixed upon (on the basis of references in the Book of Mormon itself and confirmatory and supplementary data in the early historical accounts from Mesoamerica) are still good candidates for this identification. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, BYU, December 1, 1969, p. 5)

Most members of the Mormon Church probably have no idea of the dilemma a person is faced with if he tries to make a serious study of the geography of the Book of Mormon. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe has admitted, however, that those who have studied this subject are not in agreement, and that often "thousands of miles" separate suggested locations for the same site:

The actual geographical locations of Book of Mormon events and places have always intrigued students of the book. Several volumes and many articles on the subject have been published. The various writers so far have failed to agree. Often the suggested locations vary, with different authors, **thousands of miles**. An earnest, honest search is being continued by enthusiastic Book of Mormon students. (Statement by John A. Widtsoe, as quoted in *Ancient America and the Book of Mormon*, by Milton R. Hunter & Thomas S. Ferguson, 1950, Calif., p. 143)

John A. Widtsoe once stated that the Lord might have to give a revelation to settle the disputes among Mormon scholars concerning the geography of the Book of Mormon:

Students are not agreed on the main facts that must form the basis of a Book of Mormon geography. One group believes, as do most of the Church, that the great events recorded towards the end of the Book occurred in or near New York State. Another group, somewhat smaller, believes that the evidence at hand places these events in Middle America. Both views are held to tenaciously by the respective groups. . . . Out of the studies of faithful Latter-day Saints may yet come a unity of opinion concerning Book of Mormon geography; or, the Lord may give a **revelation** that will end all differences of opinion. (*Cumorah-Where?* by Thomas Stuart Ferguson, Missouri, 1947, Forward by John A. Widtsoe)

## Hill Cumorah

According to the Book of Mormon, two great civilizations—i.e., the Nephites and the Jaredites—were destroyed in battles which took place at the "hill Cumorah." This is the same hill where Joseph Smith was supposed to have found the gold plates.

The question, of course, arises as to why such an insignificant little hill would be chosen for these two great battles. M. T. Lamb made these comments:

Mormon is recording the rapid destruction of his people, the Nephites. They have been driven out of all their strong-holds in Central America: one after another their principal cities have been taken and destroyed by the victorious Lamanites. Beaten everywhere and rapidly driven northward, Mormon finally writes a letter to the king of the Lamanites, making the following strange request:

And I, Mormon wrote an epistle unto the King of the Lamanites, and desired of him that he would grant unto us that we might gather together our people unto the land of Cumorah, and there we could give them battle. And it came to pass that the King of the Lamanites did grant unto me the thing which I desired. And it came to pass that we did march forth to the land of Cumorah; and it was in a land of many waters, rivers and fountains; and here we had hope to gain advantage over the Lamanites.

Now, reader, do you think any sane general of an army would write such a letter as the above to his deadly foe? And if such a letter had been written, do you think such a deadly foe, if in his senses would have consented? Please bear in mind that the Lamanites' home was in South America, and that the principal possessions of the Nephites, their largest cities, nearly everything desirable as plunder, are found in Central America, while this hill, Cumorah, is located in western New York, from two to three thousand miles distant. Would the Lamanite king be willing to transport an army of several hundred thousand, at least two thousand miles away from his base of supplies, into a sparsely settled country, where provisions were necessarily scarce, for no other reason than to allow his enemy to secure a good position where they "had hope to gain advantage over the Lamanites"?

But again, why do you suppose the good prophet Mormon was so anxious to reach that particular hill Cumorah, so far away from the homes and possessions of his people? Was it really because said hill was a natural fortification, a famous strategic point? Not at all; it is only a little hill, while in reaching that hill he had climbed over hundreds of mountain fastnesses, had marched by scores of magnificent canons or river gorges and other of nature's hiding places or of Thermopylae passes—a thousand places had been presented that were a hundred times better adapted to the object he had in view: "to gain some advantage over the Lamanites."

Why then does he ignore all these strong places and march his army a thousand miles away from the mountains to a little hill in western New York that was utterly valueless as a natural barrier against an enemy? Reader, we will whisper the reason. Joseph Smith found his golden plates in this hill Cumorah, and he must needs get Mormon and Moroni up there with their sacred records before these worthies are swept out of existence, or his ancient history will not tally with the modern facts!! (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 204-206)

The traditional view concerning the hill Cumorah was clearly presented by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt:

The Lamanites at that time dwelt in **South America**, and the Nephites in **North America**.

A great and terrible war commenced between them, which lasted for many years, and resulted in the complete overthrow and destruction of the Nephites. This was commenced at the Isthmus of Darien, and was very destructive to both nations for many years. At length, the Nephites were driven before their enemies, a great distance to the north and north-east; and having gathered their whole nation together, both men, women, and children, they encamped on and round about the **hill Cumorah**, where the records were found, which is in the State of **New York** about two hundred miles west of the city of Albany. . . . the nation of the Nephites were destroyed, . . . (*Remarkable Visions*, p. 10, as reprinted in *Orson Pratt's Works*)

The criticism of M. T. Lamb has probably had a great effect upon Mormon scholars. In fact, in the last few years a number

of prominent Mormon scholars have decided that the traditional view—i.e., that the hill Cumorah is in New York—must be repudiated. They claim that the Nephites and Lamanites did not inhabit both North and South America as was previously taught, but that they lived in Mesoamerica and that the hill Cumorah must be located near by. Thomas Stuart Ferguson, one of the most prominent writers on the subject of archaeology and the Book of Mormon, was one of the first to promote this new theory:

The Valley of Mexico would seem to meet all the requirements to qualify as the Land of Many Waters. Mexico City is located in the Valley of Mexico. Mountains at the southeastern corner of the Valley would seem to meet all factors required of the "hill," Shim and Ramah-Cumorah. They are the best known mountains in all Mexico. . . .

Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl are magnificent landmarks, known by name for hundreds of miles. As such they would seem to meet the magnitude requirements of Ramah-Cumorah and Shim. Both were landmarks from Jaredite times, even prior to the arrival of the Nephites in the region. . . . The fact that they are referred to as "hills" in the Book of Mormon should not of itself lead us to conclude that they were minor elevations. All mounts, regardless of size, referred to by name in the Book of Mormon are termed "hills." . . .

A further indication that Ramah-Cumorah may have been a **great mountain** is the fact that "Ramah" means "high" or "the height." It is an ancient Semite term. Popocatepetl is 17,887 feet and Ixtaccihuatl is 16,883 feet.

These great mountains, which can be viewed from the present city of Mexico and the nearby lakes, are of such magnitude that the great Jaredite and Nephite armies could easily have been accommodated on their slopes. (*Cumorah-Where?* 1947, pp. 42, 46, 47)

The gathering of the Nephites at Ramah-Cumorah . . . was the idea of their leader, Mormon. . . . Apparently the location was also well-known to the Lamanite leader for Mormon wrote a letter to the king of the Lamanites and in reply, received express permission to gather the Nephites "by a hill which was called Cumorah, and there give them battle." We must ask ourselves, was Mormon asking permission to gather his people to a part of the Valley of Mexico in the northern portion of the ancient Nephite domain, or was he asking permission of the enemy to let him gather his forces at a point in what is now western New York? The latter is approximately 3,000 miles from Tehautepec. (Consider what 3,000 miles was to Old and New Testament people.) It seems reasonable that the Lamanite king might have consented to a battle site as near his ancestral home, to the south of the Narrow Neck of Land, as was the Valley of Mexico. And it would seem reasonable that Mormon would choose the Ramah-Cumorah and hill-Shim area for the battle if the Nephite population centers were near and not insurmountable. These practical and strategic considerations lend much support to the view that Ramah-Cumorah may not have been farther north than the Valley of Mexico. (*Ibid.*, p. 54)

. . . it is hardly possible that Ramah-Cumorah could have been 3,000 miles to the north. . . . the hill in New York . . . is too small to have played such a great role as was played by Ramah-Cumorah. . . . It was **not** large enough to have accommodated the great armies which camped around Ramah-Cumorah. (*Ibid.*, p. 65)

The Mormon writer Fletcher B. Hammond stated:

Many Book of Mormon scholars assert that the hill Cumorah is in what is now New York state. To justify that assertion disrupts and confuses the entire concept of Book of Mormon geography. To correctly correlate that hill with other countries and places named in the sacred record it must be placed on a map so as to show consistency and harmony in the travels of the Book of Mormon peoples. All of the places and countries named in the record may be consistently assembled on a map which may cover some of the countries now known as Mexico and Central America. This **cannot** be done if the hill Cumorah is

placed on a map in the vicinity of what is now Palmyra, New York. . . . since about 1830 there have been two Hills Cumorah in Mormon literature; but it was not so during the times of the Book of Mormon peoples. It is my aim to show that the Book of Mormon peoples knew but one hill Cumorah, and that it was **not** in what is now New York state. (*Geography of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1959, pp. 72-73)

Isn't it bordering on the ridiculous to allege that this great nation, near the end of its existence, migrated in a body to what is now New York just so as to annihilate themselves at and around the hill Cumorah? . . .

No amount of juggling of the Book of Mormon text can place the hill Ramah-Cumorah in what is now New York state. It was somewhere in what is now Central America. Hunter and Ferguson appear to be right in their conclusions on this matter. (*Ibid.*, pp. 88, 90)

How can one be so naive as to try to establish the Book of Mormon hill Cumorah in what is now New York state? . . . after all the evidence is in and weighed with reason, the only proper conclusion to be reached is: the Book of Mormon hill Cumorah was somewhere in what is now Central America or southern Mexico. (*Ibid.*, pp. 118-119)

This new idea concerning the location of the hill Cumorah was accepted by so many Mormon scholars that the Mormon Historian Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, had to write an article against it. In this article we find the following:

Within recent years there has arisen among certain students of the Book of Mormon a theory to the effect that within the period covered by the Book of Mormon, the Nephites and Lamanites were confined almost within the borders of the territory comprising Central America and the southern portion of Mexico; the isthmus of Tehuantepec probably being the "narrow neck" of land spoken of in the Book of Mormon rather than the Isthmus of Panama.

This theory is founded upon the assumption that it was impossible for the colony of Lehi's to multiply and fill the hemisphere within the limits of one thousand years, or from the coming of Lehi from Jerusalem to the time of the destruction of the Nephites at the Hill Cumorah. Moreover, that the story of the migrations, building of cities, the wars and contentions, preclude the possibility of the people's spreading over great distances such as we find within the borders of North and South America. . . .

This modernistic theory of **necessity**, in order to be consistent, must place the waters of Ripliancum and the Hill Cumorah some place within the restricted territory of Central America, notwithstanding the teachings of the Church **to the contrary** for upwards of 100 years. Because of this theory some members of the Church have become confused and greatly disturbed in their faith in the Book of Mormon. It is for this reason that evidence is here presented to show that it is not only possible that these places could be located as the Church has held during the past century, but that in very deed such is the case. . . . In the light of **revelation** it is **absurd** for anyone to maintain that the Nephites and Lamanites did not possess this northern land. . . .

In the face of this evidence coming from the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, we cannot say that the Nephites and Lamanites did not possess the territory of the United States and that the Hill Cumorah is in Central America. Neither can we say that the great struggle which resulted in the destruction of the Nephites took place in Central America. (*The Deseret News*, Church Section, February 27, 1954, pp. 2-3)

Joseph Fielding Smith's statement has not ended the matter, and the battle still rages (see *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon*, pp. 57-61). Hal Hougey makes this interesting observation concerning the division among Mormon archaeologists:

Today, Latter-day Saints are divided over this matter of Book of Mormon geography. Among those adhering to the classic

interpretation are McGavin and Bean, and Dewey Farnsworth in his *Book of Mormon Evidences in Ancient America*.

The new view called the "Tehuantepec" theory, is favored by Mormon anthropologists at Brigham Young University, and is finding some favor in the church leadership. As informed Latter-day Saints have become aware that the classic view is untenable in the light of modern archeological knowledge, they have had to search for a new explanation of Book of Mormon geography. Actually, B. H. Roberts had some misgivings about the classic view as early as 1909 (*New Witnesses for God*, 3:502-503), and suggested that the events of the Book of Mormon might be restricted to Mesoamerica, with the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Mexico as the "narrow neck of land." This explanation makes it less difficult to harmonize the descriptions of the terrain and the Jaredite and Nephite civilizations in the Book of Mormon with the archeological data, and has therefore been accepted by the Mormon anthropologists at BYU in recent years. (*Archeology and the Book of Mormon*, p. 12)

Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, Professor of Archaeology at BYU, has repudiated the idea that the Nephites and Lamanites filled both North and South America:

I am sure most of you are already aware that we have an abundance of information within the text itself for defining rather closely the area of the Book of Mormon civilizations. It is now no longer in question that this area was the comparatively small part of the New World which is now referred to as Mesoamerica—central and southern Mexico and northern Central America. There are, in fact, over 600 statements in the record of geographic significance, which pin its area down rather definitely to this relatively small part of the New World. It is possible even to go so far as to indicate the approximate location of some of the main cities, on the basis of their placement in the record in relation to certain coast lines and topographic features. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 5, 1959, p. 47)

Joseph E. Vincent, a Mormon archaeologist, claims that if a person sincerely studies the Book of Mormon he will find all the Book of Mormon lands within a small area:

Now in conclusion, what can we do about the Book of Mormon geography? Should we sit still and listen to the **traditional views** of all Indians being Lamanites and of the Book of Mormon peoples roaming back and forth between northern United States and South America?

Or are we going to read the Book of Mormon and come to our own conclusions? . . .

In conclusion, let me reiterate that if a sincere student of the Book of Mormon will conscientiously read and study the Book itself and will plot out all the locations mentioned, disregarding "off-the-cuff" remarks of the early Church leaders, he will find that **all Book of Mormon lands lie within a five or six-hundred mile radius** and that this area could not possibly extend from Chile to New York. (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium On The Archaeology Of The Scriptures*, BYU, 1963, pp. 67-68)

The Book of Mormon itself certainly gives the impression that the Nephites and Lamanites occupied both North and South America. In Helaman 3:8 we read:

And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea **south** to the sea **north**, from the sea **west** to the sea **east**.

The 1888 Edition of the Book of Mormon contained footnotes which explained that the "sea south" was the "Atlantic, south of Cape Horn." The "sea north" was explained to be the "Arctic, north of North America." The "sea west" was supposed to be the "Pacific," and the "sea east" was the "Atlantic" (Book of Mormon, 1888 ed., p. 434). In modern editions of the Book of Mormon these footnotes have been deleted.



Dr. M. Wells Jakeman states that there are several theories concerning the geography of the Book of Mormon but that the “Tehuantepec” theory has been accepted by almost all those who have studied the geography of the Book of Mormon:

When we attempt to identify this internal relative geography with some actual part of the New World, we find **several theories** advocated. The long-popular view among readers of the Book of Mormon as to its area has been what may be termed the “general New World identification,” in which the **entire** American continent is considered the area of development of the Book of Mormon civilizations, with the main land-northward division of the Book of Mormon area all North America, the main land-southward division all South America, and the connecting isthmus or “small neck of land” the Isthmus of Panama. . . . two more recent theories **restrict the area** to some middle part only of the New World. One of these, which may be called the “limited Panama identification,” retains the Isthmus of Panama as the “small neck of land,” and identifies Central America (rather than the whole continent of North America) as the “land northward” and northwesternmost South America (Colombia and Ecuador, rather than all that continent) as the “land southward.” . . .

The other of these more restricted interpretations, which may be called the “limited Tehuantepec identification,” abandons Panama as the “small neck of land” or central isthmus feature of the Book of Mormon area and instead identifies as this feature the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Mexico. . . . This “Tehuantepec” area is therefore now accepted by nearly all students of the geography of the Book of Mormon as the area of that account, at least on the basis of agreements in physical geography. (*Progress in Archaeology*, pp. 82-84)

The Mormon writer Walter M. Stout seems to agree that the geography of the Book of Mormon must be limited to a small area, but he feels that Costa Rica is the correct area:

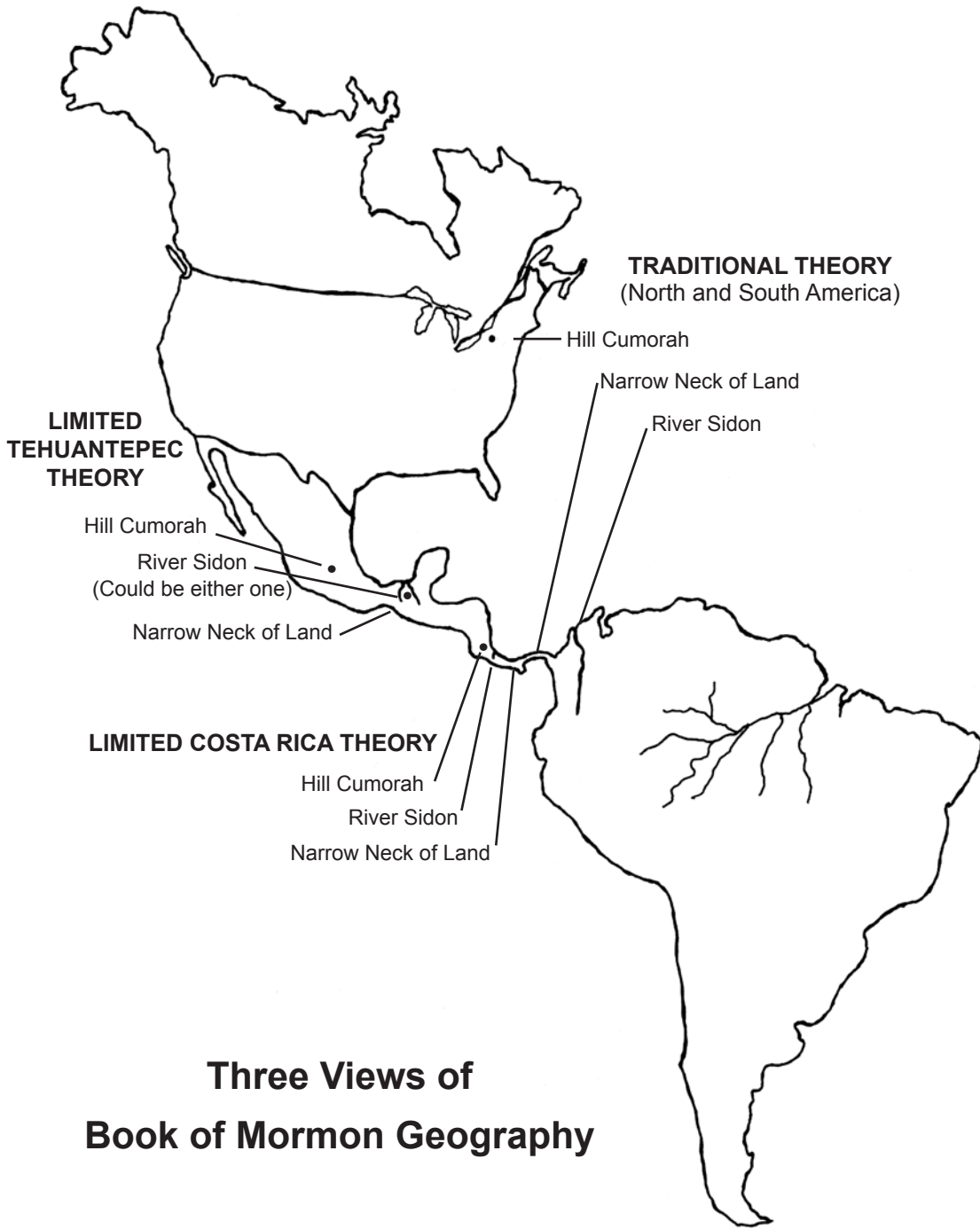
How I settled on Costa Rica is a long story. I had drawn an imaginary map, harmonizing fifty or more points, and spent many weeks trying to fit it into some country. I tried Colombia, on the Magdalena River, Panama, Spanish Honduras, on the Uluá River, Guatemala, and Southern Mexico, on the Rio Usumacinta River, and tried to fit the Isthmus of Tehuantepec into it, but this country is all backwards. The Book of Mormon does not describe it. The narrow places are North and South, when according to the Book of Mormon, they should be East and West. I tried Florida, New York and Lower California. I skipped over Costa Rica. Nothing caught my eye. I was discouraged and about to give up. Then one night I went to a show where the March of Time had something to do with Central America, and I was attracted to Costa Rica and Nicaragua. They resembled my imaginary map. I went to work on it, and right away it began to fit. . . .

Geography of the Book of Mormon will some day become one of the strongest outside evidences of the Book of Mormon. (*Harmony in Book of Mormon Geography*, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1950, pp. 2-3)

Mr. Stout does not accept the Isthmus of Panama or the Isthmus of Tehuantepec as the small neck of land mentioned in the Book of Mormon:

Other points to consider are: The isthmus of Panama is a long neck of land. It does not seem to answer this

**See graphic on next page**



description. It doesn't have an east and west sea, neither does the isthmus of Tehuantepec.

The only one answering all the descriptions is in Costa Rica. (*Harmony in Book of Mormon Geography*, p. 22)

Mr. Stout claimed that he "tried to fit the land of Cumorah into New York," but it would not work. According to his maps (pages 4-7), Mr. Stout has decided to locate the hill Cumorah in Costa Rica!

Dr. Nibley has contested the idea that the Isthmus of Tehuantepec is the small neck of land mentioned in the Book of Mormon: "To call the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, one hundred and thirty miles wide, a 'narrow passage' is of course out of the question" (*An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, p. 360).

In rebuttal to Dr. Nibley's statement, Dr. M. Wells Jakeman stated:

... this is **not** out of the question at all. Although the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in its present width of 130 miles, may be considered too wide to be described as a "small neck of land" or "narrow passage" in the absolute sense, in the relative sense—i.e. in comparison with the land areas on either side—it does fit these terms (and probably did even more in ancient Book of Mormon times, as there is evidence of a considerable regression of the sea on each side since those times)—else why do geographers designate it as an isthmus? (*U.A.S. Newsletter*, Number 40, March 30, 1957, pp. 10-11)

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn states that "there is but one river mentioned in the Book of Mormon, but it is mentioned many, many times, nearly thirty" (*The Contents, Structure & Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, p. 240). George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl state:

RIVER SIDON: One of the most important places in Nephite history for four or five hundred years was the River Sidon. It was their great highway, more to them than the Mississippi is to this country or the Thames is to England. (*Book of Mormon Geography, The Lands of the Nephites-The Jaredites*, by George Reynolds & Janne M. Sjodahl, Salt Lake City, 1957, p. 51)

C. Stewart Bagley states, "Identification of the Sidon river is necessarily one of the most important phases of our research" (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, p. 77). Even though Mormon writers have spent a great deal of time on this subject, they are not united concerning the location of this river. George Reynolds stated that the river Sidon is "known to-day as the Magdalena" (*A Complete Concordance of the Book of Mormon*, p. 633). Fletcher B. Hammond wrote:

Many Book of Mormon scholars think Us umacinta could have been Sidon of the Book of Mormon. There is no evidence that it is not. Its general course argues in its favor. That entire country for the last 1500 years has been subject to much geological change, as we shall see later, and Unumacinta, of today, may not in all respects fit Sidon of 400 A.D., yet it could be a modification of that river. (*Geography of the Book of Mormon*, Fletcher B. Hammond, p. 12)

Ross T. Christensen stated:

... Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, has identified—and you may find this discussed in various issues of the *Newsletter* (22.03, 34.01, 40.0)—the Usumacinta River as the Sidon of the Book of Mormon. Others have proposed the Grijalva, but this seems unsatisfactory to me. (*Newsletter & Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, BYU, January 13, 1969, p. 5)

Joseph E. Vincent tells of the problem he faced with the river Sidon when he tried to make a map of Book of Mormon lands:

The way I set up my map was this—and I agree that this method is definitely not above reproach. The archaeology department of B.Y.U. has thought that the Rio Usumacinta was the River Sidon, while members of the New World Archaeological Foundation have felt that it was the Rio Grijalva. Since the two rivers are actually

close together, I chose a line between the two and set it up as the River Sidon. (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, p. 65)

It would appear, then, that there is serious division among those who study the geography of the Book of Mormon. Dr. Daniel H. Ludlow made this interesting observation:

I think that as Latter-day Saints we have asked for some of the criticisms that we have received concerning some of the claims that we have made for the Book of Mormon. All of our claims cannot be right. When you get three different claims concerning something related to the Book of Mormon, and these claims do not agree, then all of them cannot be right. That does not mean that even any of them are right. The possibility is—at least it exists—that all of them are wrong. At least, if you have three different and separate claims, two of them have to be wrong, and only one of them can be right; and there is the possibility that all three of them could be wrong.

Yesterday afternoon I was preparing some material for my Book of Mormon sections for next quarter, when we go into the books of Mosiah and Alma. I was interested in the geography of the Book of Mormon. I pulled down three commentaries and books on the Book of Mormon and read three theories of Book of Mormon geography. In the books, they were even stated as more than theories. Two of the three books even had maps. One of them showed the Book of Mormon lands entirely in South America. One of them showed the Book of Mormon lands entirely in Central America. One of them showed the Book of Mormon lands in Central America and the rest in North America. Now, not all three of these can be right. Therefore, it seems to me that in these areas where we are not one hundred per cent sure, it would be best not to make the claim, rather than later on have to retract that claim. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, Dec. 5, 1959, p. 22)

The Mormon writer Paul R. Cheesman made these statements:

The geography of a country always helps us to understand its people better. Evidently it was not considered of prime importance to the writers of the Book of Mormon, however, since sufficient detailed information is not provided for us to determine with certainty the location of the areas or cities of the history. This should not discourage continuous study in this field, since future findings may help to establish the geography and thus clarify some aspects of the Book of Mormon.

There are those who believe that there are two Hill Cumorahs. Their theory is that the hill on which Mormon fought the last battle with the Lamanites is not the same hill in which Joseph Smith found the gold plates. Advocates of this theory establish their analysis primarily from the internal evidences of the Book of Mormon. Others conclude that there is only one Hill Cumorah, and that the place where Joseph Smith and Moroni met was the same place Mormon and Moroni visited in the fifth century. There is no official Church view.

Some say the "narrow neck of land" is Panama, and others the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico. (*The Instructor*, November 1968, p. 429)

In an address delivered March 25, 1964, Fletcher B. Hammond stated:

... it is practically impossible to point to any Book of Mormon land and say, unequivocally, here is that land. ... the Gentiles have not yet received the Book of Mormon by faith—or for any other reason—and until they do accept that book as scripture, it appears that empiracle facts will not be allowed to come forth as evidence of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. ... **it is next to impossible to make the geography of the Book of Mormon fit modern maps.** (*Geography of the Book of Mormon—'Where is the Hill Cumorah?'* p. 7)

In his larger book, Fletcher B. Hammond stated:

Where in Central America is there a country that well resembles the countries, the cities, and the places mentioned in the Book of Mormon? The answer must be: There is no present country in Central America, or elsewhere, patterned after the Book of Mormon lands. The



only conclusion that can be drawn from all of this discussion is that the entire face of the land of Central America has been changed since the destruction of the Nephites about 400 years after the crucifixion of Christ. . . . It appears that most, if not all, of the landmarks and monuments named in the Book of Mormon have been **obliterated** for a good and **wise purpose**. . . .

In the 109th Annual Conference Report at pages 128 and 129 Antoine R. Ivins is reported to have said:

Now if we go into Mexico and Central America, and into our own United States, and, by scraping aside the earth which has accumulated over the centuries, expose to view a consecutive and true story of this people which bear out in all its major details the story of the Book of Mormon, what a simple thing it would be. But it would lose in my mind, one of its greatest values. . . . I believe that God **purposely covered up these things** that when the Book of Mormon should come to light in this generation it would have to be accepted on **faith**. . . . Faith to me is the greatest thing in life, and God purposely, I believe, **covered up** in antiquity the history of this people and the story of the Book of Mormon so that when it should come to light it would have to rest upon faith, a faith that could be given to us only by God Himself. . . .

It seems that the Lord has changed the Book of Mormon lands since the extinction of the Nephites so that no one can say: Here is the “narrow neck of land”; here is the narrow strip of wilderness; here is the river Sidon; here is the hill Cumorah in Central America; here is the hill Shim in the land of Antum; etc., etc. If such places could be ascertained with certainty, knowledge of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon would come without faith; and that kind of knowledge is static. . . . He is keeping from this generation **all facts** possible that would produce knowledge of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon without the exercise of faith. Knowledge that comes after the exercise of faith always produces happiness; knowledge that is thrust upon us may not. (*Geography of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 122-126)

In this chapter we have shown that Mormon writers have made some fantastic claims about archaeology supporting the Book of Mormon. When these claims are put to the test, however, they are found to be very weak. Charles A. Shook made these comments concerning this matter:

In the Old World the archaeologist has little difficulty in arriving at a conclusion as to the general character of the ancient religions. The idols, the altars, the temples, the religious paintings and the hieroglyphical inscriptions of Egypt and Assyria leave him with no doubts as to the idolatrous character of the ancient religions of those countries. It requires but a passing glance for him to see that they did not partake of the distinctive features of Judaism and Christianity. But the evidences in Egypt and Assyria show no more conclusively that the old religions were not Judaism and Christianity than do those of America. Here, too, the idols, the temples, the altars, the religious paintings and the hieroglyphical inscriptions all testify to the idolatrous character of the ancient worship. There is not a figment of evidence to sustain the theory that the builders of Copan and Quirigua were monotheists, or that the builders of Chimú, in Peru, and Cholula and Teotihuacan, in Mexico, were Jews and Christians. I shall now put before the reader a number of reasons based upon the archaeology of the country, for believing that the ancient Americans were all pagans and idolaters.

1. We infer the heathen character of the ancient religions of America from the utter absence on this continent of both Jewish and Christian antiquities.

Although the Book of Mormon declares that as soon as the Nephites had become fully settled in Peru they built a temple “like unto Solomon’s,” and that afterwards they erected “temples,” “sanctuaries” and “synagogues,” “after the manner of the Jews,” **the Mormon archaeologist has never been able to point out the remains of a single Jewish religious edifice on the continent**. Neither has he been able to point out a single religious structure that bears evidence of ever having been used in Christian worship. . . . No archaeologist that I have ever heard of, whose writings are considered authoritative, mentions the finding of a single Jewish or Christian temple, altar, painting or inscription. With one accord they

all declare that the ancient inhabitants of those countries were pagans and idolaters. It will not do to claim that the ravages of time and of the warlike Lamanites have completely obliterated every trace of these structures, for, considering the widespread extent of these faiths and the length of time in which they were held, this would be next to impossible. Egypt and Assyria, too, have had their wars, and time and the elements have affected their ruins, but, nevertheless, enough data remain for the archaeologist to determine without difficulty the character of their worship, the names of their gods and many of their religious ceremonies and beliefs. If the ancient Americans were Jews and Christians, will the Mormon Church kindly tell us where the **archaeological proof** of it is to be found? (*Cumorah Revisited or ‘The Book of Mormon’ and the Claims of the Mormons Reexamined from the Viewpoint of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1910, pp. 444-446)

Although Mr. Shook asked this question in 1910, Mormon archaeologists are still unable to furnish any real proof that the Nephites ever existed.

## Compared With Bible Archaeology

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt once stated:

This generation have more that **one thousand times** the amount of evidence to demonstrate and forever establish the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon than they have in favor of the Bible! (*Orson Pratt’s Works*, “Evidences of the Book of Mormon and Bible Compared,” p. 64)

We feel that this statement is far from the truth. As we examine the evidence for the Book of Mormon we find that it is very weak. The only evidence for the existence of the gold plates is the testimony of 11 witnesses, and as we have already shown, this testimony can not be relied upon. A comparison of the archaeological evidence for the Book of Mormon with the evidence for the Bible clearly shows the weakness of the Mormon position. This, of course, is not to imply that there are no problems connected with Biblical archaeology, or that archaeological evidence alone can prove the Bible to be divinely inspired. Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., of the Smithsonian Institution, made this statement in a letter to Marvin Cowan:

Archaeological discoveries in the Near East have verified some statements in the Bible referring to certain tribes, places, etc. On the other hand there is no way in which they could verify the narrative parts of the Bible such as the actions, words, deeds, etc. of particular individuals. (Letter by Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., dated January 24, 1963)

In the same letter we find the statement that “There is no evidence whatever of any migration from Israel to America, and likewise no evidence that pre-Columbian Indians had any knowledge of Christianity or the Bible.”

The reader will remember that Dr. Nibley frankly admitted that no ancient inscription mentioning the Nephites has ever been found, and that “nothing short of an inscription which could be read and roughly dated would bridge the gap between what might be called a pre-actualistic archaeology and contact with the realities of Nephite civilization” (*Since Cumorah*, p. 243).

While the Nephites are never mentioned in any ancient inscription, the existence of the Israelites is verified by many inscriptions dating back hundreds of years before the time of Christ. The “earliest archaeological reference to the people of Israel” is a stele of the Egyptian ruler Merneptah which is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. In *The Biblical World* we find this information concerning this stele:

Merneptah, son and successor of Ramesses 2, ruled Egypt from ca. 1224 to ca. 1214 B.C. . . . His campaign in Palestine, waged during the fifth year of his reign (ca. 1220 B.C.) is commemorated on a large black granite stele which was found in Merneptah’s mortuary temple in Thebes. At the top is a representation of Merneptah



Photo of  
Merneptah Stele

and the god Amun, . . . Merneptah states:

Israel is laid waste, his seed is not;  
Hurru (i.e. Syria) is become a widow for Egypt.

The stele provides the first mention of Israel on ancient monuments, and provides proof that Israel was in western Palestine by 1220 B.C. (*The Biblical World*, edited by Charles F. Pfeiffer, Michigan, 1966, pp. 380-381)

John A. Wilson, a noted Egyptologist from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, made this comment concerning this stele:

This is the customary magniloquent claim that the god-king was victorious over all opponents, whether he had met them in battle or not. The appearance of Israel in an Asiatic context is interesting, but has no meaning in terms of armed conflict against Egypt. It merely shows that an Egyptian scribe was conscious of a people known as Israel somewhere in Palestine or Transjordan. (*The Culture of Ancient Egypt*, University of Chicago Press, 1965, p. 255)

Many ancient inscriptions mentioning the Israelites have been found, and some inscriptions even give the names of kings mentioned in the Bible. For instance, in 2 Kings 10:36 we read that “**Jehu** reigned over Israel in Samaria” for twenty-eight years. Although king **Jehu** lived more than 800 years before the time of Christ, his name has been located on an Assyrian obelisk known as the “Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser.” In *The Biblical World*, page 150, we find this information:

In his campaign at Calah (Nimrud) in 1846, A. H. Layard discovered a four-sided black limestone pillar 6 1/2 feet high, with five rows of roughly executed bas reliefs extending around the pillar. . . . The inscription reads,

Tribute of **Jehu**, son of Omri. I received from him silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden vase with pointed bottom, golden tumblers, golden buckets, tin, a staff for a king. . . .

This obelisk not only contains the name of the king but a picture of him as well. J. A. Thompson gives the following information in his book, *The Bible and Archaeology*, page 128:

Jehu is best known to us as the one king in either Israel or Judah whose picture we have today. The great Shalmaneser 3 was still reigning at the time of Jehu’s accession. He evidently had some dealings with Jehu in the year 842 B.C., for the large black obelisk found by the early excavator Sir Henry Layard at Nimrud in 1840 has a picture of Jehu bowing before Shalmaneser . . .

In 2 Kings 18:13-16 we read an account of how Sennacherib “king of Assyria” came up against “Hezekiah king of Judah.” Some remarkable parallels to the account in the Bible are found in the annals of Sennacherib. From a “hexagonal clay prism, found at Nineveh, and dating from 686 B.C.”, J. B. Pritchard translated the following: “. . . Hezekiah did send me later to Nineveh . . . **thirty talents of gold**, eight hundred **talents of silver** . . .” (*The Bible and Archaeology*, p. 144). It is very interesting to compare this with 2 Kings 18:14: “. . . the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred **talents of silver** and **thirty talents of gold**.” For other parallels see our book, *A Look at Christianity*, pages 86-87.

The New Testament mentions a number of rulers that are known to have lived around the time of Christ. For instance, the Bible tells us that Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate. That Pilate was an actual historical person was proved beyond all doubt in 1961 when “an inscription with the name of Pontius Pilate was found in the theater excavations” at Caesarea (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, September 1964, p. 71). Below is a photo of the stone inscription.



In *The Biblical World* we find the following:

An Italian expedition, . . . excavated the theater at Caesarea from 1959 to 1961. During the latter year the archaeologists discovered a stone inscription from the theater bearing the name of Pontius Pilate. The left side of the stone has been destroyed. The top line of the right side reads “Tiberieum,” which is understood to be a dedication to Tiberius, the Roman emperor of the period. The second line reads, “. . . tius Pilatus,” with the letters “Pon” missing, as well as the governor’s first name. The third line is badly damaged, but the letters visible may represent the title, “Military Procurator.” Pilate is known from references to him in the New Testament, Josephus, and Pliny. This is the first mention of him on inscriptions. (*The Biblical World*, p. 156)

For more information on the subject of archaeology and the Bible see our book *A Look at Christianity*.

The fact that the Jews were in Palestine at the time the Bible indicates is proven by hundreds of ancient Hebrew inscriptions that have been found on rocks, pieces of pottery and coins. Portions of every book of the Old Testament, except for the book of Esther, have also been found. These manuscripts are known as the Dead Sea Scrolls and date back to the time of Christ (see *A Look at Christianity*, pp. 89-91). In addition many inscriptions from other countries verify the fact that the Jews were present in Palestine.

When we turn to the Book of Mormon, however, we are unable to find any evidence at all that the Nephites ever existed. We must agree with the Mormon archaeologist Dee F. Green when he states:

The first myth we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology exists. . . . Biblical archaeology can be studied because we do know where Jerusalem and Jericho were and are, but we do not know where Zarahemla and Bountiful (nor any other location for that matter) were or are. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pp. 77-78)

## Document Forging Scheme Uncovered

On pages 104-108 of this book, we discuss the Anthon Transcript—a sheet of paper which is supposed to contain characters copied from the gold plates of the Book of Mormon. In 1980 it was announced that a man by the name of Mark Hofmann had discovered another copy of the transcript which was undoubtedly the very original transcript made by Joseph Smith. In light of this discovery, it was proclaimed that the transcript preserved by David Whitmer (see photograph on page 106 of this book) was only a very poor copy of the document found by Mark Hofmann. On May 3, 1980, the Church Section of the Mormon newspaper, *The Deseret News*, reported the following concerning Mr. Hofmann's find:

A hand-written sheet of paper with characters supposedly copied directly from the gold plates in 1828, and also bearing other writing and the signature of Joseph Smith, has been found in an old Bible by a Utah State University student.

This would make it the oldest known Mormon document as well as the earliest sample of the Prophet's handwriting. . . .

Experts believe the paper may be the original one copied by Joseph Smith from the plates and given to Martin Harris in February 1828 to take to New York City for examination by linguistic experts. . . .

The paper, written in faded brown ink, was discovered by Mark William Hofmann, . . . Written on the back, apparently after Harris brought the paper back from his encounter with Professor Anthon, are the following words (and spellings):

These caractors were diligently copied by my own hand from the plates of gold and given to Martin Harris who took them to New York Citty but the learned could not translate it because the Lord would not open it to them in fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaih written in the 29th chapter and 11th verse. [signed] Joseph Smith Jr.

"In my judgment, this writing is that of Joseph Smith," said Dean C. Jessee, senior historical associate in the Church Historical Department. He is a recognized authority on the handwriting of the Prophet. . . . Brother Jessee said that after a preliminary examination, the paper and ink also give every appearance of being authentic materials of the 1828 period. . . .

The discovery of the historic paper by Brother Hofmann was quite accidental.

In March he purchased . . . a Bible once owned by members of Joseph Smith's family. . . .

Handwriting in the Bible is signed by Samuel Smith, either the great-grandfather or great-great-grandfather of Joseph Smith. . . .

while leafing through the book, he noticed two pages stuck together. He carefully pulled them apart and saw a folded paper.

"I couldn't tell what it was, but I saw the signature of Joseph Smith. I wasn't sure it was genuine, but I got rather excited," he said.

The Mormon Church published color photographs of the Anthon Transcript and an article containing "compelling reasons for accepting it as genuine" in the July 1980 issue of *The Ensign*. The Mormon leaders were completely sold on the document. According to sworn testimony given by former Church Archivist Donald Schmidt, Hofmann was eventually given "roughly \$20,000" worth of items from the Church Archives in exchange for the old Bible and the sheet of paper found within its pages.

In 1980 Mormon scholars were rejoicing that Mark Hofmann had made such an outstanding discovery. Professor Richard L. Anderson, of Brigham Young University, was quoted by the *Provo Herald*, May 1, 1980, as saying the following:

"Joseph Smith's story is really vindicated by the finding of the document because he mentioned that he sent Harris to the East to show the characters on the gold plates to 'the learned.'

"We have Anthon's story in letters explaining exactly what Harris showed to him. What Anthon describes is quite remarkably like what is on the new transcript."

Dr. Anderson also commented:

"This new discovery is sort of a Dead Sea School [Scroll?] Equivalent of the Book of Mormon," . . . (*Ibid.*)

At first we could see no reason for doubting the "compelling" evidence Mormon scholars mounted in defence of the Hofmann document and included it in the 1982 edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* In 1983, however, we encountered some evidence which made us wonder about the authenticity of the important documents Mark Hofmann had been selling the Mormon Church and other collectors. The erosion of our faith in Mr. Hofmann began just after we obtained extracts from an important document he was selling which is known as the Salamander letter—a letter purportedly written by Book of Mormon witness Martin Harris to W. W. Phelps in 1830. We had just completed a book entitled, *Mormonism, Magic and Masonry*, in which we presented evidence linking early Mormonism to magic. We felt that the Salamander letter would provide additional evidence to support our case. As we read the extracts from the Salamander letter, however, we were shocked to find that there were important parallels to E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled*, which was first published in 1834—some four years after the Salamander letter was supposed



to have been penned. In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March 1984 we wrote that we had “some reservations concerning the authenticity of the letter, and at the present time we are not prepared to say that it was actually penned by Martin Harris.”

In the same issue of the *Messenger*, we pointed out the “disturbing” parallels to Howe’s book and said that although “the average person would have a difficult time forging these things, there are probably a number of people who could do the job. . . . While we would really like to believe that the letter attributed to Harris is authentic, we do not feel that we can endorse it until further evidence comes forth.”

On August 25, 1984, John Dart wrote the following in the *Los Angeles Times*: “. . . unusual caution . . . has been expressed by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, . . . The Tanners’ suggestion of forgery has surprised some Mormons, who note that the parallels in wording could be taken as evidence for authenticity.” The *Deseret News* for September 1, 1984, reported:

. . . outspoken Mormon Church critics Jerald and Sandra Tanner suspect the document is a forgery, they told the *Deseret News*.

Jerald Tanner . . . says similarities between it and other documents make its veracity doubtful. . . .

Another disturbing aspect, Tanner said, was the letter seemed out of character for Harris. “In the entire text of the letter, there is no mention of religion . . . if it’s a forgery, then it’s important because there’s a document forger out there.”

By August 1984 it was clear that the evidence we had found against the Salamander letter cast doubt on all the important discoveries Mark Hofmann had made since 1980. On August 22, 1984, Utah Lighthouse Ministry published the first part of a pamphlet called *The Money-Digging Letters*. On page 9 of that publication the following statement appeared:

. . . a number of important documents have come to light during the 1980’s. The questions raised by the Salamander letter have forced us to take a closer look at some of these documents.

On July 10, 1985, we published a study of the Anthon Transcript which suggested that there may be spelling problems in the material written on the back of the document which is supposed to be in the handwriting of Joseph Smith (see *Mr. Boren and the White Salamander*, pp. 9-10).

While doing research with regard to the Salamander letter, we discovered something about Hofmann’s copy of the Anthon Transcript which caused some concern. This was Charles Anthon’s letter, printed in *Mormonism Unveiled*, describing the sheet of paper which contained the characters copied from the Book of

Mormon. Anthon stated that the “letters . . . were arranged in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, . . .” This description exactly matched the document which Mark Hofmann found in 1980. The transcript which was preserved by David Whitmer, however, is quite different. Instead of having the characters running in vertical columns, this paper has them going horizontally. Furthermore, it does not have a circular object. When Hofmann made his remarkable discovery, Anthon’s letter was appealed to as evidence that the real “Anthon Transcript” had been found. At the time, this seemed to be a good argument for the document’s authenticity, but when we later examined E. D. Howe’s *Mormonism Unveiled* in the light of its possible relationship to the Salamander letter, we discovered that Anthon’s letter is printed on page 272 of that book. This could be rather significant because the important parallels to the Salamander letter begin on the very next page (page 273). We could not help but wonder if Howe’s book had provided the creative impulse for both the Anthon Transcript and the Salamander letter.

Although no one seemed to think about it at the time, Mark Hofmann did not reveal from whom he had obtained the Bible in which the Anthon Transcript was discovered. In an affidavit Hofmann made he speaks of him as a “gentleman friend of mine.” In *The Ensign*, July 1980, page 73, he referred to him as “a collector friend.” The Church Section of the *Deseret News* called him “the unnamed Salt Lake Collector” (May 3, 1980). At one time Mark Hofmann told a scholar that the name of the man was confidential but some people knew him as Mr. “White.” As far as we can learn, no one has ever found out the identity of this mysterious individual. Since collectors sometimes have a policy of checking out every page of a rare book, we felt that it would be important to be able to talk to the man and see if he remembered anything between the pages of the Bible. In this regard it is interesting to note that Mark Hofmann claimed the transcript was “folded in fourths” within the Bible (*The Ensign*, July 1980, p. 73). After we became suspicious of his story, we did an experiment with a Bible and a single sheet of paper. We found that when the paper is “folded in fourths,” it becomes four times as thick and this makes it rather obvious that something is in the book.

In spite of the warnings which we printed, Mormon Church leaders continued to deal with and help Mark Hofmann until the middle of October 1985. On the 15th of that month Salt Lake City was rocked with the news that bombs had killed two

people. One was the Mormon bishop Steven F. Christensen. It was later discovered that Mr. Christensen had been working secretly with the Mormon Church and Mark Hofmann to obtain some documents that were embarrassing to the church. These documents were to be purchased by an anonymous buyer who would eventually donate them to the church. On October 16, a bomb exploded in Mark Hofmann's car and he was critically injured. At first the police thought Mr. Hofmann was the victim of a cruel bomber. Within a short time, however, they came to believe that Hofmann himself was the bomber and that he was transporting a bomb which accidentally exploded. Mr. Hofmann was eventually charged with murdering Steven Christensen and Kathleen Sheets, the wife of another Mormon bishop. On January 23, 1987, Mark Hofmann pled guilty to the murder charges and also confessed that the Salamander letter was a forgery. Document experts carefully examined many of Mr. Hofmann's other documents and found that they were forgeries. The Anthon Transcript is included on the list of spurious documents that came through his hands. In sentencing Mr. Hofmann, Judge Rigrtrup recommended that "you spend the rest of your natural life at the Utah State Prison" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 24, 1987).

In an article published in the *New York Times*, February 16, 1986, Robert Lindsey wrote the following:

SALT LAKE CITY, Feb. 13 — Court documents indicate that prosecutors will try to prove that a murder suspect here set out to extort hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by forging embarrassing historical documents and then offering to sell them secretly to church leaders. . . .

Prosecutors say that Mr. Hofmann, perhaps with the help of an unknown accomplice to help make the forgeries, set out in the early 1980's to defraud the church by selling it forged documents that cast doubt on the validity of the Book of Mormon and other aspects of church teachings. . . . Prosecutors speculate that the church officials may have placed most of the documents in their vault without authenticating them because they were regarded as potentially embarrassing to the church.

Court documents indicate that some prosecutors in the Salt Lake County Attorney's office believe Mr. Hofmann's goal was not only to obtain money from the church through the sale of the documents but also to establish enough credibility that he could shape the world's perception of Mormonism.

This view is shared by a man here who was the first to suggest that Mr. Hofmann was forging his documents. He is Jerald Tanner, a

former Mormon who heads the Utah Lighthouse Ministry, which for decades has been challenging the truth of much of Mormon doctrine.

In an interview, Mr. Tanner said he decided . . . that the Hofmann documents might be forgeries, even though some of them . . . supported his own iconoclastic views of Mormonism.

In a newsletter that he publishes with his wife, Sandra, Mr. Tanner began raising questions about their authenticity, in some cases comparing the texts with known Mormon writings.

But if senior Mormon officials were aware of his warnings, they apparently paid little attention. Several of the church's highest officials have acknowledged negotiating to acquire documents from Mr. Hofmann until the day of the first two bombings.

Mr. Tanner said it appeared that Mr. Hofmann's growing credibility as a source of documents was putting him in a position where the documents he presented were considered unassailable. If that continued, Mr. Tanner said, Mr. Hofmann "could control the direction of Mormon history."

At Mark Hofmann's preliminary hearing [April, 1986], his close friend, Lyn Jacobs, confessed that he did not find the Salamander letter in New York as he and Mark Hofmann had previously maintained. He admitted, in fact, that he had decided "to fabricate a story" concerning the origin of the letter:

Q— . . . did you have occasion to tell people that it was—that you were the one who located the item and purchased the item and that Mr. Hofmann was brought in to help you market the item?

A—Unfortunately, that is correct.

Q—And you're doing this under Mr. Hofmann's instruction?

A—Not instructions, under his request. Not his request that I fabricate a story, but that his request that I take full responsibility for the document. That was my decision, to **fabricate a story** several months later.

At the preliminary hearing the evidence against Mark Hofmann's documents was finally revealed to the public. We had always felt that the best way to examine Hofmann's documents would be to get them all together and see if there was something they shared in common that could not be found in other 19th century documents. For instance, if it could be shown that the paper or ink was exactly the same in many of Hofmann's documents, this would certainly cast a shadow of doubt on their authenticity. At the preliminary hearing we learned that experts did, in fact, examine the documents as a group and concluded that there were features that many of the Hofmann documents exhibited which indicated they were forgeries. William Flynn, a noted forensic document

expert, testified concerning the research that revealed the documents were forgeries. Mr. Flynn is the Chief Questioned Documents Examiner for the State of Arizona.

William Flynn claimed he examined “about 461 documents.” In his testimony he disclosed that it was the contents of the ink used on the documents and the attempt to artificially age it that produced a flaky or cracked appearance which gave the whole scam away:

**Q**—With respect to the ink, did you find any peculiar or abnormal characteristics associated with any of the documents?

**A**—Yes.

**Q**—Can you tell us . . . what that would be?

**A**—Yes. On many of the documents, . . . there appeared a microscopic cracking on the surface of the ink. These appeared on the questioned . . . documents that we were examining.

**Q**—Besides the cracking, was there any other characteristics?

**A**—Yes. Under ultraviolet examination, on several of the questioned documents, there was a one-directional running of the inks or a constituent part of the inks, as if they had been wet.

**Q**—Were you able to determine if there had been any additions on any of the documents—any additional applications of ink?

**A**—Yes. On several of the documents, there were inks that were not consistent with the body of the document. That is to say that data had been added to the document with a different ink.

**Q**—Now, . . . besides these characteristics, was there anything common about the documents that you found these characteristics on?

**A**—Yes.

**Q**—What was that?

**A**—These anomalies that I spoke of all occurred on documents that had been dealt by the defendant in the case, Mark Hofmann.

**Q**—Can you tell us which documents these were?

**A**—Yes. The documents, in particular, that we found problems with were . . . the Anthon transcript, the Joseph Smith 3 Blessing, four different white notes, the Lucy Mack Smith document . . . the Josiah Stowell letter of June 18th, 1825, the document we call the E. B. Grandin contract, the Martin Harris–W. W. Phelps document called the Salamander letter, . . . the General Smith, General Dunham (I’m sorry)—Joseph Smith letter, the David Whitmer to Walter Conrad document, the document later called the Betsy Ross letter, the Solomon Spalding–Sidney Rigdon land deed, the letter to Brigham Young from Thomas Bullock, dated June 27, 1865, a promissory note to Isaac Galland from Joseph Smith, a letter called the Maria and Sarah

Lawrence letter, the Samuel Smith Bible, the Nathan Harris prayer book, the Bithel Todd–Peter and David Whitmer document, and then later there were several types of currency that were also examined.

**Q**—Let me ask you this. Besides these particular ones that you’ve mentioned, associated with Mr. Mark Hofmann, were there any other documents out of the 461 or so that you have examined that exhibit these characteristics?

**A**—No.

**Q**—And were there any documents that were not associated with Mark Hofmann that exhibit those characteristics?

**A**—No.

Mr. Flynn went on to testify that he read in “one of the old texts” concerning the “artificial aging of iron gallotannic ink by exposing it to ammonia. . . . After I read that, I made iron gallotannic inks of various types myself and exposed them to . . . both ammonia and sodium hydroxide, and found that . . . it did, indeed, artificially age the inks. . . . The sodium hydroxide, in particular, will immediately take the iron gallotannic inks and turn them a deep rust color on the paper. It won’t crack the inks, however. It was not until I began adding some of the additives that were typically added to the inks of that time period, in particular, the sugars and the gums and probably the most . . . commonly used additive in that time period would have been gum arabic, . . .” Flynn explained that gum arabic

was commonly added to the ink to give it body, as a viscosity adjuster to adjust the thickness of the ink, and also as a preservative. . . . When I mixed the iron gallotannic inks and added either the sugars or the gum arabic and then artificially aged them with the sodium hydroxide, I got exactly the same phenomenon that I described in the examination of the questioned documents. The ink both artificially aged and cracked.

It appears from William Flynn’s testimony that the forger was tripped up by the use of gum arabic or sugars in the ink. Although we do not know that the ink found in the Hofmann documents was composed from the exact ingredients mentioned in a formula in a book found in Hofmann’s home, it is interesting to note that this formula “To Make Black Ink” calls for “one Ounce **Gum Arabic**” (*Great Forgers and Famous Fakes*, by Charles Hamilton, p. 267).

At the preliminary hearing document expert George Throckmorton testified that he examined the purported Joseph Smith writing on the back of the Anthon Transcript. He reported that he was unable



to reach “a positive identification” on the handwriting. He noted, however, that Joseph Smith “was not very neat. In fact, in my own terms I would say he is quite a sloppy writer.” His opinion concerning the writing on the Anthon Transcript was that the “quality of the writing is too neat for the writing that I saw from Joseph Smith. It’s not consistent with how he normally wrote. In fact, the writing appears to be a higher quality than he was ever capable of doing.”

Mr. Throckmorton observed that the Hofmann document had “a characteristic glowing effect” under ultraviolet light. Kenneth Rendell, a noted document dealer, said that the “color of the ink” did not seem right in the Anthon Transcript.

Document experts did not find evidence of cracking in the ink on the Anthon Transcript itself, but they were convinced that heat had been used to artificially age the ink. William Flynn noted: “What was unusual about the heating pattern on the document was that . . . it was not uniform throughout the document, but there was an area that was more highly scorched . . .” George Throckmorton seemed to feel that a common household iron could have been used on the transcript:

**Q**—What did you do to duplicate, or at least in your opinion, duplicate what’s exhibited on the Anthon Transcript—this scorching?

**A**—I, first of all, used modern-day papers to experiment with and by placing an iron at different temperatures for varying lengths of time to see how long it would take before that scorching effect occurred. Later on, I progressed backwards and eventually was able to use some of the cover letters that we were able to obtain for experimentation purposes.

**Q**—You say cover letters from the time period of the 19th century, . . . ?

**A**—That’s correct. And the same experiments were conducted then. I also dipped some of those in an ammonium hydroxide solution and other types of solutions and after drying, heated them or during the process of drying I also heated them and was able to come up with this same characteristic feature.

The most devastating evidence against the Anthon transcript came when the Bible in which it was supposed to have been discovered was examined. The Mormon writer Daniel W. Bachman gave this information about the Bible:

. . . inserted in the center of the Bible is a handwritten copy of the entire book of Amos with the signature of Samuel Smith at the end . . . Hofmann’s supposition was that this Samuel was either the great-grandfather or the great-great-grandfather of the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1980, p. 327)

William Flynn noted that the purported Samuel Smith addition to the Bible “bears the dated watermark of 1819, showing that the paper was manufactured in 1819.” Mr. Flynn testified that the signature *Samuel Smith* did **not** agree with the handwriting found in the text of the document and that it was written in a different ink:

**Q**— . . . Did you have an occasion to compare the handwriting of the body of the writing with the signature itself?

**A**—Yes.

**Q**—And what was the results of the comparison?

**A**—The writer of the text, which comprises the book of Amos, is not the same writer that signed the name *Samuel Smith* at the end of that writing.

**Q**—How about the ink itself on the signature. Is there a difference in that and the body of the text?

**A**—Yes. The ink comprising *Samuel Smith* appears nowhere in the text of the writings of the book of Amos.

Flynn went on to testify that he believed another name had been written where “Samuel Smith” now appears and that this had been “bleached out”:

. . . there was an area around the signature *Samuel Smith* that had been bleached out. What it appears is that there had been a different signature at that location which had been—old writing—that had been bleached out and the name *Samuel Smith* written on top.

That the name *Samuel Smith* was a fraudulent addition to the document was clearly revealed when William Flynn observed it under a microscope: “The *Samuel Smith* signature in the Bible was indeed one of the cracked inks.” Mr Flynn also testified: “The writing in the text itself exhibited no cracking. The writing of the signature *Samuel Smith* did.”

William Flynn’s research also revealed that the Anthon Transcript could **not** have been in the Bible for any great length of time:

If the document had been in intimate contact with the pages of this Bible over a prolonged period of time, I would have expected the characters themselves which were made of the iron gallotanic ink to transfer onto the pages themselves. The highly acidic ink would have burned the pages in the form of the letters themselves—the characters which comprise the ink. In fact that did not happen. There is a uniform browning across the page rather than the ink itself, the characters of the ink, burning the pages in the shapes of the . . . letters and the characters on the page.

When Mr. Flynn was asked his opinion concerning the authenticity of the Anthon Transcript, he replied: “My opinion [is] it is not a document from that period.”

The fall of the Hofmann document will have no real effect on those who are critical of the Mormon Church. To our knowledge, none of the critics have published any special claims concerning it. Some people felt the transcript might contain magic characters. We tried very hard to find evidence to support this idea but were finally forced to conclude that the “similarities” were not “sufficient to prove the case” (*Mormonism, Magic and Masonry*, p. 42). We compared the Hofmann manuscript with many documents and samples of ancient writing, but in the end we found ourselves feeling frustrated with the transcript. Instead of containing anything related to any language, Hofmann’s document appeared to be composed of meaningless doodlings.

Mormons, on the other hand, have much to be embarrassed about. Spencer W. Kimball, the “Prophet, Seer and Revelator” of the church, examined the transcript with a magnifying glass and could detect nothing wrong with it. The Church Section of the *Deseret News*, May 3, 1980, reported: “President Spencer W. Kimball expressed gratitude to Brother Hofmann for his discovery and ‘for bringing it to our attention and for leaving it in the custody of the Historical Department.’” Since the Prophet and the other leaders of the church could not find anything wrong with the document, Mr. Hofmann was given “roughly \$20,000” worth of items from the Mormon Archives.

It is interesting to note that the Mormon Church’s most noted apologist, Dr. Hugh Nibley, not only felt that the transcript was genuine but went so far as to proclaim that it contained Egyptian characters which could be translated! In the *Provo Herald*, May 1, 1980, Dr. Nibley was quoted as saying:

“This offers as good a test as we’ll ever get as to the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.” . . .

In the same paper, Nibley triumphantly announced:

“Of course it’s translatable.”

According to *The Herald*,

Nibley also said he counted at least two dozen out of 47 characters in the Demotic alphabet that could be given phonetic value.

This offers as good a test as we’ll ever get. **Nobody could have faked those characters.** It would take 10 minutes to see that this is fake.

On May 12, 1980, the *Provo Herald* reported:

The *Herald* called Hugh Nibley to see if he was still confident about his earlier assessment.

“I still say just what I said before. **It can be translated.**”

As time passed it became evident that neither Dr. Nibley nor any other scholar was able to produce an acceptable translation of Hofmann’s transcript and all talk about a translation eventually ceased. The fact that Hugh Nibley could see so many Egyptian characters in this forgery certainly casts a shadow of doubt on the other work he has done in defence of the church.

While Mormon scholars could not produce a translation of the Hofmann document, an opportunist by the name of Barry Fell seized upon the situation and claimed that he could read the document. He declared, in fact, that the first line should be translated: “. . . I, Nefi, a son born of sagacious parents, . . .” This, of course, sounds like the first eight words of the Book of Mormon: “I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, . . .” (1 Nephi 1:1) In line three Fell claimed to find these words: “My father, Lehi, was of Salem, . . .” This is similar to 1 Nephi 1:4: “. . . my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem . . .” Mr. Fell claimed that line two contained the words “Zedekiah” and “Judah.” These two names are also found in 1 Nephi 1:4.

Dr. Fell submitted his manuscript on the transcript to *Brigham Young University Studies*, but those in charge felt that it should not be published. In a letter Fell received from *BYU Studies*, dated June 19, 1980, we find the following:

. . . *BYU Studies* has been very interested in the Hofmann Document find and at first hoped to print a photographic copy and a translation of it; but after some consideration we thought it too early for the kind of serious study and translation the document needs. Then friends of Herm Olsen told us you could translate the document . . . Our reaction was an immediate yes, we are interested. We even held space in the Summer 1980 issue anticipating your article.

We have had six independent referees read your article and study the accompanying translations. . . . the sections we can understand were found to have significant problems. . . .

As is the case with all the refereed journals, when the referees are unanimous in their decision not to publish, we cannot publish; therefore I have returned your article to Prof. Paul Cheesman. . . . the present effort appears too preliminary for us to use.

One interesting result of the discussion of the Hofmann document was that it brought forth a statement by the Mormon Egyptologist Edward H. Ashment concerning his attempt to decipher the Whitmer copy of the transcript—i.e., the authentic transcript which appears on page 106 of this book. Ashment wrote the following in *Sunstone*, May–June 1980, page 30:

Nephi clearly had to learn the same type of Egyptian as did his father . . . that type of Egyptian presumably would be recognizable as a known form of ancient Egyptian.

The characters on the Anthon Transcript are not thus recognizable. The author studied them with one of the world’s foremost Demoticists. They have resisted decipherment as Demotic and stand just as little chance of representing earlier forms of ancient Egyptian.

The improbability that the characters of the Anthon Transcript are related to any known form of Egyptian does not rule out comparative studies, . . .

A proper interim conclusion is: Moroni’s statement that “none other people knoweth our language” must still be seriously considered.”

We will have more material concerning Mark

Hofmann's forgeries and the serious implications they present to the Mormon leaders in chapter 13 of this book. For those who are interested in the subject we recommend our book, *Tracking the White Salamander: The Story of Mark Hofmann, Murder and Forged Mormon Documents*.

### Mormon Church Admits That The Kinderhook Plates Are Fraudulent

On pages 111-115 of this book we discuss the Kinderhook plates. Joseph Smith accepted these plates as authentic and began to translate them. Later, however, it was discovered they were nothing but "a joke" prepared by his enemies. We pointed out that in September 1962, the church's *Improvement Era* reported that one of the original Kinderhook plates had been rediscovered (facsimiles, of course, had always been available) and that this plate proved Joseph Smith's "prophetic calling." Subsequent examination of the plate, however, revealed that it was of modern origin. As we pointed out on page 113, George M. Lawrence, a Mormon physicist, was given permission to examine and make "some non-destructive physical studies of the surviving plate." He found that "The dimensions, tolerances, composition and workmanship are consistent with the facilities of an 1843 blacksmith shop and with the fraud stories of the original participants."

Since Mr. Lawrence was only allowed to make non-destructive tests, some Mormon scholars would not accept his work as conclusive.

In 1980 the Mormon scholar Stanley P. Kimball was able "to secure permission from the Chicago Historical Society for the recommended destructive tests. These tests, involving some very sophisticated analytical techniques, were performed by Professor D. Lynn Johnson of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at Northwestern University" (*The Ensign*, August 1981, p. 69).

Professor Kimball describes the results of the tests in the official church publication, *The Ensign*, August 1981:

A recent electronic and chemical analysis of a metal plate (one of six original plates) brought in 1843 to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Illinois, appears to solve a previously unanswered question in Church history, helping to further evidence that the plate is what its producers later said it was—a nineteenth-century attempt to lure Joseph Smith into making a translation of ancient-looking characters that had been etched into the plates. . . .

As a result of these tests, we concluded that the plate owned by the Chicago Historical Society is not of ancient origin. We concluded that the plate was etched with acid; and as Paul Cheesman and other scholars have pointed out, ancient inhabitants would probably have engraved the plates rather than etched them with acid. Secondly, we concluded that the plate was made from a true brass alloy (copper and zinc) typical of the mid-nineteenth century; whereas the "brass" of ancient times was actually bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. (*The Ensign*, August 1981, pp. 66, 70)

As we pointed out on page 113 of this book, back in 1970 the Mormon scholar John A. Wittorf tried to come to grips with what would happen if the Kinderhook plates were proven to be forgeries:

Accepting the find as genuine, Joseph had facsimile drawings of the plates made, presumably for future study. The brevity of his translation of "a portion of the plates" precludes the possibility that—if the plates are ultimately demonstrated to be fraudulent—his abilities as a translator of ancient scripts and languages can be called into question.

In rebuttal to this statement we wrote that we cannot agree with him when he states that Joseph Smith's reputation as a translator will not be affected. We feel that Joseph Smith's work



A photograph of one of the Kinderhook plates. Joseph Smith "translated" a portion of these plates and claimed they contained the history of a descendant of Ham. Recent tests, however, show they are forgeries.

on the plates casts serious doubt upon his ability as a translator of "ancient scripts and languages." He definitely stated that he "translated a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of heaven and earth." (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 372) Now, in order to obtain this much information from the plates it would have been necessary to have translated quite a number of the characters, and a man who could make such a serious mistake with regard to the Kinderhook plates is just the type of man who would pretend to translate the Book of Abraham from Egyptian papyri which he knew nothing about.

The Mormon scholar Paul R. Cheesman opened the door for an entirely different approach to the problem in an article written in March, 1970. He suggested that Joseph Smith was not really the author of the statement about the translation which appeared in the *History of the Church*:

As of now, the original source of Joseph Smith's statement, under the date of May 1, 1843, concerning the Kinderhook Plate, cannot be found. Much of Volume V of the *Documentary History of the Church* was recorded by Leo Hawkins in 1853, after the saints were in Utah, and was collected by Willard Richards from journals. . . . Liberty was taken by historians of those days to put the narrative in the first person, even though the source was not as such. Verification of the authenticity of Joseph Smith's statement is still under study. In examining the diary of Willard Richards, the compiler of Volume V, the Kinderhook story is not found there. Our research has taken us through numerous diaries and letters written at this particular time, and the Kinderhook story is not mentioned. ("An Analysis of the Kinderhook Plates," an unpublished paper by Paul R. Cheesman, p. 2)

Some of our readers will remember that as early as 1965 we charged that Joseph Smith was not really the author of a large portion of the material attributed to him in the *History of the Church*. As we shall point out in the next chapter, this was



finally confirmed by Dean C. Jessee of the Church Historical Department in an article published in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971. According to Jessee's research over 60% of Joseph Smith's *History* was compiled after his death. In any case, the idea with regard to the Kinderhook plates seemed to be that if they turned out to be forgeries, a person could get the church off the hook by arguing that the statement attributed to Joseph Smith concerning the translation was also spurious. This is certainly a strange way of looking at the matter—almost as if “two wrongs” would make “a right.” Since the *History of the Church* was prepared by the highest officials of the Mormon Church and printed by the church itself, to admit falsification in it is to undermine the entire foundation of Mormonism.

Since the recent tests on the Kinderhook plate, Mormon apologists find themselves facing a real dilemma, and there is no way out without doing serious injury to the church. Stanley B. Kimball chose to discredit the accuracy of the *History of the Church* rather than admit that Joseph Smith “translated” bogus plates:

It has been well known that the serialized “History of Joseph Smith” consists largely of items from other persons’ personal journals and other sources, collected during Joseph Smith’s lifetime and continued after the Saints were in Utah, then edited and pieced together to form a history of the Prophet’s life “in his own words.” (*The Ensign*, August 1981, p. 67)

Professor Kimball was apparently planning to advance the argument that since the part in Joseph Smith's *History* concerning the Kinderhook plate was not recorded until after his death and since there seems to be nothing written in any journal during his lifetime, it must have been made up by later historians. Before Kimball printed his article, however, he was informed that the church was suppressing a journal written by William Clayton which contained evidence that Joseph Smith did “translate” a portion of the plates. This journal was hidden in the First Presidency's vault, but Kimball was able to obtain a copy of the important portion:

President J. has translated a portion and says they contain the history of the person with whom they were found, and he was a descendant of Ham through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of heaven and earth. (*Ibid.*, p. 73)

Professor Kimball maintains that this is the original source for the entry in Joseph Smith's *History*. Speaking of this *History*, Kimball writes:

Although this account appears to be the writing of Joseph Smith, it is actually an excerpt from a journal of William Clayton. . . . the words “I have translated a portion” originally read “President J. has translated a portion. . . .” . . . this altered version of the extract from William Clayton's journal was reprinted in the *Millennial Star* of 15 January 1859, and, unfortunately, was finally carried over into official Church history when the “History of Joseph Smith” was edited into book form as the *History of the Church* in 1909. (*Ibid.*, pp. 67-68)

Stanley Kimball is undoubtedly correct in assuming that Clayton's journal is the source for the entry in Joseph Smith's *History*. The two writings appear to be too similar to be coincidental. While this shows evidence of falsification on the part of church leaders as far as the *History of the Church* goes, Clayton's journal proves that Joseph Smith claimed he had “translated a portion” of the plates. This testimony by Clayton cannot be easily set aside. For one thing, Clayton's account is contemporary with the event. According to Kimball, “in his journal entry of Monday, May 1, he included a tracing of one of the plates” (*Ibid.*, p. 71).

Furthermore, Clayton was Joseph Smith's scribe and was in constant contact with him. James B. Allen wrote:

Beginning in early 1842, then, William Clayton became involved in nearly every important activity in Nauvoo, including the private concerns of the Prophet. . . . He became an intimate friend and confidant of Joseph Smith, writing letters for him, recording revelations, and performing important errands. As a scribe he kept the sacred “Book of the Law of the Lord”; was officially designated to write the history of the Nauvoo Temple; helped prepare the official history of Joseph Smith (indeed, his personal journals become the source for many entries in that history); and kept various other books . . . for almost two and a half years, until Joseph's death in 1844, they were in each other's presence almost daily. (*Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 6, 1979, pp. 42-43)

If anyone would be in a position to know what Joseph Smith really believed about the Kinderhook plates, it would be William Clayton.

Since Clayton's journal was apparently used for the statement about the Kinderhook plate in the *History of the Church*, it shows that the highest leaders of the Church at the time the *History* was compiled also believed that Joseph Smith “translated a portion” of the plates. Wilford Woodruff (who became the fourth President of the Church) and George A. Smith said that the *History* was “carefully revised under the strict inspection of President Brigham Young, and approved by him” (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, Preface, p. VI).

Besides the Clayton journal, there is other contemporary evidence that Joseph Smith “translated a portion” of the plates. On May 7, 1843, just six days after the entry appears in Clayton's journal, the Apostle Parley P. Pratt wrote a letter containing the following:

“Six plates having the appearance of Brass have lately been dug out of a mound by a gentleman in Pike Co. Illinois. They are small and filled with engravings in Egyptian language and contain the genealogy of one of the ancient Jaredites back to Ham the son of Noah.” (*The Ensign*, August 1981, p. 73)

The reader will notice that both Pratt's and Clayton's accounts agree that the Kinderhook plates contain information about a descendant of “Ham.” As we have already pointed out, if Joseph Smith had not been murdered in June 1844, it is very possible he might have published a complete “translation” of the Kinderhook plates. Just a month before his death it was reported that he was “busy in translating them. The new work which Jo. is about to issue as a translation of these plates will be nothing more nor less than a sequel to the Book of Mormon; . . .” (*Warsaw Signal*, May 22, 1844).

The fact that Joseph Smith was actually preparing a translation of the plates is verified by a broadside published by the Mormon newspaper, *The Nauvoo Neighbor*, in June 1843. On this broadside, containing facsimiles of the plates, we find the following: “The contents of the Plates, together with a Fac-Simile of the same, will be published in the ‘Times and Seasons,’ as soon as the translation is completed.” It is certainly possible that the church still has Joseph Smith's unpublished work on the Kinderhook plates.

On page 114 of this book, we reported that some scholars felt the inscriptions on the Kinderhook plates were copied from the writing of the Lo tribe in China. Dr. Edward Hope of the United Bible Societies questions this identification. In a letter to us, dated August 26, 1976, he wrote:

1. The language of the “texts” is not Lo or Lolo. This language has topic and sentence-end markers which occur in virtually every sentence. If the language were Lolo one would expect at least two symbols to recur quite regularly. . . .
2. A few of the symbols look like Lolo symbols. . . . Most, if not all, Lolo symbols bear resemblance to Chinese. Since the Lolo were completely illiterate, and Chinese was the only writing system in the area, this is not surprising. If the

Kinderhook plates were copied from a Chinese tea chest the similarity to certain Lolo symbols would be explained.

3. It is highly unlikely that the Kinderhook plates represent the written form of any human language. If one examines the symbols, and the sequence of symbols, it becomes very plain that many of them are “variations” on other nearby symbols. When taken with the surprising lack of repetition, it certainly looks as if someone were making the symbols up, and avoiding repetitions. The middle plate in the bottom row is especially suspect. Most of this plate is simply variations on two “symbols.” It was either done by someone with less imagination than the others, or was done in a hurry. There is no way this plate could represent a human language.

However this may be, in 1970 Paul R. Cheesman could see that scientific study of the Kinderhook plate was not coming up with the results the church had hoped for. In an attempt to side-step the serious implications of the matter, he came up with a new theory—i.e., the plates that Joseph Smith had were genuine but since that time, “It is quite possible that someone duplicated a fake set of plates and took the original” (“An Analysis of the Kinderhook Plates,” p. 16). Cheesman noted there was a discrepancy between the size of the plate which was rediscovered and a description given by “J. Roberts” which was first published in the *Quincy Whig*. The Mormon scholar Stanley B. Kimball has now completely closed the door to this avenue of escape. He says that the figures J. Roberts “gave the *Whig* appear to be estimates only. For in contrast to those estimates, which come to us second-hand, the tracings in the Clayton and Brigham Young journals, as well as the broadside facsimiles, all match the Chicago plate in size” (*The Ensign*, August 1981, p. 74, n. 10). On page 70 of the same article, Professor Kimball presents additional evidence that “the Chicago plate is indeed one of the original Kinderhook plates, . . .”

In the *Mormon History Association Newsletter*, for June 1981, Stanley B. Kimball was quoted as saying:

The time has come to admit that the Kinderhook Plate incident of 1843 was a light-hearted, heavy-handed, frontier-style prank, or “joke” as the perpetrators themselves called it. That from the beginning anti-Mormons seized upon the incident to discredit Joseph Smith should not deter us from consigning the episode to the limbo of faked antiquities and to place forever the Kinderhook Plates on the bosom of the Cardiff Giant.

## Archaeologists Still Unconvinced About the Book of Mormon

On pages 97-98 of this book, we show that both the Smithsonian Institution and the National Geographic Society have rejected the archaeological claims made concerning the Book of Mormon. This situation has not changed. The Smithsonian Institution is still sending out a statement that reads:

1. The Smithsonian Institution has never used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see no direct connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the book. (“Statement Regarding the Book of Mormon,” Rev.-1978)

The reader can obtain a copy of this statement by writing the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

The National Geographic Society’s position on the Book of Mormon was reaffirmed in a letter dated August 7, 1979, and in a letter written May 29, 1978, we find the following:

With regard to the cities mentioned in the Book of Mormon, neither representatives of the National Geographic Society nor archeologists connected with any other institution of equal prestige have ever used the Book of Mormon in locating historic ruins in middle America or elsewhere.

Christianity was not practiced on this continent prior to the Spanish conquest. The major civilizations of North and South America were practicing their own forms of religion.

Michael Coe, who is one of the most well-known authorities on the New World, admonished the Mormons to give up their fantastic claims about the Book of Mormon being supported by archaeology:

Mormon archaeologists over the years have almost unanimously accepted the Book of Mormon as an accurate, historical account of the New World peoples between about 2,000 B.C. and A.D. 421. They believe that Smith could translate hieroglyphs, whether “Reformed Egyptian” or ancient American, and that his translation of the Book of Abraham is authentic. Likewise, they accept the Kinderhook Plates as a bona fide archaeological discovery, and the reading of them as correct. Let me now state unconditionally that as far as I know there is not one professionally trained archaeologist, who is not a Mormon, who sees any scientific justification for believing the foregoing to be true, and I would like to state that there are quite a few Mormon archaeologists who join this group. . . . The picture of this hemisphere between 2,000 B.C. and A.D. 421 presented in the book has little to do with the early Indian cultures as we know them, in spite of much wishful thinking . . .

The bare facts of the matter are that nothing, absolutely nothing, has ever shown up in any New World excavation which would suggest to a dispassionate observer that the Book of Mormon, as claimed by Joseph Smith, is a historical document relating to the history of early migrants to our hemisphere. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1973, pp. 41, 42, 46)

## Ferguson Questions Book of Mormon

On pages 102-103 of this book we relate that Thomas Stuart Ferguson, one of the church’s great defenders of the Book of Mormon, visited us on December 2, 1970, and told us that he had spent 25 years trying to prove Mormonism, but had finally come to the conclusion that his work had been in vain. Mr. Ferguson had organized the New World Archaeological Foundation in 1952, and firmly believed he would be able to prove the Book of Mormon through archaeological research. Michael Coe related:

Of far greater import were the events that culminated in the program of the New World Archaeological Foundation. While the guiding light of this endeavor, Ferguson, was also an Iron Rod, from the beginning everything was put on what non-Mormons would consider a scholarly underpinning. . . . Unlike Jakeman, however, with his rival Zarahemla on the Usumacinta, Ferguson set up his program as an undertaking in modern anthropological archaeology, and created a committee that included not only Mormons like Milton Hunter and himself, but also non-Mormon experts in New World archaeology, such as A. V. Kidder, Gordon R. Willey, and Gordon F. Ekholm. The first field directors of the New World Archaeological Foundation were non-Mormons. By 1952, funds were made available by the Church, and the largest and most ambitious archaeological project ever funded by a religious institution (including the Vatican) got under way. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1973, p. 45)

In the book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, page 141, we wrote:

. . . The church leaders gave “large appropriations” to support Mr. Ferguson’s New World Archaeological Foundation. This organization also failed to find evidence to prove the Book of Mormon, and the man who organized it, hoping that it would prove Mormonism, ended up losing his faith in the church.

The Mormon apologist Robert L. Brown tried to discredit our book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, so that Moody Press would discontinue publishing it. In a letter to Moody Press, Mr. Brown claimed our statement about Ferguson was “**not so!**” Mr. Brown based his accusation on a letter written



by Thomas Stuart Ferguson on October 23, 1980, in which Ferguson stated: “My relationship and membership with the Church has never been terminated.” Mr. Brown has apparently misunderstood our statement. We did not say that Ferguson has left the church, but that he “ended up losing his faith in the church.” Mr. Ferguson makes this very plain in a letter dated December 3, 1979:

I lost faith in Joseph Smith as one having a pipeline to deity—and have decided that there has never been a pipeline to deity—with any man. . . . I give Joseph Smith credit as an innovator and as a smart fellow. I attend, sing in the choir and enjoy my friendships in the Church. In my opinion it is the best fraternity that has come to my attention . . .

I think that Joseph Smith may have had Ixtlilxochtl and *View of the Hebrews* from which to work. . . . Oliver Cowdery was in Ethan Smith’s congregation before he went from Vermont to New York to join Joseph Smith. . . .

Thomas Stuart Ferguson has been privately circulating a 28-page response “to the Norman & Sorenson Papers” on the Book of Mormon. In the conclusion to this paper, Ferguson declared:

The evidence supporting the geographical views of Norman and Sorenson, under the exacting tests laid down by the text of the Book of Mormon, is indeed very meagre. We have the cylinder seal from Chiapa de Corzo, the cylinder seal from Tlatilco and the toys with wheels. That’s about all. This paucity of specific support presents, at least to me, a dilemma. One way out of the dilemma is to say that everything was scrambled and lost because of the upheavals described in 3 Nephi for the time of the crucifixion. In my personal opinion, this is not a satisfactory escape hatch. Virtually all of the data in the Book of Mormon must be credited to Mormon and his abridgment of the “larger plates.” He and Moroni, writing in the 4th century (over 300 years after the crucifixion), were responsible for the last 400 pages of the text. And it is in those 400 pages that most of the geographical data appear. Mormon doesn’t say that his references to geography are useless and hopeless.

Further, innumerable excavations made in the area we are dealing with, and in the time span (3000 B.C. – 400 A.D.) with which we are involved, reveal great undisturbed architectural structures, extensive relatively undisturbed ancient strata etc., etc. . . . right through the time of the crucifixion.

I don’t have the answer to the dilemma. I just call it up.

I’m afraid that up to this point, I must agree with Dee Green, who has told us that to date there is no Book-of-Mormon geography. I, for one, would be happy if Dee were wrong.

### Nibley Attacks Interpretation of Stela 5

On pages 116-118 of this book, we show that Dr. M. Wells Jakeman maintains that “Stela 5” proves the Book of Mormon. We have also shown, however, that some of the Church’s best scholars reject Jakeman’s work. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1977, page 122, Dr. Hugh Nibley mocked Jakeman’s work:

I would now like to show you Dr. W. H. Sterling’s reproduction of the so-called *Izapastella* number five, of which he was the discover. This reproduction is remarkable for its almost total lack of resemblance to the local reproduction familiar to students of the Book of Mormon. Apparently Dr. Sterling does not have access to such refined technical aids as a magnifying glass. The remarkable thing about this document is that even in Dr. Sterling’s reproduction, we have the signature of Moroni clearly and unmistakably before our eyes. I call your attention to the two fishes in the upper right hand corner. Now, as G. B. Shaw has shown, a possible phonetic writing for “fish” in English is “gh” as in *enough, rough*; “o” as in *women*, “i” and “sh”(ti) as in *nation, ration* and so forth. So “ghoti” spells

fish. Be that as it may, even a layman will recognize that a goatee is a beard; he may also recall that Aaron’s beard reached the hem of his garment. Now “hem” in Egyptian also means warrior, and who will doubt that Moroni was a great warrior? Beyond the shadow of a doubt, Moroni has signed his name on this remarkable stela.

The three pyramids, at the bottom—plainly of Egyptian origin—indicate that the writing is Egyptian. We should notice here that the figure identified locally as Lemuel has a long tail and has been called a monkey, and this confirms the identification since this is the Egyptian scribe’s way of indicating that Lemuel aped his brother Laman, behind whom he is standing. Moreover, the resemblance between a small spider monkey and a lemur is remarkable, as is also the obvious affinity between the names lemur and Lemuel, the “r” and “l” being interchangeable in Semitic languages.

The object held by the figure in front of Laman has been identified as a flute. What the layman is liable to overlook is that there is no indication that the iron rod of Lehi’s dream was not hollow. It survives in early American tradition as the flute of the spider lady (note the significant allusion to the spider monkey), which was ritually filled with sugar-coated pimientos, symbolic of the earth mother’s power of turning herself into the sacred drum, the beating of which made a sound which to the primitive ear must have resembled that of the snapping of a crocodile’s jaws, such a sound as “Lehi, Lehi, Lehi.”

### Church Discourages Research on Book of Mormon Geography

On pages 118-124 of this book, we show how completely confused Mormon scholars have become because they cannot agree on the geography of the Book of Mormon. On July 29, 1978, the church leaders became so upset by the differing views that an article was published in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* which discourages the study of Book of Mormon geography:

The geography of the Book of Mormon has intrigued some readers of that volume ever since its publication. **But why worry about it?**

Efforts to pinpoint certain places from what is written in the book are fruitless because the record does not give evidence of such locations in terms of our modern geography.

Attempts to designate certain areas as the Land Bountiful or the site of Zarahemla or the place where the Nephite city of Jerusalem sank into the sea “and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof” can bring no definitive results. **So why speculate?**

To **guess** where Zarahemla stood can in no wise add to anyone’s faith. But to **raise doubts** in people’s minds about the location of the Hill Cumorah, and thus challenge the words of the prophets concerning the place where Moroni buried the records, is most certainly harmful. And who has the right to **raise doubts** in anyone’s mind?

Our position is to build faith, not to weaken it, and theories concerning the geography of the Book of Mormon can most certainly **undermine faith** if allowed to run rampant.

Why not leave hidden the things that the Lord has **hidden**? If He wants the geography of the Book of Mormon revealed, He will do so through His prophet, and not through some writer who wishes to enlighten the world despite his utter lack of inspiration on the point.

Some authors have felt “called upon” to inform the world about Book of Mormon geography and have published writings giving their views. These books, however, are strictly private works and represent only their personal speculations.





## 7. Changes in Joseph Smith's History

In 1838 Joseph Smith began writing the account of his life which is now published by the church. Joseph Smith began publishing this history in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. It was published in installments, and therefore only part of the history appeared in print before Joseph Smith's death. The church continued to publish the history in the *Times and Seasons* after his death until the Mormons were driven from Nauvoo. The remainder of the history was published in the *Millennial Star* and also in the *Deseret News*. In 1902 the *History of the Church* was reprinted in seven volumes, and it has been republished several times since then.

Mormon leaders claim that Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* is the most accurate history in the world and that it has never been changed or falsified in any way. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church and former Church Historian, stated: "The most important history in the world is the history of our Church, **and it is the most accurate history in all the world, it must be so**" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 199). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made these statements:

Joseph was sincere or he would have permitted some events to be **hidden** and only major concerns of the Church to come before the public. There was **no** undercover planning in his work—there was nothing to hide. . . . The use of the modern printing press ensured the continued existence of the correct history of the Church. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, Salt Lake City, 1951, p. 250)

The *History of the Church* and the utterances therein contain, if read properly, a continued evidence that Joseph Smith told the truth . . . Throughout all his writings runs the simple spirit of truth. . . . There is in them **no attempt to "cover up" any act** of his life. . . . Mormon history and doctrine have been carefully preserved in the published records of the Church—and **all** has been published. (*Ibid.*, pp. 256-257)

The *History* of Joseph Smith, published by the Church, as to events and dates, may be accepted as an unusually **accurate** historical document. It will increase in importance with the years and become more and more a proof of the honest sincerity of the founders of the Church in this dispensation.

The history is trustworthy. **No** flaws have been found in it. (*Ibid.*, p. 297)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards also claimed that no changes have been made in the *History of the Church*. In a letter to Morris L. Reynolds he stated: "Your second question: 'Has Joseph Smith's History been changed from the original history?' **No. No changes have been made** in meaning in any way" (Letter by LeGrand Richards, dated May 11, 1966). Dr. Hugh Nibley also stated that "There have been **no** changes in Joseph Smith's history" (Letter dated May 12, 1966).

In the Preface to volume 1 of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*, we find the statement that "no historical or doctrinal statement has been changed" (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, Preface, p. vi).

The material which follows will prove beyond all doubt that the statements quoted above are completely false. Actually, the Mormon historians have broken almost all the rules of honesty in their publication of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*. It is a well known fact that when an omission is made in a document it must be indicated by ellipses signs. The Mormon historians have almost completely ignored this rule; in many cases they have deleted thousands of words without any indication. They have also added thousands of words without any indication. They have changed spelling, grammar, punctuation and rearranged the words. There can be no doubt that the changes were deliberate, although there may have been a few typographical errors. We have already shown that three important changes were made to cover up the fact that Joseph Smith broke the "Word of Wisdom." Certainly, no one would argue that these changes happened by accident, for they bear unmistakable evidence of falsification. Some of Joseph Smith's prophecies that did **not** come to pass have been changed. Many exaggerated and contradictory statements were either changed or deleted without indication. Crude or indecent statements were also deleted. Joseph Smith quoted the enemies of the church as using the name of the Lord in vain many times in the history, but much of this profanity has been removed by the Mormon leaders. In the first printed version of Joseph Smith's *History* he cursed his enemies, condemned other churches and beliefs, and called the President of the United States a fool. Many of these extreme statements were deleted or changed. The Mormon leaders did not dare let their people see the real Joseph Smith. They would rather falsify the *History of the Church* than allow Joseph Smith's true character to be known. The Mormon leaders have not only changed the *History of the Church*, but they have further deceived the people by making the claim that no historical or doctrinal statement has been changed.

Not only has the *History of the Church* been changed since it was first printed, but there is also evidence to prove that changes were made before it was first published. In other words, there is evidence that even the first printed version of the history is inaccurate.

When the history was first printed the Church Historians George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff (who later became President of the Church) stated that "a history more correct in its details than this was never published," and that it was "one of the **most authentic histories ever written**" (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, Preface v-vi). There is an abundance of evidence to show that this statement is absolutely false. Charles Wesley Wandell, who worked in the Church Historian's Office after the death of Joseph Smith, accused the leaders of the Mormon Church of falsifying the history. When he saw the way that they were printing it in 1855, he made this comment in his journal:

I notice **the interpolations** because having been employed (myself) in the Historian's office at Nauvoo by Doctor Richards, and employed, too, in 1845, in compiling

this very autobiography, I know that after Joseph's death his memoir was "**doctored**" to suit the new order of things, and this, too, by the direct order of Brigham Young to Doctor Richards and systematically by Richards. (Statement from the journal of Charles Wesley Wandell, as printed in the *Journal of History*, vol. 8, p. 76)

According to Dean C. Jessee, of the Church Historian's Office, Charles Wesley Wandell was one of the scribes who helped make a "duplicate handwritten copy of the History, . . ." (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer, 1971, p. 469).

Although the early Mormon leaders claimed that Joseph Smith's *History* was "one of the most authentic histories ever written," they admitted that there had been some revisions made under Brigham Young's leadership. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 7, page 243, we read: "Moreover, since the death of the Prophet Joseph, the history has been carefully **revised** under the strict inspection of President **Brigham Young** and approved of by him." The word "**revised**," of course, might be understood in several different ways and would not necessarily mean that Joseph Smith's *History* was falsified. Perhaps we can gain insight into Brigham Young's methods from a statement he made in a sermon delivered on August 2, 1857:

Brother Heber says that the music is taken out of his sermons when brother Carrington **clips out a word here and there**: and I have taken out the music from mine, . . .

I know that I have seen the day when, let men use language like brother Heber has to day, and **many would apostatize from the true faith**. In printing my remarks, I **often omit the sharp words**, . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 99)

We must remember also that after Brigham Young suppressed the book written by Joseph Smith's mother, it was "**revised**" and then republished. Over 2,000 words were added, deleted or changed without any indication. Brigham Young seems to have been a very dishonest historian, and therefore when the Mormon Historians speak of Joseph Smith's *History* being "**revised**" we can only conclude that this meant falsification. That the Mormon Historians did a great deal of tampering with Joseph Smith's *History* before publishing it is obvious from the following statements in Brigham Young's *History*:

Tuesday, April 1, 1845.—I commenced **revising** the *History of Joseph Smith* at Brother Richard's office: Elder Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith were with me. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 389)

Wednesday, 2.—Engaged at Elder Richard's office with Elders Kimball and Smith **revising Church History**. (*Ibid.*, pp. 389-390)

Tuesday, 13.—With Elders Heber C. Kimball, W. Richards and George A. Smith reading and **revising Church History** . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 408)

Wednesday, 14,— . . . we read and **revised** history all day. (*Ibid.*, p. 411)

Friday, 16.—I spent the day at Brother Hunter's in company with Brothers Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, George A. Smith and N. K. Whitney **revising** history: . . .

Saturday, 17.—**revising** history as yesterday, . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 411)

Tuesday, 20.— . . . We read and **revised** fifty-seven pages of *History of Joseph Smith* from Book "B": . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 414)

Wednesday, 18.—I met with Elders Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor and George A. Smith at Brother Taylor's; we **revised** a portion of the *History of Joseph Smith*. . . .

Thursday, 19.—I spent the day with Brothers H. C. Kimball and George A. Smith **revising** history. . . .

Friday, 20.—Elders H. C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, and myself engaged **revising Church History**. (*Ibid.*, pp. 427-428)

For other references concerning the revision of Joseph Smith's *History* see *History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 514, 519, 520, 532, 533, 556)

We now have definite proof that Joseph Smith's *History* was "doctored" before it was first published by the church. It is very hard to understand how men who claimed to be historians and religious leaders could put forth such a fraudulent history and then claim that it is "one of the most authentic histories ever written."

## Written By Joseph Smith?

In 1965 we published a book entitled *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*. In this book we showed that thousands of words were added, deleted, or changed since Joseph Smith's *History* was first published. On pages 7-9 of this book we made these observations:

On the title page to Vol. 1 of the *History of the Church*, this statement appears: "History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet **by Himself**"; this study, however, reveals that much of the history was not written by Joseph Smith. Only a small part of the history was printed during Joseph Smith's lifetime, and we are very suspicious that Joseph Smith did not finish writing the history before his death. Joseph Smith probably kept a journal which the historians used to write part of the history. The entries in the *History of the Church* for 1835 sound very much like a day-to-day journal. The Church Historians, no doubt, used Joseph Smith's journals, but they also interpolated material of their own and tried to make it appear that Joseph Smith had written it. An example is found in the *Millennial Star*, v. 19, p. 7:

. . . on this evening **Joseph the Seer** commenced giving instructions to the scribe concerning writing the proclamation to the kings of the earth, . . .

It is very obvious that Joseph Smith did not write this; when this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, the words "**Joseph the Seer**" were changed to the word "I." In the *Millennial Star*, v. 19, p. 630, Joseph Smith was referred to in the third person four different times, but when this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* it has been changed to the first person to make it appear that Joseph Smith was writing the history. We will say more about this change at its proper place in the study. The account of the "Kirtland Camp" was probably not written by Joseph Smith, but rather by someone who was with the camp. Under the date of September 26, 1838, Joseph Smith records in the history: 'I was about home until ten or eleven o'clock when I rode out, but returned home and spent the evening. (*Millennial Star*, v. 16, p. 296)

This reference shows that Joseph Smith was not with the camp. Under the same date in the history, Joseph Smith tells of the "Kirtland Camp." Part of the reference reads as it should; the writer (which is supposed to be Joseph Smith) referring to the camp in the third person:

The camp passed on, and crossing Chariton tents.

Here **they** found seven of the nine wagons of the Florence Camp, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p. 296)

In the middle of this reference, however, the writer strangely becomes part of the camp:

Elder McArthur said, in a low tone, that it was his impression that **we** might go on . . . Here **our** faith was tried, and here the Lord looked down and beheld **us**, and lo, a gentleman . . . came among **us** although **we** were a good distance from the road, and he told **us** that there was no trouble in Far West . . . but that **we** might go right along . . . A vote of the camp was called for, whether, **we** should proceed, . . .

**We** pursued our journey, and in crossing a seven mile prairie **we** stopped . . .

The Mormon Historians could, no doubt, see that the word "we" should read "they," "our" should read "their" and

“us” should read “them,” but instead of changing these words they deleted the entire reference.

In the *Millennial Star*, v. 23, pp. 737-739, the Mormon Historians included an article which was found in the *Times and Seasons*. Joseph Smith could not have included this article in the history as it was not published in the *Times and Seasons* until after his death. Later Mormon Historians evidently became aware of this and deleted it from the history.

In the *History of the Church*, v. 6, p. 426, this statement appears:

A conference was held in Glasgow, Scotland, representing 1,018 members, including 1 High Priest, 30 Elders, 46 Priests, 36 Teachers and 20 Deacons.

It is very unlikely that Joseph Smith could have written this statement. The date of the history is June 2, 1844. Joseph Smith stopped writing the history on June 22, 1844 and was killed on June 27. It would have been almost impossible for the news of this conference to have reached Nauvoo in 20 days. In the *History of the Church*, v. 6, p. 424, Joseph Smith received a letter which took 23 days to come from Boston. A letter from Scotland would take much longer to arrive than a letter from Boston.

It is interesting to note that in 1844 Joseph Smith said: “For the last three years I have a record of all my acts and proceedings, for I have kept several good, faithful, and efficient clerks in constant employ: they have accompanied me everywhere, and carefully kept my history” (*History of the Church*, v. 6, p. 409). The last few years of Joseph Smith’s life in the *History of the Church* are filled with personal incidents, however, in the year 1840 there seems to be a vacuum. There seems to be an abundance of information concerning England but very little concerning incidents that were happening in Nauvoo (where Joseph Smith was). The interesting thing about this is that Brigham Young, George A. Smith and Heber C. Kimball (the men who ‘revised’ Joseph Smith’s history after his death) were in England at this time. Could it be that they wrote this part of the history after Joseph Smith’s death? See especially the *History of the Church*, v. 6, pp. 233-239. . . .

The Mormon Historians evidently feel that more converts can be won to the church with a bogus history than with a true factual one. It is apparently felt that the truth will not bear its own weight and that a little forgery here and there is not wrong as long as it helps win converts to the Church. Men go to prison for the crime of forgery, however, the Mormon Church leaders seem to be immune from punishment because it is a religious document they have falsified. Perhaps some day the members of the Church will demand an honest history and that the “secret manuscripts” be made available. (*Changes in Joseph Smith’s History*, pp. 7-9)

## New Discoveries

Since we published our book, *Changes in Joseph Smith’s History*, a great deal of information has come to light which tends to confirm our conclusions concerning the falsification of Joseph Smith’s *History*. For instance, a microfilm copy of the original handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith’s *History*, “Book A-1,” was recently given to us. This manuscript is the basis for the *History of the Church* up to the year 1836. It will, no doubt, deal a devastating blow to the Mormon Church. In 1961 the Mormon leaders denied us access to this handwritten manuscript of the *History of the Church*. After we published *Changes in Joseph Smith’s History*, a young man from California, who had recently been converted to the Mormon Church, read the book and decided to go to the Historian’s Office to see if they would allow him to examine the original handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith’s *History*. He stated to us later that they told him at the Historian’s Office that they were going to make a microfilm copy of the handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith’s *History*. They assured him that as soon as the microfilm was completed it would be made available, but that they could not let him examine the handwritten manuscript until it was on microfilm. After this young man had this conversation at the Church Historian’s Office, he came to our

house and told us all about it. He was certain that they had told the truth. He assured us of their sincerity, but we informed him that the handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith’s *History* had already been filmed. We brought out a copy of the thesis “An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith’s Early Visions,” written by Paul R. Cheesman for the Degree of Master of Religious Education at the Brigham Young University. On page 77 of this thesis Paul R. Cheesman states:

Joseph Smith started officially to write the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sometime near May 2, 1838. . . . This handwritten copy of the history is in possession of the Church Historian’s office. A **microfilm has been made from the original** and from this film the following copy was made.

After reading this statement this young man got up from the chair in which he was sitting and stated that the church leaders had lied to him. He went out of the house thoroughly disillusioned with the Mormon leaders. Wallace Turner, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, witnessed part of this incident and wrote the following concerning it:

That day an apostasy was in the making. A young man visiting Tanner was reading one of the Tanner books. In an agitated voice he exclaimed: “That does it! That’s all! I can still get out of it and I will!”

Something in the book had convinced him that one of the minor church officials had mislead him about existence of a microfilm copy of a document. When his emotions had quieted, he explained that he had been converted to Mormonism in order to marry a devout Mormon girl. She had insisted that he become a Saint, and that he promise to work in the church as a condition of marriage. . . .

But for this young convert standing in Jerald Tanner’s house, it seemed to be all finished. He explained his way out of the marriage. “I can get out of it still because it wasn’t consummated,” he said as he left the house. (*The Mormon Establishment*, by Wallace Turner, 1966, pp. 155-156)

This young man seems to have remained with the girl, but he was visibly shaken as Wallace Turner indicates. Now that we have a copy of Joseph Smith’s “Manuscript History,” Book A-1, we can see that it was originally microfilmed by the church’s Genealogical Society on January 27, 1942. This was over twenty years prior to the time that they told the young man mentioned above that they had not completed microfilming it.

A few years after the incident mentioned above, another Mormon, who was doing research in the Church Historian’s Office, became very disturbed with the church’s policy of changing and suppressing the records. In some way he gained access to the microfilm copy of “Book A-1,” and a number of duplicate copies were made from this film. The Mormon leaders were, of course, very disturbed over this matter, and we understand that this man is now denied access to all material in the Church Historian’s Office. At any rate, we were given a copy of this film. Although we have not had the time to make a thorough study of the manuscript, a preliminary examination clearly reveals the duplicity of the Mormon Historians. Thousands of words—sometimes entire pages—have been crossed out so that they could be deleted from Joseph Smith’s *History*. On the other hand, the film shows many pages of material which were interpolated after Joseph Smith’s death. The pages which follow contain actual photographs from the “Manuscript History,” Book A-1. The reader will see that the evidence of falsification is overwhelming.

Although we now have a film of the handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith’s *History* up to 1836, the remaining portion is still suppressed. Fortunately, we have another film which sheds a great deal of light on this period. This is a copy of a film in the Church Historian’s Office of the newspaper published in Nauvoo by the Mormons. This newspaper was originally called *The Wasp*, but the name was later changed to *The Nauvoo Neighbor*. A woman



June 1834

inhabitants of this country, ~~and the~~ ~~mountain~~ ~~we~~ ~~went~~ ~~up~~ ~~on~~ ~~a~~ ~~high~~ ~~mountain~~ ~~where~~ ~~the~~ ~~river~~ ~~was~~ ~~accompanied~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~brethren~~. From this mound we can overlook the tops of the trees and view the prairie on each side of the river as far as our vision could extend, and the scenery was truly delightful.

On the top of the mound were stones which presented the appearance of three altars ~~forming~~ ~~lines~~ ~~across~~ ~~the~~ ~~ground~~, or above the other, according to ancient orders; and there were stones on the surface of the ground. The brethren procured a shovel & hoe, and removing the earth to the depth of about one foot discovered the skeleton of a man, almost entire, and between his ribs <sup>the true point of</sup> was an arrow, which evidently produced his death. ~~His~~ ~~bones~~ ~~were~~ ~~found~~ ~~retained~~ ~~the~~ ~~arrow~~, and ~~the~~ ~~bones~~ ~~were~~ ~~found~~ ~~retained~~ ~~the~~ ~~arrow~~.

The contemplation of the scenery <sup>before</sup> us produced peculiar sensations in our souls: and <sup>subsequently</sup> the visions of the past being opened to our understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty, I discerned that the person whose skeleton <sup>we had found</sup> was a Samaritan, a large thick set man, and a man <sup>his name was Joseph</sup> who was known from the ~~hills~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Rocky~~ ~~Mountains~~. ~~The~~ ~~bones~~ ~~were~~ ~~found~~ ~~retained~~ ~~the~~ ~~arrow~~. The ~~bones~~ ~~were~~ ~~found~~ ~~retained~~ ~~the~~ ~~arrow~~. This ~~bone~~ ~~was~~ ~~broken~~ ~~by~~ ~~a~~ ~~stone~~ ~~flung~~ ~~from~~ ~~a~~ ~~slang~~ ~~in~~ ~~a~~ ~~battle~~ ~~years~~ ~~before~~ ~~his~~ ~~death~~. He was killed in battle, the arrow found among his ribs, during a ~~war~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~Samaritans~~. <sup>His</sup> <sup>wounds</sup> <sup>carried</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>bone</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>ground</sup>.

~~Continuing on~~ ~~the~~ ~~4th~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~month~~ ~~we~~ ~~arrived~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~banks~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Mississippi~~ ~~River~~. At ~~the~~ ~~place~~ ~~we~~ ~~were~~ ~~somewhat~~ ~~afflicted~~, and our enemies ~~thought~~ ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~should~~ ~~not~~ ~~cross~~ ~~over~~ ~~the~~ ~~river~~ ~~being~~ ~~nearly~~ ~~one~~ ~~and~~ ~~a~~ ~~half~~ ~~miles~~ ~~wide~~. ~~but~~ ~~our~~ ~~boats~~ ~~it~~ ~~took~~ ~~two~~ ~~days~~ ~~and~~ ~~three~~ ~~days~~ ~~were~~ ~~perished~~.

Photograph of page 483 of "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History," Book A-1. Notice the words that have been crossed out and the words that have been interpolated between the lines.



thy judgment is not forth into victory, and after this great tribulation let  
 thy blessing fall upon thy people, and let thy commandment be laid for and  
 shall be satisfied in believing his glory of glory, notwithstanding his present  
 affliction the death yet great and put on his beautiful garments, and to  
 be thy and glory of his whole world, therefore let your heart be comforted;  
 live in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and with humble  
 hearts turn away from sin, and let us in his name and time. *Since come*  
*was that the same time respect unto the offering you made. Brother*  
*David Patten has just returned from his tour to the East, and gives us*  
*great satisfaction as to his ministry, he has raised up a church of*  
*about eighty-three members in that part of the country, where his*  
*preaching has in the State of New York, many were healed through his*  
*ministry, several cripples were restored, as many as twelve*  
*that were afflicted came at a time from a distance to be healed,*  
*and were administered in the name of Jesus, and they were made*  
*whole thus you see that the labours in the Lord's Vineyard are labouring*  
*with great vigour, while the day is so favouring the night soon cometh*  
*when no more can work - (see page 365)*

Nov 11 about the 17th of November I received a visit from Elders Joseph Young, Brigham  
 Young and Peter C. Hunt from Newbern, Newbern County, New York,  
 they spent four or five days at Hillstead, during which we had many  
 interesting conversations. At one of our interviews, Brother Brigham Young, and  
 John Sprague spoke in Tongues, which was the first time I had heard this  
 gift among the brethren, others also spoke, and I received the gift myself.  
 Brother Joseph speaks a great man, but Brigham is a greater, and the time  
 will come when he will preside over the whole church. (see page 260)

Nov. 13. May the 25, 1833. My uncle John Smith and family  
 arrived in Hillstead, from Rotterdam New-York, they uncle being  
 an Elder in the Church, and his wife and eldest son George  
 A. Smith, a total of fifteen were members; they being the first  
 of my father's relatives who obeyed the Gospel. page 297.

Note E. Joseph Smith was born July 12th 1771, in Topsfield, <sup>Essex County,</sup> Massachusetts  
 his father, Isaac Smith was born March 7th 1706, in Topsfield,  
 his father Samuel Smith was born Jan 26th 1716, in Topsfield, Massachusetts  
 his father Samuel Smith was born Jan 26th 1666, in Topsfield  
 his father Robert Smith came from England. page 1.

Photograph of page 2 of the "Addenda" to "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History," Book A-1. The "Addenda" follows page 533 in the manuscript. It is composed of 16 pages of notes written after Smith's death which were to be inserted as if they were written by him.



1836

was the first instance of excitement in our numbers. He was followed by  
brother Aaron Hyde who perceived by the scriptures that baptism was for the  
remission of sins. I next called upon brother Stephen Johnson, who  
at first at some small degree in necessity of men being upright in  
their work, and keeping the truth in story intact. I then called upon  
brother Lewis Platt, who delivered an excellent discourse on the  
necessity of the same redemptions of all things. The services of the  
day were concluded by a powerful exhortation from George Miller.  
The voice was such as to be heard a mile and a half. Page 442

Note I

While we were reflecting ourselves upon these, about the  
middle of the day, I got up to <sup>and called the people together</sup> and said that I  
would deliver a prophecy. After giving the brethren much good  
advice, exhorting them to faithfulness and humility; I said the  
which had <sup>made</sup> me that there would a scourge come upon the camp  
in consequence of the profane and unruly spirits that appeared  
among them, and they should die like sheep with the rest: and  
if they would repent and humble themselves before the Lord, the  
scourge, in a great measure, might be turned away; but, as  
in word said, this camp will suffer for giving way to their  
unlawful desires.

Note of Council

~~... which was purchased about ...~~  
~~... five gallons of ...~~  
~~... about ...~~  
... to the stage, and crossed over that  
night in a ferry boat. We encamped for the night on the  
bank of the river. There was a great excitement in the  
country through which we had passed, and also ahead of us  
since we first in almost all directions through the night.  
I did not sleep much, if any, but was through the camp,  
practically ~~... the night~~ Page 443

Note J

The consequence of my giving at home, while he  
was ministering, his converting up to the camp, he being the last  
that came over the river. The next morning I told them that I  
would descend to the spirit that was manifested by some of  
the brethren, to let them see the folly of their wickedness. I ran  
up and commenced speaking by saying, "if any man  
invented me, or abuses me, I will stand in my own defence  
at the expense of my life; and if a dog growls at me, I  
will let him know that I am his master." At this moment

Photograph of page 5 of the "Addenda" to "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History," Book A-1. The "Addenda" follows page 533 in the manuscript. It is composed of 16 pages of notes written after Smith's death which were to be inserted as if they were written by him.

who lived outside of Utah told us that she could borrow a copy which had previously been made of the film in the Church Historian's Office and wondered if we could get a firm in Salt Lake City to make duplicate copies. Although there were no copyright restrictions on the film, the company refused to make copies because the Church Historian's Office would be opposed to it. Finally, it was duplicated outside the State of Utah and a copy was sent to us.

We wondered why the Church Historian's Office had suppressed this film, and with this question in mind we began our research on it. At first we found nothing of importance, but then one day we noticed that some words had been crossed out with a pen or pencil and some other words written in their place. Naturally, we wondered why the words had been changed in this newspaper. The answer soon became apparent. We found that the article which contained these words was reprinted in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*. The words which were crossed out on the newspaper were also left out in Joseph Smith's *History*, and the words which were written in by hand on the newspaper appeared in Joseph Smith's *History*. We found this same pattern in many other articles reprinted in *History of the Church*. Where words were crossed out on the newspaper, they were deleted from Joseph Smith's *History*, and where words were added in by hand on the newspaper they were also found in the *History*. From this only one possible conclusion could be reached: we had a film of the very pages which the Mormon Church Historians used when they compiled Joseph Smith's *History*, and the handwriting clearly revealed the falsifications which they made in composing the *History*. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the name "W. Richards" is written on the top of many of the pages, and the reader will remember that Brigham Young claimed that "Willard Richards" helped in "revising" Joseph Smith's *History* after his death (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 411).

For photographic proof that this paper is marked for falsifications in Joseph Smith's *History* see our publication *Falsification of Joseph Smith's History*, page 8.

When Joseph Smith's *History* was first printed, some important testimony by Joseph Smith against Dr. Foster was included. This testimony was taken from the *Nauvoo Neighbor* for April 15, 1844. In the *Nauvoo Neighbor* Joseph Smith was quoted as saying:

"I did say that Dr. Foster did steal a raw hide, **I have seen him steal a number of times**: these are the things that they now want to ruin me for; for telling the truth. When riding in the stage, **I have seen him put his hand in a woman's bosom, and he also lifted up her clothing**. I know that they are wicked, malicious, adulterous, bad characters; I say it **under oath**; **I can tell all the particulars from first to last.**" (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 15, 1844)

The fact that Joseph Smith was able to tell "all the particulars" almost makes him an accessory to the crimes. If he had seen Foster steal "**a number of times**" why hadn't he reported this? Why did Foster feel so free to carry on in the manner he did in the stage in front of the Prophet Joseph Smith? The Mormon leaders could apparently see that these statements by Joseph Smith cast a shadow of doubt upon his character. The film of the *Nauvoo Neighbor* from the Historian's Office reveals that even in Brigham Young's time the Mormon Historians realized that Joseph Smith's testimony could not stand as originally published. The words "**I have seen him steal a number of times**" were crossed out in their copy of the *Nauvoo Neighbor* and were deleted without indication when Joseph Smith's *History* was first published in the *Millennial Star*: "I did say that Dr. Foster stole a raw hide. These are the things that they now want to ruin me for—for telling the truth" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 23, p. 454).

Although this change made Joseph Smith look better, the Mormon leaders were still not satisfied. They probably felt that this whole proceeding threw too much light on Joseph Smith's system of plural marriage. In modern editions of the *History of the Church*, they have deleted 3,742 words without any indication. This deletion, of course, includes the part concerning the carriage ride as well as the portion concerning Foster's stealing (compare *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 360, with *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, pp. 439, 440, 454, 455, 456).

## Film Supplies New Evidence

The film of *The Wasp* and *The Nauvoo Neighbor* not only proves that the changes made in Joseph Smith's *History* were deliberate falsifications, but it also seems to show that Joseph Smith did not finish the *History of the Church* and that it was actually written after his death. Many of the articles from the newspaper used in Joseph Smith's *History* are introduced with a statement like the one found in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 171: "I insert the following from the *Neighbor*, . . ." This, of course, is what we would expect to find if Joseph Smith actually wrote the *History of the Church*. In our study of the film, however, we found articles marked to be included in Joseph Smith's *History*, but inserted in the *History of the Church* as if they were the **very words of Joseph Smith himself**. Many cases could be cited to show that the Mormon Historians borrowed heavily from the newspaper published in Nauvoo when they composed Joseph Smith's *History*.

The film of *The Wasp* and *The Nauvoo Neighbor* has helped us solve a problem which we mentioned in our book, *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*. On page 60 of that book we stated:

CHANGE 311.

In the *Millennial Star*, v. 19, p. 630, Joseph Smith supposedly said:

. . . they left **them** in the care of the Marshall, without the original writ by which **they** were arrested, and by which only **they** could be retained, and returned back to Governor Carlin for further instructions, and **Messrs. Smith** and Rockwell went about **their** business.

In the *History of the Church*, v. 5, p. 87, this has been changed to read:

. . . they left **us** in the care of the marshal, without the original writ by which **we** were arrested, and by which only **we** could be retained, and returned to Governor Carlin for further instructions, and **myself** and Rockwell went about **our** business.

It would appear that Joseph Smith did not write this part of the history, and that the Mormon Historians forgot to change these words when they first printed them. Later the "mistake" was "corrected."

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith's prophecy that the "Saints" would "be driven to the Rocky Mountains" appears only two paragraphs before this. Could it be that this was not written by Joseph Smith, but by someone after the Mormons were driven to Utah? (*Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, p. 60)

Now that we have examined the film of the newspaper published at Nauvoo, we know the exact source for the portion of Joseph Smith's *History* which deals with his arrest. This is an article published in *The Wasp* on August 13, 1842. At the bottom of the next page is a comparison of the article from *The Wasp* and the material which was purported to have been written by Joseph Smith in his *History of the Church*.

The discovery of the source of the material concerning Joseph Smith's arrest certainly casts a shadow of doubt upon the authorship of the prophecy that the Saints would "become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains"

(*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 85). The material concerning his arrest from *The Wasp* is inserted in the *History of the Church* only twelve words after Joseph Smith’s famous prophecy, and the top of the paragraph containing the prophecy may have been taken from another article on the same page of *The Wasp*. In this article we find the following: “We attended the installation of Rising Sun Lodge of Ancient York Masons, at Montrose, . . . The deputy Grand Master of Illinois, Gen. Adams, installed the officers . . .” (*The Wasp*, August 13, 1842). Joseph Smith’s *History* contains almost the same words, although they are in a slightly different order. It states that he witnessed “the installation of the officers of the Rising Sun Lodge Ancient York Masons, at Montrose, by General James Adams, Deputy Grand-Master of Illinois” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 85).

It is also interesting to note that the same issue of *The Wasp* contains a poem which speaks of “the Rocky Mountains,” and a lengthy quotation from an unpublished work entitled, “Life in The Rocky Mountains.”

We could go on to show many cases where the Mormon Historians borrowed from *The Wasp* and *The Nauvoo Neighbor* to make it appear that Joseph Smith actually finished his *History of the Church*, but this should be sufficient to convince the reader. Our discoveries with regard to *The Wasp* and *Nauvoo Neighbor* led us to an investigation of the *Times and Seasons* to see if the Mormon Historians had borrowed from it in making up Joseph Smith’s *History*. Considering the limited amount of time we had to spend on this project, we have had a great deal of success in uncovering the sources. For instance, in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, p. 447, we read: “. . . it was plainly evident that the design . . . was to excite the public mind still more on the subject, and inflame

the passions of the people against **the defendant** and **his** religion.” This material was incorporated into Joseph Smith’s *History*, but it was changed slightly to make it appear that Joseph Smith was the author: “. . . it was plainly evident that the design . . . was to excite the public mind still more on the subject and inflame the passions of the people against **me** and **my** religion” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 367). Many other examples could be cited.

The examples we have presented seem to show that Joseph Smith never finished his *History of the Church*, and that the Mormon leaders actually completed it after his death. All evidence seems to point to this unmistakable conclusion.

In our book, *Falsification of Joseph Smith’s History*, page 11, we stated:

The Church has published six volumes which they attribute to Joseph Smith, but only 241 pages of the first volume were published before his death. Since the Mormon leaders have suppressed the original manuscripts, it has been very difficult to determine whether Joseph Smith had written much more than this before his death. Dean C. Jessee, a member of the staff at the Church Historian’s Office, says that Joseph Smith’s *History* amounted to more than 2,000 handwritten pages, but he admits that only 157 pages had been written by December 1841:

By the time Willard Richards was appointed private secretary to the Prophet and General Church Clerk in December 1841, a mere 157 pages of a history that eventually numbered more than two thousand, had been written. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 276)

Since Joseph Smith started the *History of the Church* in 1838, he had been working on it for about three and a half years by December 1841. If he had completed

THE WASP	HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
<p>. . . <b>Joseph Smith</b> was arrested upon a requisition of Gov. Carlin, . . . in accordance with a process from Gov. Reynolds of Missouri, upon the affidavit of Ex-Governor Boggs, complaining of the said Smith as “being an accessory before the fact, to an assault with an intent to kill, made by one O. P. Rockwell on Lilburn W. Boggs,” on the night of the sixth of May A.D. 1842. Mr. Rockwell was arrested at the same time as principal. There was no evasion of the officers, tho’ the Municipal court issued a writ of habeas corpus according to the constitution of the State, article 8, and section 13. This writ demanded the bodies of Messrs. Smith and Rockwell to be brought before the aforesaid Court, but these officers refused to do so, and finally without complying, they left <b>them</b> in care of the Marshal, without the original writ by which <b>they</b> were arrested, and by which only <b>they</b> could be retained, and returned back to Gov. Carlin for further instruction,—and <b>Messrs. Smith</b> and Rockwell went about <b>their</b> business..</p> <p>As to Mr. Smith, we have yet to learn by what rule of right <b>he</b> was arrested to be transported to Missouri for a trial of the kind stated. “An accessory to an assault with an intent to kill,” does not come under the purview of the fugitive act, when the person charged has not been out of Illinois &amp;c. An accessory before the fact, to manslaughter is somewhat of an anomaly. The isolated affidavit of Ex-Governor Boggs is no more than any other man’s, and while the Constitution says “that no person shall be liable to be transported out of the State, for an offense committed within the same,” . . . The whole seems to be another Missouri farce. In fact, implied power, and constructive guilt, as a dernier resort, may answer the purpose of despotic governments, but are beneath the dignity of the sons of liberty, and would be a blot on our juridical escutcheon. . . . (<i>The Wasp</i>, August 13, 1842)</p>	<p>. . . <b>I</b> was arrested...on a warrant issued by Governor Carlin, founded on a requisition from Governor Reynolds of Missouri, upon the affidavit of ex-Governor Boggs, complained of the said Smith as “being an accessory before the fact, to an assault with intent to kill made by one Orrin P. Rockwell on Lilburn W. Boggs,” on the night of the sixth of May, A.D. 1842. Brother Rockwell was arrested at the same time as principal. There was no evasion of the officers, though the municipal court issued a writ of habeas corpus according to the constitution of the state, Article 8, and Section 13. This writ demanded the bodies of Messrs. Smith and Rockwell to be brought before the aforesaid court; but these officers refused to do so, and finally without complying, they left <b>us</b> in the care of the marshal, without the original writ by which <b>we</b> were arrested, and by which only <b>we</b> could be retained, and returned to Governor Carlin for further instructions, and <b>myself</b> and Rockwell went about <b>our</b> business.</p> <p>I have yet to learn by what rule of right <b>I</b> was arrested to be transported to Missouri for a trial of the kind stated. “An accessory to an assault with intent to kill,” does not come under the provision of the fugitive act, when the person charged has not been out of Illinois, &amp;c. An accessory before the fact to manslaughter is something of an anomaly. The isolated affidavit of ex-Governor Boggs is no more than any other man’s, and the constitution says, “that no person shall be liable to be transported out of the state, for an offense committed within the same.” The whole is another Missouri farce. In fact, implied power, and constructive guilt, as a dernier resort, may answer the purpose of despotic governments, but are beneath the dignity of the Sons of Liberty, and would be a blot on our judicial escutcheon. (<i>History of the Church</i>, vol. 5, pp. 86-77)</p>



only 157 pages by that time, he would have needed to move much faster to complete more than 1,800 pages in the next two and a half years before his death in June of 1844. We must remember, however, that Joseph Smith was a very busy man during this period, and this would have made it very difficult for him to have finished the *History of the Church*. Evidence shows that the Mormon Apostle Willard Richards had a great deal to do with finishing Joseph Smith's *History* after Smith's death. On December 11, 1844, Brigham Young stated: "Elder Willard Richards recommenced to gather materials for the Church History assisted by W. W. Phelps." (*History of the Church*, Vol. 7, page 325) The Mormon writer Claire Noall gives this interesting information:

In Salt Lake City, after Richards' death, George A. Smith said something to this effect: "It is too bad Willard did not live to write the history of the martyrdom. He knew more about it than any other man alive. He **stopped writing the History in 1843**," meaning that Willard brought the **official History to that date only**. (This story was given to me by Preston Nibley.) (*Intimate Disciple—A Portrait of Willard Richards*, University of Utah Press, 1957, page 617)

This reference would seem to indicate that Willard Richards had **not** finished Joseph Smith's *History* at the time of his death in 1854.

The idea that Willard Richards helped produce Joseph Smith's *History* after Smith's death is strengthened by the fact that articles from the issues of the *Nauvoo Neighbor* which belonged to Richards are marked to be inserted in the *History of the Church*. We once asked a very prominent Mormon historian—a man who frequently writes for the church's *Improvement Era*—concerning this matter. Instead of dodging the issue, he frankly stated that he also believed that Joseph Smith did not finish the *History of the Church* and that Willard Richards helped complete it after Smith's death. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, once stated: "There were some things published after Brother Joseph's death, claiming to have been written by him, which I do **not** believe Brother Joseph wrote; . . ." (*An Address to Believers in the Book of Mormon*, p. 6)

While we now know that Joseph Smith did not finish the work which the Mormon leaders attributed to him, and that serious changes have been made in it, the *History of the Church* is still of value since some of it is apparently based on Joseph Smith's private journals. (*Falsification of Joseph Smith's History*, p. 11)

## Over 60% After Smith's Death

Just as we were preparing to print the book, *Falsification of Joseph Smith's History*, Dean C. Jessee, a member of the staff at the LDS Church Historian's Office, published an article in the *Brigham Young University Studies* which contains some very startling admissions. His work verifies our contention that Joseph Smith did not finish his *History of the Church* and that it was actually completed after his death. He states:

Not until Willard Richards was appointed secretary to Joseph Smith in December 1842 was any significant progress made on the *History*. At the time he began writing, not more than 157 pages had been completed, covering events up to November 1, 1831. By May 8, 1843, he had written 114 pages beyond W. W. Phelps' last entry. At the time of Joseph Smith's death, **the narrative was written to August 5, 1838**. . . .

By February 4, 1846, the day the books were packed for the journey west, the *History* had been completed to March 1, 1843. . . .

The rigors of establishing a new commonwealth in the mountains precluded even the unboxing of the historical records of the Church until June 7, 1853. . . . resumption of work on the *History* occurred on "Dec. 1, 1853 [when] Dr. Willard Richards wrote one line of *History* being sick at the time—and was never able to do any more." . . .

The remainder of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* from March 1, 1843 to August 8, 1844, was completed under the direction of George A. Smith. . . .

The Joseph Smith *History* was finished in August 1856, **seventeen years after it was begun**. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, pp. 466, 469, 470, 472)

Dean C. Jessee frankly admits that the manuscript was only completed to page 812 at the time of Joseph Smith's death (*Ibid.*, p. 457). Since there were almost 2,200 pages, this would mean that over 60% of Joseph Smith's *History* was not compiled during his lifetime!

As we had suspected, Willard Richards played a prominent part in making up this bogus history after Joseph Smith's death in 1844. Dean C. Jessee stated: "Bullock became the chief scribe under Willard Richards when work resumed on the Joseph Smith *History* in 1845" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 456).

In his diary Thomas Bullock frankly admitted that he helped Dr. Willard Richards write Joseph Smith's *History* after Joseph's death:

Jan. 14, 1845 . . . recording Church History  
16 . . . Dr [Dr. Willard Richards] & I preparing for history all day.  
17 . . . Dr. & I preparing Church History  
18 . . . G. A. Smith called in the afternoon about the history of the Church, staid some time. . . . Dr. & I on the Church History. . . .  
March 15. . . . finished the year 1839—wrote 56 pages last week.  
May 3 Saturday Office—writing history finished July 1842 being the end of Vol. 3.

(Thomas Bullock, "Diary," February 11, 1844–August 5, 1845, as cited in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 467)

Dean C. Jessee cites a letter from the Mormon Historian George A. Smith which shows that he was still writing the last part of Joseph Smith's *History* many years after Smith's death:

On the 10th April 1854, I commenced to perform the duties of Historian by taking up the *History of Joseph Smith* where Dr. Willard Richards had left it when driven from Nauvoo on the 4th day of February 1846. I had to **revise** and compare two years of back history which he had compiled, filling up numerous spaces which had been marked as omissions on memoranda by Dr. Richards.

I commenced compiling the *History of Joseph Smith* from April 1st 1840 to his death on June 27th 1844. I have filled up all the reports of sermons by Prest. Joseph Smith and others from minutes of sketches taken at the time in long hand . . . which was an immense labor, requiring the deepest thought and the closest application, as there were mostly only two or three words (about half written) to a sentence. . . .

. . . The severe application of thought to the principles of the History, the exercise of memory &c., have caused me to suffer much from a nervous headache or inflammation of the brain; and my application of mind being in exercise both day and night, deprived me of a great portion of necessary sleep. (Letter from George A. Smith to Woodruff, April 21, 1856, as cited in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, pp. 470, 472)

This letter certainly provides devastating evidence against the authenticity of "Joseph Smith's *History*."

## Rocky Mountain Prophecy

Important evidence concerning Joseph Smith's prophecy that the Mormons would come to the Rocky Mountains has recently come to light. This prophecy was reported to have been given in 1842 in Illinois. Joseph Smith himself was supposed to have said:

While the Deputy Grand-Master was engaged in giving the

# Documentary History of The Church

## Vol. DI, Page 1362

An Earthquake was recently felt in Dunblane Cathedral near Glasgow Scotland

Monday August 1. 1844. A most disgraceful riot is reported to have commenced in Philadelphia between the Black and White people which continued 3 or 4 days.

Tuesday 2. In the City transacting a variety of business in company with General James Adams and others.

→ Brigadier General Wilson Saw elected Major General of the Nauvoo Legion (by a small majority over Syrian Wright) in place of J. C. Bennett confirmed.

In company with fifteen officers.

Thursday 4. <sup>In company with fifteen officers.</sup> Leaving Nauvoo for Iowa with General Brewer and attending to a variety of business.

→ Friday 5. Engaged in a variety of business, and at 6 P. M. presided in the City Council on the subject of our persecutions in Missouri, and the constant annoyance which has followed us since we were driven from that State. prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death in my persecutions, and God bless their lives in consequence of endurance or disease and some of you will be to go and assist in settling and building cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.

→ Saturday 6. Passed over the River to Montrose Iowa, in company with General Adams, Colonel Brewer and others, and witnessed the Installation of the officers of the Rising Sun Lodge of Ancient York Masons, at Montrose by General James Adams, Deputy Grand

→ Master of Illinois. while the Deputy Grand Master was engaged in giving the requisite instructions to the master elect. Had a conversation with a number of persons on the state of the subject of our persecutions in Missouri, and the constant annoyance which has followed us since we were driven from that State. prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death in my persecutions, and God bless their lives in consequence of endurance or disease and some of you will be to go and assist in settling and building cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.

A photograph of "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History," Book D-1, page 1362. The arrows point to three interpolations which appear in this portion of the manuscript. The arrow at the bottom points to the prophecy concerning the Mormons becoming "a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains." Notice that it has been crammed in at the bottom in a smaller handwriting. Although the Mormon leaders claim that Joseph Smith dictated these words, new evidence shows that they could not have been written in the "Manuscript History" until after his death.



requisite instructions to the Master-elect, I had a conversation with a number of brethren in the shade of the building on the subject of our persecutions in Missouri and the constant annoyance which has followed us since we were driven from that state. I prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and apostatize, others would be put to death by our persecutors or lose their lives in consequence of exposure or disease, and some of you will live to go and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 85)

The reader will remember that we said that the discovery of the source of the material concerning Joseph Smith's arrest—taken from *The Wasp* and inserted in the *History of the Church* as if Joseph Smith had written it—certainly casts a shadow of doubt upon the authorship of this famous prophecy. We pointed out that the material from *The Wasp* is inserted in Joseph Smith's *History* only twelve words after Joseph Smith's prophecy. In our book *Falsification of Joseph Smith's History*, page 10, we made this statement concerning this prophecy:

There is some evidence that Joseph Smith considered going west to build his kingdom, but since we now know that the Mormon Historians actually compiled Joseph Smith's *History* after his death and that they drew from many sources, we cannot help being suspicious of the authorship of this prophecy. An examination of the original handwritten manuscript would probably help solve this problem, but the Mormon leaders are still suppressing this portion of the manuscript.

We are now happy to announce that a photograph of the portion of the original handwritten manuscript containing this "prophecy" has been located at the Visitor Center in Nauvoo, Illinois. Wesley P. Walters of Marissa, Illinois, has sent us a photograph of this page which we reproduce on page 134. This photograph is taken from "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History," Book D-1, page 1362.

The reader will notice that the part concerning the Mormons becoming "a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains" has been crammed in at the bottom in a smaller handwriting. This would seem to indicate that it was added sometime after the page had originally been written.

It is interesting to note that the Mormon writer Nephi Morris wrote a book on the "Prophecies of Joseph Smith" in 1920. The church leaders allowed him to publish a photograph of the prophecy as printed in the *Deseret News* for November 7, 1855, but he apparently had no access to the original manuscript. He stated:

It was published in its regular order as the *History of the Church* appeared in that paper. We have **not** had access to the original record as kept by the Prophet, containing this remarkable prophecy. (*Prophecies of Joseph Smith and Their Fulfillment*, p. 63)

Now that we have a photograph of the page containing this "prophecy," we can see why it was suppressed for all these years.

The exact time the prophecy concerning the Rocky Mountains was added would be hard to determine since the handwriting of the interpolation appears to be that of Thomas Bullock—the same man who wrote the rest of the page. Bullock served as "the chief scribe under Willard Richards when work resumed on the Joseph Smith History in 1845" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 456), and worked in the "Historian Office in Salt Lake City under Willard Richards and George A. Smith (*Ibid.*, p. 458). Two "marginal notes" by Bullock were added to page 1486 of the "Manuscript History" after the Mormons came to Utah (see photograph in *BYU Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 459). We know also that Bullock was working for George A. Smith when Smith was tampering with this part of the *History* in 1854. The reader will remember that George A. Smith stated that on April 10, 1854, he began

to perform the duties of Historian by taking up the History of Joseph Smith. . . . I had to **revise** and compare two years of back history . . . filling up numerous spaces which had been marked as omissions on memoranda by Dr. Richards.

I commenced compiling the *History* of Joseph Smith from April 1st 1840 to his death on June 27th 1844. (*BYU Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 470)

Dean C. Jessee made this comment concerning this matter:

The reference to April, 1840, appears to contradict the beginning date of March 1, 1843, given above. However, the early date represents the point from which George A. "**revised** and compared." His actual compilation of the text started with the latter entry. (*Ibid.*, n. 103)

From this it is evident that the prophecy concerning the Rocky Mountains could have been added years after the Mormons were in Utah. At any rate, Dean C. Jessee's study proves that this prophecy could not have been written in "Joseph Smith's Manuscript History" until at least a year after Joseph Smith's death. He shows that page 1362 of the Manuscript History—the page containing the prophecy—was not even written until July 4, 1845!

Unless the Mormon leaders can establish that the entry in the Manuscript History was taken from another source written during Joseph Smith's lifetime, the prophecy as found in the *History of the Church* becomes of no historical value. Although some Mormons would like us to believe that Brigham Young knew all along that he was going to lead the Mormons to "the midst of the Rocky Mountains," there is evidence to show that he was somewhat confused about the matter. In a letter dated Dec. 17, 1845, he said:

. . . we expect to emigrate West of the mountains next season. If we should eventually settle on Vancouver's Island, according to our calculation we shall greatly desire to have a mail route, . . . if Oregon should be annexed to the United States, . . . and Vancouver's Island incorporated in the same by our promptly paying the national revenue, and taxes, we can live in peace with all men. (Photograph of letter in *Prologue*, Spring 1972, p. 29)

There is an important change in the *History of the Church* that seems to be related to this matter. In Joseph Smith's *History* as it was first published in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 280, the following words were attributed to Joseph Smith:

The Lord has an established law in relation to the matter: there must be a particular spot for the salvation of our dead. I verily believe **this** will be **the** place; . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 319, this has been changed to read:

The Lord has an established law in relation to the matter: there must be a particular spot for the salvation of our dead. I verily believe **there** will be **a** place, . . .

The reason for this change is obvious; the Mormons were driven from Nauvoo in 1846, just two years after Joseph Smith had said "this will be the place." It is reported that when Brigham Young looked over the valley where Salt Lake City now stands he stated: "This is the place." A temple has been built at Salt Lake City, and work for the dead is performed in this temple. The change in the location of the headquarters of the church seemed to make it necessary to change Joseph Smith's statement.

## Selected Changes

Although we will deal with some of the most important changes in Joseph Smith's *History* in later chapters, we will mention some of the changes at this point. In Joseph Smith's *History* as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* we read the following:

. . . I was left to all kinds of temptations, and mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors and displayed the weakness of youth and the **corruption** of human nature, which I am sorry to say led me into divers temptations, to the **gratification of many appetites**, offensive in the sight of God. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 749)

In modern printings of the *History of the Church* this has been changed to read:

. . . I was left to all kinds of temptations; and mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth, and the **foibles** of human nature, which, I am sorry to say led me into divers temptations, offensive in the sight of God. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 9)



Charles Marshall, who had been in Utah “sometime before June, 1871,” was allowed the privilege of examining the page in the original handwritten manuscript which relates to this change. Speaking of Joseph Smith’s behavior after the First Vision, he stated:

During this interval he appears from his own confession to have abandoned himself freely to a variety of youthful vices. “I was led to all kinds of temptations,” he writes; “and mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth, and the corruption of human nature; which, I am sorry to say, led me into divers temptations, to the gratification of many appetites offensive in the sight of God.”

I have italicised some of the expressions in this confessions for a special reason. In the copy of the Autobiography in the Historian’s Office, Salt Lake, from which I made these extracts, the words I have thus marked are crossed through with ink. It will be perceived that if the passage be reprinted as thus trimmed, the sense will be much modified. This is but a trivial example of the way in which piety will lend itself to fraud for the honor of religion, and is scarcely perhaps worth mentioning. If Mormonism lives, as it promises to do, the process of purifying and exalting the prophet’s character will no doubt be carried to great lengths. (*The Eclectic Magazine*, April 1873, p. 482, reprinted from *Fraser’s Magazine* for February 1873)

Notice that Mr. Marshall states that the words “all kinds of” were crossed out in two places in the text. The film of the handwritten manuscript confirms this, but they have never been removed from the printed version. The words “to the gratification of many appetites,” which have now been deleted from the printed version, were crossed out in the handwritten manuscript as Mr. Marshall indicated. The word “corruption” is also crossed out and the word “foibles” is found written above it. Charles Marshall speaks of the word “corruption” as being crossed out in the manuscript, however, he does not state that the word “foibles” is written above it as we find on the microfilm made on January 27, 1942. This may indicate that the word “foibles” was not written in the manuscript until after 1871, or, on the other hand, it may simply be an oversight on the part of Mr. Marshall. Mr. Marshall also indicates that the word “the” just before “corruption” has been crossed out. We cannot determine this from our film, but it seems reasonable since the removal of these two words would make good sense without adding the word “foibles”: “I . . . displayed the weakness of youth and of human nature, . . .”

Just following these changes there is an apology of 82 words which has been added to the text. It seems to have been written to soften down the confession which Joseph had made (see *Falsification of Joseph Smith’s History*, p. 12). In his thesis, “Textual Changes in the Pearl of Great Price,” written at Brigham Young University, Walter L. Whipple informs us that in the original manuscript the 82 words are not found in their proper place at the beginning of the manuscript, but are found on page 133 of the manuscript. At the place where they should appear the following words are found: ‘See note C, p. 133.’ We have checked the film of the original and have found Mr. Whipple’s statements to be correct. If the interpolation is in the handwriting of Willard Richards (as Dean C. Jessee maintains), it must have been added to the manuscript sometime after the *Times and Seasons* printed this part of the *History* in 1842 but before 1854 when Richards died. This 82 word interpolation is one of three notes found on pp. 131-133 of Joseph Smith’s “Manuscript History,” vol. A-1. These notes were obviously added to the manuscript at a later date. In our book, *Falsification of Joseph Smith’s History*, page 12, we maintained that they could “not possibly have been added to the manuscript before April 1, 1842 and that they might have been added as late as 1854. Dean C. Jessee, however, maintains that he has found evidence that they were dictated by Joseph Smith and were added to the manuscript in December 1842:

. . . their location on pages 131-134 of Volume A-1 of Joseph’s History manuscript, in the handwriting of Willard Richards, and a note

of reference to them in Richards’ Diary, clearly date them as having been written in December 1842. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1971, pp. 87-88)

Since Mr. Jessee does not tell us exactly what Willard Richards records in his journal it is hard to evaluate his statement. At any rate, even if the church leaders were able to establish the fact that Joseph Smith dictated the notes, they would find themselves faced with another problem. While Notes B and C have been added into the printed *History of the Church*, Note A has never been added. Notes B and C only amount to about 200 words, but Note A is over 600 words. If Joseph Smith really dictated these notes, why was Note A never added to his *History*? This note deals with Joseph Smith’s leg operation and other troubles and persecutions he was supposed to have suffered in his youth.

One of the most important changes in the *History* is concerning the name of the Angel who was supposed to have appeared in Joseph Smith’s room. In the *History* as it was first published by Joseph Smith, we learn that the Angel’s name was “Nephi”:

He called me by name, and said . . . that his name was **Nephi**. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 753)

In modern printings of the *History of the Church*, this has been changed to read “Moroni”:

He called me by name, and said . . . that his name was **Moroni**; . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 11)

The original handwritten manuscript shows that the name was originally written as “Nephi,” but that someone at a later date has written the word “Moroni” above the line. Below is a photograph of the original manuscript.

*The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as . . . When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear name and said unto me that he was a messenger sent of God and that his name was Nephi. That God had a work he had for good and evil among all nations kindreds and*

In our book, *Falsification of Joseph Smith’s History*, page 13, we show that this change was made after Joseph Smith’s death.

The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson argues that the name “Nephi” had to be changed because it contradicted other statements made by Joseph Smith:

This wording in the present *Pearl of Great Price* is modified from the first printing, in which the messenger was identified as “Nephi,” a fact that has generated its share of superficial comment. A textual critic or a court of law reserves the right to use common sense in the face of obvious documentary errors. The “Nephi” reading contradicts all that the Prophet published on the subject during his lifetime. (*Improvement Era*, September 1970, pp. 6-7)

Actually, it would appear that the early Mormon leaders were somewhat confused concerning the identification of the angel who appeared in Joseph Smith’s room. In Joseph Smith’s earliest attempt to write the history of his life—which has only recently come to light—he merely states that it was “an angel of the Lord” who appeared. The “angel” tells him that the plates were “engraved by Moroni” in “ancient days,” but the “angel” does **not** give his own name. Joseph Smith stated:

. . . behold an angel of the Lord came and stood before me and it was by night and he called me by name and He the Lord had forgiven me my sins and he revealed unto me that in the Town of Manchester, Ontario County N.Y. there was plates of gold upon which there was engravings which was engraved by Moroni and his father the servant of the living God in ancient days . . . (“An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith’s Early Visions,” by Paul R. Cheesman, Master’s thesis, BYU, 1965, p. 130)

When the church began the “first published consecutive account of the origin of the Church” in 1834-35, the “angel”

still did not seem to have a name, for in the February 1835 issue of the *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate*, Oliver Cowdery identified the angel only as “a messenger sent by commandment of the Lord, . . .” (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 79). Two months later, however, the angel seems to have acquired the name “Moroni,” for Cowdery speaks of “the angel Moroni, whose words I have been rehearsing, . . .” (*Ibid.*, April 1835, p. 112). In the *Elders' Journal* for July 1838, page 42, Joseph Smith stated that the angel's name was “Moroni.”

The *Doctrine and Covenants* 27:5 is sometimes cited to try to prove that the angel was identified as Moroni at a very early date. The revelation purports to have been given in August 1830, but the name “Moroni” was **not** in the revelation when it was first printed in the *Book of Commandments* in 1833. It was interpolated into the revelation when it was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835.

It would appear, then, that until 1835 the angel was not identified. From 1835 to 1838 the Mormon leaders were teaching that the angel was “Moroni.” When Joseph Smith published his history in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842, he had changed his mind. He had decided that the angel was really “Nephi.” The handwritten manuscript plainly reads “Nephi,” and since Joseph Smith was the editor of the *Times and Seasons* at the time this was published, it is almost impossible to believe this was a “clerical error.” Joseph Smith lived for two years after the name “Nephi” was printed, and he never published a retraction. The *Millennial Star*, printed in England, also published Joseph Smith's story stating that the angel's name was “Nephi” (see *Millennial Star*, vol. 3, p. 53). That the Church members in England believed that the angel's name was “Nephi” is obvious from the editorial remarks published in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 3, page 71:

. . . we read the history of our beloved brother, Joseph Smith, and of the glorious ministry and message of the angel **Nephi** which has finally opened a new dispensation to man, . . .

Joseph Smith's mother, when writing her history, also quoted Joseph Smith's statement that the angel's name was “Nephi,” but this has been changed in later editions of her book to read “Moroni.” The name was also published in the first edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* as “Nephi.” Walter L. Whipple states that Orson Pratt “published *The Pearl of Great Price* in 1878, and removed the name of Nephi from the text entirely and inserted the name Moroni in its place” (“Textual Changes in the Pearl of Great Price,” typed copy, p. 125).

In LaMar Petersen's book, *Problems in Mormon Text*, he tells that Joseph Smith said the angel's name was “Nephi.” In the July, 1961, issue of the *Improvement Era*, pp. 492 and 522, Dr. Hugh Nibley attempts to answer this problem by stating:

Some critics, for example, seem to think that if they can show that a friend or enemy of Joseph Smith reports him as saying that he was visited by Nephi, they have caught the Prophet in a fraud.

In footnote 15, page 526 of the same issue, Dr. Nibley stated:

Mr. L. Petersen, *Problems in Mormon Text* (Salt Lake City, 1957), p. 3, n. 4, labours this point most strangely. He cites as evidence the *Millennial Star* for August 1842 and the 1851 edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*—the first printed in England, far away from Joseph Smith, and the second edition years after his death; for them Joseph Smith cannot be held responsible. . . . That Mr. P. should have to search so far among literally thousands of retellings of the story of Moroni to find this inevitable slip is actually a vindication of the original.

Dr. Nibley seems to have missed the whole point; LaMar Petersen was telling how Joseph Smith's story originally read. The original did say it was Nephi, and it was published in Nauvoo, Illinois, and Joseph Smith himself was the editor at that time. Therefore, Joseph Smith must be held responsible for identifying the angel as “Nephi.”

At the bottom of page 120 of volume 1 of the *History of the Church*, there is nothing to indicate that a deletion has been made,

but approximately 3,400 words which were printed in the *Times and Seasons* have been deleted. These words were very complimentary to Sidney Rigdon. Since Rigdon was excommunicated after Joseph Smith's death, it was apparently felt best to remove Joseph Smith's praise concerning him. An examination of the original handwritten manuscript reveals that these words have been crossed out, which proves that this was a deliberate change. If Rigdon had remained faithful to the church, the Mormon Historians would probably have left these 3,400 words concerning him in the *History of the Church*.

Speaking of a member of a mob who assaulted him, Joseph Smith stated:

. . . the fellow that I kicked came to me and thrust his hand into my face, all covered with blood, (**for I hit him on the nose.**) and with an exulting horse laugh, muttered: . . . (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 611)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* the words “**for I hit him on the nose**” were deleted without any indication:

. . . the fellow that I kicked came to me and thrust his hand, all covered with blood, into my face and with an exulting hoarse laugh, muttered: . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 262)

The original handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith's *History* bears witness against the modern edition of the *History of the Church*, since it contains the words “**for I hit him on the nose.**”

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 285, twenty-four words were added which were not in the *Times and Seasons* (see vol. 5, page 657). They are concerning George A. Smith who became a very prominent man in the Mormon Church. These words read as follows:

On September the 10th, George A. Smith was baptized by Joseph H. Wakefield, at Potsdam, St. Lawrence county, New York; and confirmed by Elder Solomon Humphry.

The original handwritten manuscript plainly reveals that these words were interpolated after this portion of the manuscript was originally written. In fact, they have been squeezed into the manuscript between two lines in a very awkward manner. That this interpolation was made **after** Joseph Smith's death is obvious from the fact that the issue of the *Times and Seasons* which printed this portion of Joseph Smith's *History* is dated October 1, 1844—about three months after Smith's death. It is obvious from this that if the words in question had been in the handwritten manuscript at the time this issue of the *Times and Seasons* was printed they would have been included. It is also interesting to note that George A. Smith was one of the men who “**revised**” Joseph Smith's *History* after his death. He apparently could not resist the temptation to add material concerning himself in Joseph Smith's *History*.

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, pages 295-297, seventy-four words are added which were not in the *Times and Seasons* (see vol. 5, p. 673). This interpolation reads as follows:

About the 8th of November I received a visit from Elders Joseph Young, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball of Mendon, Monroe county, New York. They spent four or five days at Kirtland, during which we had many interesting moments. At one of our interviews Brother Brigham Young and John P. Greene spoke in tongues, which was the first time I had heard this gift among the brethren; others also spoke, and I received the gift myself.

This interpolation was certainly made after Joseph Smith's death and is an obvious attempt to glorify Brigham Young. The interpolation was too large to be inserted into the handwritten manuscript at its proper place (“Manuscript History,” Book A-1, p. 240), and therefore it is written in the “Addenda” which follows p. 553. (The Addenda contains a great deal of material which was to be inserted into Joseph Smith's *History* and was obviously written after his death.)



Below is a photograph from the “Addenda” showing the words concerning Brigham Young which were to be added to the *History of the Church*.

Note A. about the 8<sup>th</sup> of November I received a visit from Elders Joseph Young, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball from Mendon, Monroe County, New York. They spent four or five days at Kirtland, during which we had many interesting moments. At one of our interviews, Brother Brigham spoke, and John Stephens spoke in Tongues, which was the first time I have heard this gift among the brethren, others also spoke, and I received the gift myself. Brother Joseph Young is a great man, but Brigham is a greater, and the time will come when he will preside over the whole church. (see page 240)

Note B. May the 25, 1833. My uncle John Smith and family arrived in Kirtland, from Rotterdam New-York, My uncle being an Elder in the Church, and his wife and eldest son George.

The reader will notice that although the Mormon leaders added most of this interpolation into *Joseph Smith's History*, they omitted two lines (see arrow). These lines contain some very important information:

**Brother Joseph Young is a great man but Brigham is a greater, and the time will come when he will preside over the whole church.**

Although the Mormon Historians added the part about Brigham Young speaking in tongues, they have never dared to add the prophecy that Brigham Young was to become leader of the church. We must remember that many people questioned the leadership of Brigham Young. In fact, the Apostle William Smith—Joseph Smith's brother—left the church and stated that he once heard Joseph say that if Brigham Young ever led the church “he would certainly lead it to destruction” (*Warsaw Signal*, October 29, 1845). However this may be, the Mormon historians never dared to add in the “prophecy” found in the “Addenda.” They probably realized that the dissenters would question such a statement in Joseph Smith's *History* and ask for proof. An examination of the original manuscript, however, would soon reveal that the prophecy is a forgery made after Brigham Young had become the leader of the church.

On page 353 of the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, thirty-nine words are added that did not appear in the *Times and Seasons* (vol. 6, p. 785). In this interpolation it is stated that “George A. Smith hauled the first load of stone for the Temple.” The handwritten manuscript clearly shows that this was added at a later time.

On page 388 of the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, nineteen words were added which were not in the *Times and Seasons* (vol. 6, p. 818). They are as follows: “Elder Brigham Young having returned from his mission to Canada, accompanied by some twenty or thirty of the brethren, . . .” The original manuscript shows this to be an interpolation.

One of the most important changes in the *History of the Church*—for it amounts to thousands of words added or rewritten—is concerning “Zion's Camp” and its journey from Kirtland to Missouri. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 65, line 13, to p. 78, line 5, there have been so many changes made and so much new material added that it is almost impossible to determine just what was in the original and what was added.

In the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, pages 1075-1076, the story of “Zion's Camp” from May 11, 1834, to June 1, 1834, takes just a little over a page—863 words; this same period of time in the *History of the Church* takes almost 13 pages—3,916 words. Therefore, at least 3,053 words have been added.

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, pages 80-82, 751 words have been added which were not in the *Times and Seasons* (vol. 6, p. 1076). It is very interesting to note that the first paragraph

that is added resembles Heber C. Kimball's Journal for June 3, 1834. Below is a comparison.

#### Kimball's Journal:

. . . while we were refreshing ourselves and teams, about the middle of the day, **Brother Joseph** got up in a wagon and said, that **he** would deliver a prophecy. After giving the brethren much good advice, exhorting them to faithfulness and humility. **He** said, the Lord had told **him** that there would a scourge come upon the camp, in consequence of the fractious and unruly spirits that appeared among them and they should die like sheep with the rot; still if they would repent and humble themselves before the Lord, the scourge in a great measure might be turned away: but, as the Lord lives, this camp will suffer for giving way to their unruly temper. . . . (Extracts from H. C. Kimball's Journal, published in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 788)

#### History of the Church:

. . . while we were refreshing ourselves and teams about the middle of the day (June 3rd), **I** got up on a wagon wheel, called the people together, and said that **I** would deliver a prophecy. After giving the brethren much good advice, exhorting them to faithfulness and humility, **I** said the Lord had revealed to **me** that a scourge would come upon the camp in consequence of the fractious and unruly spirits that appeared among them, and they should die like sheep with the rot; still, if they would repent and humble themselves before the Lord, the scourge, in a great measure, might be turned away; but, as the Lord lives, the members of this camp will suffer for giving way to their unruly temper. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 80)

Since these words were not in the history as it was first published, and since they so closely resemble Heber C. Kimball's Journal, it is almost impossible not to believe that the Mormon Historians were guilty of falsification and deceit. The handwritten manuscript also shows that the words added to Joseph Smith's *History* were interpolated at a later date. They do not appear in their proper place but are found in “Note I” in the “Addenda.”

We could cite many other cases where words have been taken from Heber C. Kimball's Journal and interpolated into Joseph Smith's *History*.

The reader will remember that the Mormons were driven from Nauvoo before the *Times and Seasons* had completed the publication of Joseph Smith's *History*; therefore, the publication of the *History of the Church* was continued in the *Millennial Star*. In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 15, page 297, this statement appears:

**This curse shall be upon them**—the hand of the Lord shall be upon them, until they repent . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 237, six words have been deleted so that it now reads:

The hand of the Lord shall be upon them, until they repent. . . .

In a letter from Alanson Ripley to Joseph Smith (*Millennial Star*, vol. 17, page 125) we read:

. . . it is like fire in my bones, and burns against your enemies **to the bare hilt**; and I never can be satisfied, while there is one of them to **piss** against a wall, . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 3, page 313, this has been changed to read:

. . . it is like fire in my bones, and burns against your enemies, and I never can be satisfied, while there is one of them to **stand** against a wall, . . .

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 19, page 38, Joseph Smith stated: “Attended to **business** in general; . . .” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 4, page 502, this was changed to read: “Attended to **baptism** in general; . . .”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 19, page 38, Joseph Smith said:

. . . placed the carpet given by Carlos Granger, on the floor of my office; **case lots with the recorder**, and spent the evening in general council . . .



In the *History of the Church*, vol. 4, page 503, five words were deleted: “. . . placed the carpet given by Carlos Granger on the floor of my office; and spent the evening in general council . . .”

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 67, 1,179 words have been deleted without any indication. These words are found in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 19, pages 598-600. The words which have been deleted contain the Phrenological Charts of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. Phrenology is defined as “the theory that one’s mental powers are indicated by the shape of the skull” (*The American College Dictionary*). A phrenologist had examined the heads of several prominent Mormons in Nauvoo.

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 212, nineteen words have been deleted which were printed in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 20, page 263. These words are concerning Joseph Smith’s cure for the cholera: “Salt, vinegar, and pepper, given internally, and plunging into the river when the paroxysms begin, will cure the cholera.”

Some very important changes concerning the Apostle Orson Pratt have been made in Joseph Smith’s *History*. The Mormon writer T. Edgar Lyon claims that an incident concerning polygamy destroyed Orson Pratt’s chances of becoming President of the Mormon Church. At first Pratt had opposed Joseph Smith’s doctrine of polygamy, and for this offense he was supposed to have been excommunicated. T. Edgar Lyon states that because of his excommunication, Orson Pratt lost his seniority. Dr. Lyon goes on to explain that “Had he not lost his seniority, at the death of Brigham Young in 1877, he would have been next in line for the presidency of the Church” (“Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader,” M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, June 1932, typed copy, page 30, n. 2). Strange as it may seem, however, Joseph Smith’s *History*, as it was originally published, seems to show that Orson Pratt was **not** legally cut off and that he was restored to his “former standing” in the quorum of the Twelve. When Joseph Smith’s *History* was later reprinted some very important changes were made concerning Orson Pratt’s trial and restoration to the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. At the bottom of the page is a comparison of the text as it appeared in the *Millennial Star* with the way it has been falsified in modern editions of the *History of the Church*.

It would appear from the way Joseph Smith’s *History* was first printed that Orson Pratt did **not** lose his seniority and that he

should have become the third President of the Mormon Church. The changes in Joseph Smith’s *History* evidently were made to cover up this fact. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, was not ordained to the Apostleship until Dec. 1838. Orson Pratt had been ordained to that office more than three years before; therefore, if he was restored to his “former standing in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles,” he should have been the third President of the Church.

The Mormon writers Reed Durham and Steven H. Heath show that Orson Pratt was not stripped of his seniority until 1875:

Perhaps the most significant of all changes made in the development of seniority and successorship among the apostles during the later years of President Young’s administration occurred in Sanpete County in June, 1875.... President Young ruled...that, according to true principles of seniority, the two Orsons, Hyde and Pratt, were not in proper positions in the Quorum. Both of them had been excommunicated at one time and then, following genuine repentance, had been reinstated and brought back into the Quorum in the same positions they had held upon leaving....at this 1875 meeting these two apostles were removed from their places, their seniority was properly adjusted,... (*Succession in the Church*, pp. 73-74)

Chad J. Flake, Special Collections Librarian of Brigham Young University, made this statement:

. . . the two people next in succession to Brigham Young were Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt, both of whom Brigham distrusted. Therefore at the General Conference of October 1875, the Quorum was reshuffled so that these men were dropped in seniority. (*BYU Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 328)

It would appear, then, that Brigham Young deliberately destroyed Orson Pratt’s chance to become President of the Church, and that Joseph Smith’s *History* was changed to cover up the fact that Joseph Smith had restored Orson Pratt to “**his former standing** in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, . . .”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 21, page 23, Joseph Smith made this statement: “Brother George A. Smith, I don’t know how I can help him to a living, but to go and preach, **put on a long face, and make them doe over him.**” When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 367, twelve words were deleted: “Brother George A. Smith, I don’t know how I can help him to a living, but to let him go and preach.”

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 416, 547 words have

AS FIRST PUBLISHED	AS PUBLISHED TODAY
<p>This Council was called to reconsider the case of Orson Pratt, who had previously been cut off from the <b>quorum of the Twelve for neglect of duty</b>; . . . (<i>Millennial Star</i>, vol. 20, p. 423)</p>	<p>This council was called to consider the case of Orson Pratt who had previously been cut off from the Church for <b>disobedience</b>, . . . (<i>History of the Church</i>, vol. 5, p. 255)</p>
<p>I told the <b>Council that as there was not a quorum present when Orson Pratt’s case came up before them, that he was still a member—that he had not been cut off legally, and I would find some other place for Amasa Lyman, to which the Council agreed.</b> (<i>Millennial Star</i>, vol. 20, p. 423)</p>	<p>I told the <b>Quorum: You may receive Orson back in the quorum of the Twelve and I can take Amasa into the First Presidency.</b> (<i>History of the Church</i>, vol. 5, p. 255)</p>
<p>. . . ordaining Orson Pratt to his former office <b>and standing</b> in the quorum of the Twelve. (<i>Millennial Star</i>, vol. 20, p. 423)</p>	<p>. . . ordaining Orson Pratt to his former office in the quorum of the Twelve. (<i>History of the Church</i>, vol. 5, p. 256)</p>
<p>. . . I had restored Orson Pratt to <b>his former standing</b> in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, . . . (<i>Millennial Star</i>, vol. 20, p. 518)</p>	<p>. . . I had restored Orson Pratt to the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, . . . (<i>History of the Church</i>, vol. 5, p. 264)</p>

been deleted which were printed in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 21, page 187. This was an ordinance “to establish a ferry across the Mississippi river at the city of Nauvoo.” In section 1, it was stated:

Be it ordained by the City Council of the city of Nauvoo that **Joseph Smith** or his successor is authorized and licensed to keep a ferry for the term of perpetual succession across the Mississippi river . . .

In section 3 we read:

And be it further ordained that if any person or persons, except those whose ferry is established and confirmed by this ordinance, shall at any time run any boat or boats, or other craft, for the purpose of conveying passengers or their property across said river as aforesaid, within said boundaries as aforesaid, he, she, or they so offending shall forfeit every such boat or boats, or other craft, to the owner or proprietor of the ferry; . . .

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 21, p. 188, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning Brigham Young:

He is, in the language of the Hebrews, **Hawra-ang Yeesh Raw-ale**—the friend of Israel, and worthy to be received and entertained as a man of God: yea, he has, as had the ancient Apostles, **O Logos O Kalos**—the good word, even the good word that leadeth unto eternal life. **Laus Deus**—Praise God!

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 417, nineteen words were deleted:

He is the friend of Israel, and worthy to be received and entertained as a man of God; yea, he has, as had the ancient apostles, the good word, even the good word that leadeth unto eternal life.

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 21, page 219, Joseph Smith said: “If any man attempts to refute what I am about to say, after I have made it plain, let him be **accursed**.” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 426, this was changed to read: “If any man attempts to refute what I am about to say, after I have made it plain, let him **beware**.”

In the report of Charles C. Rich (*Millennial Star*, vol. 21, p. 667) the following statement is made concerning a Mormon by the name of Jesse B. Nichols:

The son of Vulcan, however, took the dollar, but demanded more; upon which Nichols **kicked the priest on his seat of honour**, mounted his horse, and left, . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 488, seven words were deleted:

The son of Vulcan, however, took the dollar, but demanded more; upon which Nichols mounted his horse and left, . . .

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 21, page 762, Joseph Smith quotes this statement from the *Illinois State Register*: “An indictment was found against Smith **for treason** five years’ old.” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 514, two words have been deleted: “An indictment was found against Smith five years old.”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 22, page 153, Wilford Woodruff (who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church) is quoted as saying the following:

It [the Book of Mormon] also points out the establishing of this our own nation, with its progress, **decline and fall**, and those predictions . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 24, this was changed to read:

It [the Book of Mormon] also points out the establishing of this our own nation, with **the conditions for** its progress, and those predictions . . .

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 22, page 182, Joseph Smith said: “I have been reduced to the necessity of opening **my** mansion as a hotel; . . .” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 33, this was changed to read: “I have been reduced to the necessity of opening **‘the Mansion’** as a hotel.”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 22, page 455, Joseph Smith said the following concerning the persecutions that the Mormons had received in Missouri: “. . . robbing them of all they possessed on earth, murdering **hundreds** . . .” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 115, this was changed to read: “. . . robbing them of all they possessed on earth, murdering **scores** . . .”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 22, page 455, Joseph Smith said:

While discussing the petition to Congress, I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government, **and God shall damn them and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot**.

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 116, eighteen words were omitted:

While discussing the petition to Congress, I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government. \*\*\*\*

Notice that the comma after the word “government” was changed to a period to make it appear that the sentence was complete. It is very strange that the Mormon Historians would claim that Joseph Smith was a prophet and yet delete part of his prophecy.

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 22, page 518, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning Orrin Porter Rockwell: “The following is his statement of his experience and sufferings by that **accursed** people: —” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 135, this was changed to read as follows: “The following is his statement of his experience and sufferings by that people: —”

Joseph Smith made this statement in a letter to John C. Calhoun (*Millennial Star*, vol. 22, p. 602): “. . . and rebellious **niggers** in the slave States, . . .” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 158, this was changed to read: “. . . and rebellious **negroes** in the slave States, . . .”

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 248, 364 words have been deleted which were printed in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, pages 85-86. These words were concerning Joseph Smith’s attempt to repeal the hog law. Joseph Smith said that hogs and dogs should be allowed to run loose in the streets of Nauvoo. In this discussion he said:

Let the hogs run in the streets, and the people make good fences to secure their gardens.

Many physicians have given it as their opinion that a hog mud-hole in the streets is the most healthy of any place.

Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith’s brother, was quoted as saying the following in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 231: “. . . we will get all the big souls out of all the nations, and we shall have the largest city in the world. **It works just like a God**.” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 300, the words “**It works just like a God**” have been deleted without any indication.

Joseph Smith was quoted as making this statement in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 246: “. . . you might just as well take the lives of other false teachers as that of mine, **if I am false**.” When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 304, four words were deleted: “. . . you might just as well take the lives of other false teachers as that of mine.”

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 406, Joseph Smith quotes his brother Hyrum as saying: “There were Prophets before **Adam**, and Joseph has the spirit and power of all the Prophets.” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 346, the word “Adam” has been left out: “There were prophets before, but Joseph has the spirit and power of all the prophets.” It is interesting to note that in 1854 the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde taught that “**the world was peopled before the days of Adam**, as much so as it was before the days of Noah . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 79). Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, however, calls

this a “false notion”: “. . . Adam was the first mortal on the earth; . . . Since Adam was the first man on the earth, that does away with the **false notion** that there were pre-Adamites” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 78).

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 406, Joseph Smith remarked: “. . . received a visit from L. R. Foster of New York, who gave me a **gold** pencil case, . . .” In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 347, this was changed to read: “. . . received a visit from L. R. Foster of New York, who gave me a **good** pencil case, . . .”

In the order to the Sheriff in the case of Francis M. Higbee vs. Joseph Smith (*Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 438) this statement appears:

“The Sheriff is directed to hold the within-named defendant to bail in the sum of five thousand dollars.”

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 360, this has been omitted without any indication.

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 23, page 560, Joseph Smith said: “I was about home the rest of the day, and read in the *Neighbor* the report of **my** trial before the Municipal Court on the 8th inst.” When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pages 379-380, it was changed to read: “I was about home the rest of the day and read in the *Neighbor* the report of **the** trial in the Municipal Court on the 8th inst.”

The last part of vol. 6 of the *History of the Church* was compiled by the Mormon Historian George A. Smith. This part deals with the “account of the arrest, imprisonment and martyrdom of President Joseph Smith.” In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 24, page 487, the following story concerning Joseph Smith's death is given:

. . . he fell outward into the hands of his murderers, exclaiming, “O Lord my God!” **He fell partly on his right shoulder and back, his neck and head reaching the ground a little before his feet, and he rolled instantly on his face.**

**From this position he was taken by a man who was barefoot and bareheaded, and having on no coat, his pants rolled up above his knees, and his shirt sleeves above his elbows. He set Joseph against the south side of the well curb, which was situated a few feet from the jail, when Col. Levi Williams ordered four men to shoot him. They stood about eight feet from the curb, and fired simultaneously. A slight cringe of the body was all the indication of pain visible when the balls struck him, and he fell on his face.**

**The ruffian who set him against the well curb now gathered a bowie-knife for the purpose of severing his head from his body. He raised the knife, and was in the attitude of striking, when a light, so sudden and powerful, burst from the heavens upon the bloody scene (passing its vivid chain between Joseph and his murderers), that they were struck with terror. This light, in its appearance and potency, baffles all powers of description. The arm of the ruffian that held the knife fell powerless, the muskets of the four who fired fell to the ground, and they all stood like marble statues, not having the power to move a single limb of their bodies.**

**The retreat of the mob was as hurried and disorderly as it possibly could have been. Col. Williams hallooed to some who had just commenced their retreat to come back and help carry off the four men who fired, and who were still paralyzed. They came and carried them away by main strength to the baggage waggons, when they fled towards Warsaw.**

Dr. Richards' escape was miraculous; . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 24, p. 487)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pages 618- 619, 307 words were deleted:

. . . he fell outward into the hands of the murderers, exclaiming, “O Lord, my God!”

Dr. Richards' escape was miraculous; . . .

After telling of this change in our book, *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, we made this statement: “Apparently the Mormon Historians felt that this story was too unbelievable; therefore it was deleted.” At the time we made this statement we did not realize that the Mormon Historian B. H. Roberts had repudiated this story in his *Comprehensive History of the Church*. (This is not to be confused with Joseph Smith's *History* mentioned above, which was edited by B. H. Roberts.) In the *Comprehensive History of the Church*, B. H. Roberts stated:

It was inevitable, perhaps, that something miraculous should be alleged as connected with the death of Joseph Smith; that both myth and legend, those parasites of truth, should attach themselves to the Prophet's career. . . . Hence we have the legend of the body dragged to a sitting posture by the old well curb by the Missouri ruffian . . . the effort to behead the Prophet by the same person; the flash of heavenly light from the clear sky that paralyzed the arm of the would-be mutilator of the dead; and also paralyzing four other persons detailed by Captain Levi Williams to shoot the Prophet after he was set up by the well curb—paralyzed so that they stood like marble statues having no power to move a single limb and had to be carried away in their helpless condition by their companions! . . . Of course this whole fabric of myth and legend comes from the story of Daniels and Brackenbury, and has, unfortunately, found its way into some of our otherwise acceptable church works, and still more unfortunately has entered into the beliefs of many Latter-day Saints.

. . . Ford says that Daniels was “afterwards expelled from the Mormons, but no doubt they will cling to his evidence in favor of the divine mission of the Prophet.” It was for the refutation of the governor's supposition that this paragraph, in part, is written. . . . the great, determining facts of “Mormonism” rest on no such questionable witnesses as Daniels and Brackenbury to alleged miraculous displays of divine power connected with the Prophet's death; . . .

Fortunately for the church; fortunately for the truth of history, the church placed on record at an early date, following the event an official declaration of the accepted facts and incidents attending upon the martyrdom of her two chiefest men and prophets [*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 135]; and it is with a deep satisfaction that one can note the absence of the myths and legends that ignorance and superstition would all too willingly attach to the tragedy of their martyrdom. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 2, pp. 332-334)

It is interesting to note that B. H. Roberts called this story a myth in his *Comprehensive History*, and yet it appeared in the *History of the Church* as it was first published by the church leaders—it was removed in the 1902 edition. The reason that B. H. Roberts did not mention that this story was once in the history and later deleted is obvious: if he had mentioned this fact, it would have cast a shadow of doubt upon the entire history, for if George A. Smith (who was the Church Historian at the time this story was put in the history) included “myth and legend” in the history at this point, how do we know that other parts of the history are accurate? Perhaps the whole history could be filled with “myths and legends.”

While the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts felt that the fantastic story concerning Joseph Smith's death was only “myth and legend,” the early Mormons certainly believed it. Besides being included in Joseph Smith's *History*, it was preached from the pulpit in Utah. Speaking in the Tabernacle on January 3, 1858, the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde stated:

Did Joseph Smith overcome, even unto death? Yes. . . . When they were about to cut off his head, behold, the



power of the Almighty came down, and the men stood as it were like marble statues: they could not move, but stood there like Lot's wife—not pillars of salt, but pillars of petrified corruption. The power of the Almighty came down with the vivid glare of lightning's flash, and they had no power to take his head off. Was God with him? Yes. Was his death glorious? Yes. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 154)

## Conclusion

We do not have room to go into a detailed study of the changes which the Mormon leaders have made in Joseph Smith's *History*. Some of the more important changes are discussed in other chapters of this book.

In the book, *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, we said that "more than 62,000 words" were either added or deleted. A thorough examination of the original handwritten manuscripts would probably reveal that there have been many more words added or deleted. More important than this, however, is the evidence we uncovered that Joseph Smith did not finish his work. This evidence certainly casts a shadow of doubt upon the *History of the Church*. Only a small part of Joseph Smith's *History* was published during his lifetime; therefore, the greater part of the *History of the Church* stands on a very shaky foundation. We have shown that Dean C. Jessee, of the Church Historian's Office, admits that Joseph Smith's *History* was not completed until after his death. We must commend Mr. Jessee for his article on Joseph Smith's *History*. It is certainly one of the most honest and scholarly articles that has ever appeared in a Mormon publication. It is deplorable, however, that the Mormon leaders have not allowed such a study to appear before. For years we have maintained that Joseph Smith's *History* has been changed and that it was not completed until after his death. The Mormon leaders, however, have denied that any changes were made and have continued to suppress the original manuscripts. Now that the truth has become publicly known they have allowed Dean C. Jessee to publish his articles. This is certainly a step in the right direction, but it should be followed by the release of all the documents and journals used in compiling Joseph Smith's *History*.

The Mormon leaders must face the serious implications of this whole matter. Less than 40% of the history attributed to Joseph Smith was written during his lifetime, and this portion has had serious changes made in it. The remaining portion—more than 60% of the history—was not even compiled until after Joseph Smith's death. Since it was compiled by men who believed in falsification and deceit, it cannot be trusted as a reliable history of Joseph Smith.

The new evidence concerning the changes in Joseph Smith's *History* is already beginning to have an effect on some of the Mormon scholars. Davis Bitton, who recently became an Assistant Church Historian, made these interesting statements in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

In discussing his [B. H. Roberts'] use of primary sources we must here say something about his edition of Joseph Smith's documentary *History of the Church* (the DHC). . . . To be sure, the multi-volume DHC is an immensely useful tool for anyone studying the early history of Mormonism. . . . What, then, is the problem? Why cannot the DHC be put forth proudly as an example of Roberts' historical scholarship?

To answer this question we must recall that Joseph Smith's *History* had been published, in whole or in part, three times before. . . . the idea of publishing the entire work in a new critical edition was an excellent one. But to achieve its purpose such a work should have been scrupulously accurate. It should have gone back to the original manuscript copy whenever possible, making

"corrections" or comments in footnotes, where they would clearly be the responsibility of the editor. Variant readings should have been noted in the same way. Admittedly, such a procedure would have required organization, infinite care, and several years of time, but the results—as witness the monumental edition of Jefferson papers now being published—would have allowed later historians to use the compilation with confidence.

Measured against such a standard the DHC does not come off well. It does contain some editorial annotation, some comparing of different sources. But the basic text itself has not been treated with proper respect. When we compare the DHC with the earlier published versions, in fact, we discover that hundreds of changes have been made. These include deletions, additions, and simple changes of wording. . . .

True, Roberts was not himself the originator of all the changes in the text; some of the "corrections" may well have been the work of Joseph Smith himself, and others were quite clearly the work of clerks and appointed "historians" who began the rewriting of Mormon history long before Roberts appeared on the scene. But whether he was hindered by censorship, by the lack of time, or by lack of familiarity with editorial standards, he did allow his name to be used on the title page. And he would not, I think, be proud of the fact that for researchers in early Mormon history Rule Number One is "Do not rely on the DHC; never use a quotation from it without comparing the earlier versions." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1968, pp. 30-32)

The Mormon writer Samuel W. Taylor made these comments concerning Joseph Smith's *History*:

This work, known as the "Documentary" history, is a rich vein that must be mined with care. The prophet was not so much interested in history as in establishing a church. Vital facts are omitted. . . .

Also, this work has been "corrected" by many hands, making corroboration from original sources necessary. Jerald and Sandra Tanner, in their *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, detail "More than 62,000 words added or deleted" in the first six volumes. Even so, the Tanners overlooked some changes, a notable example being alteration of the conference minutes of October, 1843, concerning Sidney Rigdon. A comparison of the minutes as originally published in the *Times and Seasons* (4:330), and as revised in the DHC (6:47), will reveal exactly opposite accounts of what happened. (*Nightfall at Nauvoo*, New York, 1971, p. 383)



## Original Manuscripts Cast Even More Doubt on Joseph Smith's History

On page 128 of this book we indicated that a microfilm copy of the original handwritten manuscript of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*, Book A-1, was given to us (this film also includes part of B-1). Some time after publishing *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* we became aware of the fact that the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had traded microfilm copies of documents with the Mormon Church and they had films of all of the original handwritten manuscripts of Joseph Smith's *History*. Although we live within two miles of the Historical Department of the Mormon Church, its restrictive policy forced us to travel to Independence, Missouri, the location of the headquarters of the RLDS Church, to see the Joseph Smith collection. We had only a few days to examine the documents, but a preliminary examination clearly reveals the duplicity of the early Mormon historians. Now that we have had a brief look at the entire manuscript of Joseph Smith's *History*—i.e., books A-1 through F-1—we must conclude that the history is in a deplorable state. Thousands of words—sometimes entire pages—have been crossed out so that they could be deleted from the printed version. On the other hand, the films show that many pages of material were interpolated after Joseph Smith's death.

### Joseph Smith's Diaries Discredit History

Since we now know that more than sixty percent of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* was not compiled until after his death, the question arises as to what sources Mormon historians used to create the purported history. We know that they used newspapers and journals of other Mormon leaders and that much of the material came only from memory. It was, of course, written in the first person to make it appear that Joseph Smith was the author. We have always felt that Joseph Smith's private diaries were used in preparing the history, but we were denied access to them. Finally, in August, 1976, we were able to examine microfilm copies of these diaries; therefore, we are able to make some preliminary observations concerning them.

The first thing we notice is that there are large periods of Joseph Smith's life that are not covered by extant diaries—unless the Mormon leaders are still suppressing some of his diaries. According to the information furnished in the *Register of the Joseph Smith Collection in the Church Archives*, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, only a small percentage of Joseph Smith's thirty-eight years are covered by his diaries. As we indicated earlier, at the time of Joseph Smith's death, his *History of the Church* had only been completed to August 5, 1838. Since Smith died in June, 1844, this left a period of almost six years which the Mormon historians had to fill in from Joseph Smith's diaries and other sources. Now, there are a few brief diaries from 1838 and 1839, but for the next three years there are no extant diaries. The last period of Joseph Smith's life, December 21, 1842—June 22, 1844, is covered by four diaries. If there were other diaries they were either lost, destroyed or suppressed. However this may be, only three of the last six years of Joseph Smith's lifetime as it appears in the *History of the Church* can be checked against his diaries.

Unfortunately, these diaries do not contain the important information that we would expect to find about Joseph Smith's life. Many pages are left blank or only contain information on the weather or other trivial matters. The value of the diaries decreases even more when we learn that a large part of the entries were not written in the first person, but rather by Joseph Smith's scribe Willard Richards. For instance, under the date October 20, 1843, we read this entry in Joseph Smith's diary: "heard that Joseph

went to Ramus yesterday has not returned." In the *Register of the Joseph Smith Collection*, page 4, Jeffery O. Johnson admitted that "Joseph Smith himself kept very little in his own hand. Under Joseph's direction, for example, Willard Richards wrote many of the daily entries in the prophet's journal, relating experiences they both shared in many cases, but this was done in the words as well as in the hand of the clerk."

Our brief examination of the diaries reveals that although they were used as one source for Joseph Smith's history, there was no attempt to follow them faithfully. Mormon leaders chose only the portions of the journals which served their purposes. For instance, in his diary Joseph Smith related a dream and its interpretation which tended to discredit his famous prophecy about the Civil War. This material was simply omitted in Joseph Smith's *History*. We will have more to say about this matter in the updated material for the chapter on false prophecy.

On pages 6-7 of this book we show that Joseph Smith frequently broke the Word of Wisdom—i.e., a revelation which forbids the use of tea, coffee, tobacco or alcoholic beverages (see *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 89). The anonymous Mormon historian, who we refer to as Dr. Clandestine, was unable to refute our evidence and had to admit that Joseph Smith had an "occasional glass of beer or wine" (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, p. 9, n. 2). On page 7 of the same booklet, he speaks of "Joseph Smith's polygamy, smoking and drinking, . . ." He maintains, however, that the Mormon leaders have not tried to suppress the fact that Smith broke the Word of Wisdom. In *Answering Dr. Clandestine*, pages 28-29, we prove beyond any doubt that there was a deliberate cover-up on this matter. Joseph Smith's diaries provide additional evidence concerning his disregard for the Word of Wisdom and the attempt to cover-up the matter in the *History of the Church*. Under the date of January 20, 1843, the following was recorded in Joseph Smith's Diary:

Elder Hyde told of the excellent white wine he drank in the east. Joseph prophesied in the name of the Lord—that he would drink wine with him in that country.

These words were completely suppressed in the printed *History of the Church*.

The Mormon Church forbids the use of tea, but according to Joseph Smith's Diary, March 11, 1843, Smith was fond of strong tea:

...in the office Joseph said he had tea with his breakfast. his wife asked him if [it] was good. he said if it was a little stronger he should like it better, when Mother Granger remarked, "It is so strong, and good, I should think it would answer Both for drink, and food."

This was entirely omitted in the *History of the Church* (see vol. 5, p. 302).

Another statement which was probably embarrassing to the Mormon leaders appeared in Joseph Smith's Diary under the date of May 19, 1844: "eve I talked a long time in the bar Room . . ." In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 398, this has been modified to read: "In the evening I talked to the brethren at my house, . . ."

In chapter 18 of this book, we show that on many occasions the Mormon leaders emphatically denied polygamy at the very time they were living in it. Some of Joseph and Hyrum Smith's denials were so embarrassing to later Mormon leaders that they were altered in the *History of the Church*. Since publishing this book, we have learned that a statement in Joseph Smith's *History* which sanctions plural marriage was actually a condemnation of the practice before it was falsified. This statement was used by Joseph Fielding Smith, who later became the tenth president of the Mormon Church, in rebuttal to a member of the Reorganized LDS Church who claimed that Joseph Smith never endorsed the doctrine of plurality of wives:

Whether any such statement was ever printed in his lifetime

or not I am not prepared to say. But I do know of such evidence being recorded during his lifetime, for I have seen it.

I have copied the following from the Prophet's manuscript record of Oct. 5, 1843, and know it is genuine:

Gave instructions to try those persons who were preaching, teaching or practicing the doctrine of plurality of wives; for according to the law, I hold the keys of this power in the last days; for there is never but one on earth at a time on whom this power and its keys are conferred; and I have constantly said no man shall have but one wife at a time unless the Lord directs otherwise.

(*Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 55)

When Joseph Fielding Smith speaks of "the Prophet's manuscript record" he is, of course, referring to the handwritten manuscript of the *History of the Church*. The same reference is printed in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 46.

Now that we know that Joseph Smith's *History* was not finished until after his death, it is obvious that it could not have been "recorded during his lifetime" as Joseph Fielding Smith claimed. According to a chart in Dean Jessee's article in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 441, this material was not written until sometime between November 1854 and August 1855, which is about ten years after Smith's death. In our research in Joseph Smith's diaries we found that the entry in the manuscript record and the *History of the Church* is based on a statement recorded in Joseph Smith's diary. When we compare the two, however, we find that the statement has been falsified so that the meaning is entirely changed. In Joseph Smith's diary the statement flatly condemns polygamy and no exceptions are made for its practice:

. . . gave instructions to try those who were preaching teaching or practicing the doctrine of plurality of wives or this law—Joseph forbids it. and the practice thereof. No man shall have but one wife (Joseph Smith Diary, Oct. 5, 1843, Church Historical Department)

The reader will notice how this has been changed in the *History of the Church* to make it appear that Joseph Smith has the "keys of power" to perform plural marriages if the Lord "directs otherwise":

Gave instructions to try those persons who were preaching, teaching or practicing the doctrine of plurality of wives; for according to the law, I hold the keys of this power in the last days; for there is never but one on earth at a time on whom this power and its keys are conferred; and I have constantly said no man shall have but one wife at a time unless the Lord directs otherwise. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 46)

Our preliminary study of the diaries of Joseph Smith leads us to the conclusion that they were used as a source for the *History of the Church*. Unfortunately, however, there was no attempt to accurately follow the text of the diaries. Mormon leaders used only the parts that suited their purposes. Where a portion did not say what they wanted, they altered it or ignored it completely, sometimes using an entirely different source. The diaries of Joseph Smith, then, tend only to deal another heavy blow to the credibility of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*. No wonder Mormon leaders suppressed these diaries for so long.

### Jessee's Statement on ABC Notes Confirmed

On page 136 of this book we quote Dean C. Jessee as saying that the ABC notes were written in 1842 before Joseph Smith's death. Michael Marquardt has recently confirmed the fact that Willard Richards spoke of these notes in his diary. With this information in mind, we again ask the question, "If Joseph Smith

really dictated these notes, why was Note A never added to his History?" As we pointed out earlier, this note (containing over 600 words) deals with Joseph Smith's leg operation and other troubles and persecutions he was supposed to have suffered in his youth.

### Further Light on Rocky Mountain Prophecy

On pages 133-135 of this book we show that the famous Rocky Mountain Prophecy is an interpolation in Joseph Smith's *History*. We have recently found new evidence which further undermines the authenticity of this prophecy. Fortunately, in 1845 Brigham Young had ordered the scribes to make a "duplicate handwritten copy of the History" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 469). In 1976 we examined this second manuscript, Book D-2, page 2, and found that the "Rocky Mountain Prophecy" was written in very small handwriting between the lines. In other words, it was obviously added at a later time to this manuscript.

The situation, then boils down to the following: we have two handwritten manuscripts, books D-1 and D-2. Neither of these books were even started until **after** Joseph Smith's death. In both cases the prophecy concerning the Mormons coming to the Rocky Mountains was interpolated in a smaller handwriting. From this evidence we can reach only one conclusion: the famous "Rocky Mountain Prophecy" is not authentic. The Church Historical Department has Joseph Smith's diary for 1842-43, but the first entry does not appear until December 21—some four months after the prophecy was supposed to have been given. Mormon scholars have been unable to come up with anything to support the authenticity of this prophecy. Assistant Church Historian Davis Bitton has written almost five pages concerning this matter. He frankly states that "**There is no such prophecy in the handwriting of Joseph Smith or published during the Prophet's lifetime, but it was referred to in general terms in 1846 during the trek west. After the arrival in the Salt Lake Valley the prophecy was frequently cited and became more specific as time went on**" ("Joseph Smith in the Mormon Folk Memory," The John Whitmer address, delivered at the Second Annual Meeting of the John Whitmer Historical Association, Lamoni, Iowa, September 28, 1974, unpublished manuscript, p. 16).

Davis Bitton goes on to state that "The manuscript history covering this period was written in 1845. . . ." This is, of course, a year after Joseph Smith's death. Mr. Bitton then admits that the prophecy is an "insertion" which was added into the manuscript as "an afterthought" (p. 18). Although Davis Bitton cannot find any real evidence that Joseph Smith made the famous "Rocky Mountain Prophecy," he does feel that there was "a time when something like this might have been said by Joseph Smith with considerable plausibility. Anytime during the last four years of his life, . . . the Prophet had good reason to consider possibilities for relocation. It can be demonstrated that he considered the possibility of settling in Oregon (or on Vancouver Island). He was attempting to negotiate some kind of colonization venture in Texas. . . ." (p. 17).

Mr. Bitton admits that other changes were made in Joseph Smith's documents to support the idea that he knew the Mormons would come to the Rocky Mountains:

And in February 1844 the Prophet was organizing an exploring expedition to go to the West. There are some interesting changes in the way the description of this expedition was written by Willard Richards, secretary of Joseph Smith at the time, and the later revisions. The original, handwritten version reads: "Met with the Twelve in the assembly room concerning the Oregon Expedition." This has been modified to read "the Oregon and California Exploring Expedition." Continuing, the Richards manuscript reads, "I told them I wanted an exposition of all that country,"—which



has been changed to “exploration of all that mountain country.” There are other changes that make one suspect that the later compilers of the history, notably George A. Smith and his assistants in the 1850s, were determined to have Joseph Smith contemplating the precise location where the Saints had by then settled. Oregon would not do; Oregon and California as then defined at least included the Rocky Mountains. If the Prophet could be made to say “mountain country” instead of just “country,” it would appear that he clearly had in mind the future history of his followers (pp. 17-18).

The anonymous Mormon Historian attempted to answer our work on the Rocky Mountain Prophecy, but in *Answering Dr. Clandestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*, pages 29-30, we show that his argument is unsound. It is interesting to note that “Dr. Clandestine” was forced to admit that the source of Joseph Smith’s Rocky Mountain Prophecy “is not clear”:

The Tanners are aware that the *History of the Church* was compiled from a variety of sources (many of which were only loaned to Church historians, to be returned once they had extracted pertinent information), and that the exact source for the account of Joseph Smith’s prophecy of August 6, 1842 is not clear. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* p. 15)

Prior to the time we published our work on Joseph Smith’s *History*, Mormon historians claimed that Joseph Smith himself authored the prophecy. Now, however, it is conceded that the source “is not clear.”

### More on Nephi–Moroni Change

On pages 136-37 of this book we discussed how the name of the angel who appeared in Joseph Smith’s room was changed from Nephi to Moroni. We indicated that this change must have been made after Smith’s death. In 1976 we were able to examine the duplicate copy of the handwritten manuscript, Book A-2. This manuscript provides additional evidence that the change was not made during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. This manuscript, in fact, was not even started until about a year after Smith’s death. Like the other manuscript (Book A-1), it has the name “Nephi” with the name “Moroni” interpolated above the line.

### Mormon Historians Backing Away From Joseph Smith’s History

At one time it would have been almost heresy for a Mormon writer to openly criticize Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*. As the evidence against the *History* has continued to mount, however, some of the top scholars have begun to voice their discontent. We have already quoted Dean C. Jessee of the Church Historical Department, as making some astonishing admissions about the *History*. In an article published in 1976, Jessee had to admit that there have been “numerous alterations, discrepancies, editorial irregularities, and other variations that appear suspicious in an age of precise literary style and historical method.” (*Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 3, 1976, p. 23)

On page 37 of the same article, Jessee commented:

The format gives the impression that the history was written personally by Joseph Smith. A study of original documents, however, shows that much of its content was not the actual product of the Prophet’s own mind, even though he was the architect of its form. And while it may appear trivial to distinguish the parts of Joseph Smith’s writings actually authored by himself from those farmed

out to his clerks, the biographer whose contact with the mind of his subject is indispensable finds this distinction of paramount importance. One notes a marked difference in style between those entries in the *History* that reflect Joseph Smith’s own thought and those that are the creation of his scribes. . . .

To further complicate the question of authorship, since Joseph Smith’s diary did not provide an unbroken narrative of his life, gaps were bridged by using other sources, changing indirect discourse to direct as if Joseph had done the writing himself. . . . by transferring other people’s words and thoughts to Joseph Smith, this editorial method produced a distorting effect for those who would study his personality from his personal writings.

Marvin S. Hill, of the church’s Brigham Young University, has now admitted that “large portions” of Joseph Smith’s *History* were not written by him:

One reason that Brodie concluded that Joseph had veiled his personality behind a “perpetual flow of words” in his history may be that she assumed he had actually dictated most of it. We now know that large portions of that history were not dictated but were written by scribes and later transferred into the first person to read as though the words were Joseph’s. That fact makes what few things Joseph Smith wrote himself of great significance. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1972, p. 76)

In 1979 Leland Nelson brought out a publication entitled, *The Journal of Joseph: The Personal Diary of a Modern Prophet by Joseph Smith, Jr.* While Mr. Nelson claimed that he was publishing excerpts from Joseph Smith’s diary, it soon became apparent to scholars that he had only taken extracts from the published *History of the Church*. Howard C. Searle, a Mormon scholar from the Salt Lake Institute of Religion, accused Nelson of publishing a “misleading” book:

Leland Nelson has compiled an interesting narrative of first-person passages from the *History of the Church* in an attempt to expand the familiar “Joseph Smith Story” into an entire volume. In doing this he has included a great deal of material that was not authored by Joseph Smith at all. In spite of this fact, he claims on the dust cover and in the introduction that “this book is exactly what the title says it is—the personal journal or diary of Joseph Smith Junior.” . . . the *Journal of Joseph* is not taken directly from Joseph Smith’s diaries but from material written by scribes and the Church Historians for the Church annals. . . . what is in the book has been grossly misrepresented in newspaper ads, radio spot commercials, and the introduction to the book. . . .

Anyone familiar with the methodology involved in the compilation of the *History of the Church* will recognize that one of its main problems is the confused and misleading authorship. To quote reliably from this source, one should first answer two questions: (1) Who wrote the original source? and (2) How has it been edited for publication? Had Mr. Nelson pursued these questions, he would have immediately discovered that many of the first-person passages which he has quoted in Joseph’s personal writings are neither the Prophet’s personal writings nor even his dictations. . . . Many diary entries by the scribes were only brief, incomplete notes—some in the third person—that had to be deciphered and filled out by the later compilers of the Church annals. Much of this editing was done after the original writers and the Prophet were dead. Such material would hardly qualify as verbatim dictation. . . . In terms of pages in the original manuscript history, only thirty-five percent had been written up to the time of the Prophet’s death, and none of this was in his own handwriting. . . .

Although Willard Richards had proceeded with the history after the Prophet’s death, he continued the first-person narrative that characterized the Prophet’s early dictation. . . . Having been called as the Prophet’s “private Sect. and

Historian,” Elder Richards apparently felt that he had the necessary investiture of authority to permit him to write for, and as if he were, the Prophet Joseph Smith. Throughout the compilation of the history, Elder Richards, as well as the later writers, stuck devotedly to the first-person style commenced by the Prophet. The notes of Elder Richards and other scribes in the Prophet’s diaries were filled out in accordance with this format, but this was not the only material that was modified for amalgamation into the first-person narrative of the history. . . . Comparison of these sources with the *History of the Church* reveals that passages from many of them were converted into first-person accounts of Joseph Smith, and although such passages appear to be the direct discourse or writing of the Prophet, they are really the composition of others. . . . Brigham continued the practice of allowing clerks to write in the first person for Joseph until it was finished in 1857. . . .

After the deaths of the original compilers of the history, there was a tendency in the Church to forget or ignore the methodology of the early scribes and Church historians who wrote it and to attribute all of the first-person material in the history to Joseph Smith himself. . . . Whether by ignorance or design, Elder Pratt’s successors in the Historian’s Office apparently said nothing about the methodology involved in compiling the early *History of the Church*, and by the end of the nineteenth century it was frequently assumed that all the history had been written or dictated by the Prophet.

By the turn of the century the project of publishing the entire history in accessible book form was undertaken by George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency. In an unpublished preface, he asserted that the history “was written by the Prophet himself or under his own direction during his lifetime.” . . . In less than fifty years from the time the history was completed, the methods involved in its compilation were either obscured or ignored to the point that it was commonly assumed the history was the personal writing or dictation of the Prophet. In spite of several recent articles on the subject, nothing has significantly modified this belief as far as the general Church membership is concerned. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1981, pp. 101, 102, 105, 109, 111, 114, 116, 117, 119, 120)

Although it is true that the publication *Journal of Joseph* is a “misleading” book which has been “grossly misrepresented,” we feel that the main responsibility for the appearance of such a book rests on the shoulders of the General Authorities of the church. As early as 1965 we pointed out that there were serious changes in the *History of the Church* and that there was reason to believe a large portion of it was not really written by Joseph Smith. In 1971 Dean C. Jessee, the church’s own scholar who worked in the Historical Department, confirmed that over sixty percent of the History was not compiled during Smith’s lifetime! Since that time the church leaders have done nothing to dispel the myth concerning Joseph Smith’s authorship. They have, in fact, continued to perpetuate the false idea that he was the author. The 1978 printing of the *History of the Church* still has this statement on the title page: “History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet by Himself.” If the *Journal of Joseph* is “misleading” and “grossly misrepresented,” what can we say about the *History of the Church* which the Mormon leaders continue to publish in the face of all the evidence? Howard C. Searle seems willing to admit that the root of the problem lies with the church and even suggests that the church publish an honest version of the *History of the Church*:

The *History of the Church* in its present form was edited by B. H. Roberts, . . . although Elder Roberts made significant contributions to the history through his editing, he also created many problems. His most serious shortcoming was that he did not come to grips with the question of the history’s authorship nor the methodology associated with its original compilation. He not only perpetuated the myth that the entire narrative was the Prophet’s own writing or words, but he also made additions and deletions right in the text, without any annotation, as if these too were the product of the Prophet’s own mind. In doing

this, he corrupted the text as he tried to correct it and actually widened the gap between the real Joseph Smith and what was being published as his personal writing. If Joseph Smith’s declaration that “no man knows my history,” were true in his own lifetime, it was even more true after Roberts’s revisions, for the Prophet’s actual personality, character, and style were further obscured by an often misleading editorial screen. . . . Elder Roberts’s editorial work is at best incomplete and at worst misleading. . . . The great value of this enduring work should justify a painstaking and forthright re-editing, which would identify the history’s authors and sources and would prevent the publication and popularity of such misleading books as the *Journal of Joseph*. . . . It could be argued that the history is reliable regardless of its authorship, but this in no way justifies representing quotations from its contents as the personal compositions of the Prophet, when they are actually the work of other men. (*Ibid.*, pages 120-122)

It is certainly refreshing to find a scholarly and honest article like Mr. Searle’s in a journal published by the church’s own Brigham Young University. In any case, even though the General Authorities of the church continue to print the falsified edition of Joseph Smith’s *History*, the church’s top scholars are coming out against it. Even the anonymous Mormon historian (Dr. Clandestine) has had to concede that our charges are true:

They criticize the fact that deletions and additions were introduced into the original texts without acknowledgments in the printed history, that Joseph Smith’s autobiographical “History” was written in large part after his death by clerks and “historians” who transformed third-person accounts by others than Joseph Smith into first-person autobiography of Joseph Smith, and that between the first serialized publication of the history (1840s–1860s) and the seven-volume edition of the *History of the Church* in the twentieth century, there have been thousands of deletions and additions not noted in the text or footnotes. This is certainly all **true**, and as an historian I regret the confusion that such editorial practices have caused. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism: A Response to Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* p. 42)

Dr. Clandestine would try to excuse all this by saying that “until quite recently official LDS history was written by men (often of limited education) who were not trained in methods of editing and history.” Now, while the early Mormons may not have been trained in “methods of editing and history,” they certainly knew enough to criticize their enemies when they broke the rules. We feel, therefore, that Dr. Clandestine’s explanation for the falsification is a very poor excuse. Even if a person could accept this excuse concerning the early Mormon leaders, it would not explain why the present-day leaders of the Church continue to print the work as the “History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet **by Himself**.”



## 8. The First Vision

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made this statement:

On the morning of a beautiful spring day in 1820 there occurred one of the most important and momentous events in this world's history. God, the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph Smith and gave instructions concerning the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth in these latter days. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 1966, p. 7)

Joseph Smith published his story in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* in 1842. The following is the description of the vision as written by Joseph Smith:

So in accordance with my determination, to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. . . . I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, . . . When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in the air. One of them spoke unto me, calling me by name, and said, (pointing to the other.) "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

. . . I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right, . . . I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt, . . . He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, pp. 728, 748)

This story is now published in the *Pearl of Great Price* and is accepted as scripture by the Mormon people. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this comment concerning Joseph Smith's First Vision:

The First Vision of 1820 is of first importance in the history of Joseph Smith. Upon its reality rest the truth and value of his subsequent work.

Professed enemies of Joseph Smith and his work, have felt themselves helpless in their efforts to destroy the reality of the First Vision and have said little about it. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 19)

James B. Allen, of Brigham Young University, said that "Belief in the vision is one of the fundamentals to which faithful members give assent. Its importance is second only to belief in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. The story is an essential part of the first lesson given by Mormon missionaries to prospective converts, and its acceptance is necessary before baptism" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1966, p. 29).

### Vision Criticized

Fawn M. Brodie was one of the first to cast serious doubt upon the authenticity of Joseph Smith's story of the First Vision:

The description of the vision was first published by Orson Pratt in his *Remarkable Visions* in 1840, twenty years after it was supposed to have occurred. Between 1820 and 1840 Joseph's friends were writing long panegyrics; his enemies were defaming him in an unceasing stream of affidavits and pamphlets, and Joseph himself was dictating

several volumes of Bible-flavored prose. But no one in this long period even intimated that he had heard the story of the two gods. At least, no such intimation has survived in print or manuscript. . . . The first published Mormon history, begun with Joseph's collaboration in 1834 by Oliver Cowdery, ignored it altogether, . . . Joseph's own description of the first vision was not published until 1842, twenty-two years after the memorable event. . . .

If something happened that spring morning in 1820, it passed totally unnoticed in Joseph's home town, and apparently did not even fix itself in the minds of members of his own family. The awesome vision he described in later years may have been the elaboration of some half-remembered dream stimulated by the early revival excitement and reinforced by the rich folklore of visions circulating in his neighborhood. Or it may have been sheer invention, created some time after 1834 when the need arose for a magnificent tradition to cancel out the stories of his fortune-telling and money-digging. (*No Man Knows My History*, New York, 1957, pp. 24-25)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of Brigham Young University, was very disturbed with Mrs. Brodie's statements, but he admitted that Joseph Smith did not publish the story until 1842:

Joseph Smith's "official" account of his first vision and the visits of the angel Moroni was written in 1838 and first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. (*Improvement Era*, July 1961, p. 490)

Dr. Nibley claims that Joseph Smith tried to keep the First Vision a secret. In a letter to us, dated March 8, 1961, he stated:

The Prophet did **not** like to talk about the first vision and those to whom he told the story kept it to themselves. It was only when inevitable leaks led to all sorts of irresponsible reports that he was "induced" to publish an official version.

In the *Improvement Era* for July, 1961, page 522, Dr. Nibley stated:

But, one may ask, why should Joseph Smith have waited so long to tell his story officially? From his own explanation it is apparent that he would not have told it publicly at all had he not been "induced" to do so by all the scandal stories that were circulating.

Dr. Nibley's argument that Joseph Smith kept the vision secret is in direct contradiction to Joseph Smith's own story. Smith stated that he was persecuted because he told this story and would not deny it:

I soon found, however, that **my telling the story** had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase; and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution; and this was common among all the sects—all united to persecute me. . . . though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true; and while they were persecuting me, reviling me, and speaking all manner of evil against me falsely for so saying, I was led to say in my heart: Why persecute me for telling the truth? . . . For I



had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it: . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:22, 25)

Before Mormon scholars were forced to claim that Joseph Smith kept the vision a secret, the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

Whether the story of the first vision existed in written form in the early days of the Church is not known. Many manuscripts of that time have been lost. In some cases, secretaries deliberately carried Church records away from Church possession. But even were they all available, minutes of meetings as they are usually kept might seldom mention the first vision, for familiar and repeated things are often not recorded because they are taken for granted. (*Evidence and Reconciliations*, 1960, p. 334)

Perhaps one of the most damaging evidences that Joseph Smith did not see the Father and the Son in 1820, to those who believe in the restoration of the Priesthood, is the fact that in the year 1832 Joseph Smith claimed to have a revelation which stated that a man could not see God without the priesthood. This revelation is published as Section 84 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In verses 21-22 we read:

And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh;

For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

In 1841 the Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt stated:

The truth is this: that without the priesthood of Melchizedek, “no man can see God and live.” (*Writings of Parley P. Pratt*, p. 306)

It is claimed now that Joseph Smith saw the Father and the Son in 1820, before he was supposed to have received the Melchizedek priesthood. Joseph Fielding Smith said:

The Father and the Son appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith before the Church was organized and the priesthood restored to the earth. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 4)

The revelation given in 1832 seems to show that Joseph Smith’s story of the First Vision was made up years after it was supposed to have occurred. Joseph Smith did not even claim to have the priesthood in 1820, and the *Doctrine and Covenants* clearly states that without the priesthood no man can see God and live. So, according to the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Joseph Smith could not have seen the Father and the Son in 1820. James B. Allen, who became Assistant Church Historian in 1972, frankly admitted that the story of the First Vision “was not given general circulation in the 1830’s”:

According to Joseph Smith, he told the story of the vision immediately after it happened the early spring of 1820. As a result, he said, he received immediate criticism in the community. There is little if any evidence, however, that by the early 1830’s Joseph Smith was telling the story in public. At least if he were telling it, no one seemed to consider it important enough to have recorded it at the time, and no one was criticizing him for it. . . .

The fact that none of the available contemporary writings about Joseph Smith in the 1830’s, none of the publications of the Church in that decade, and no contemporary journal or correspondence yet discovered mentions the story of the first vision is convincing evidence that at best it received only limited circulation in those early days. . . . as far as non-Mormons were concerned there was little, if any, awareness of it in the 1830’s. . . .

As far as Mormon literature is concerned, there was apparently no reference to Joseph Smith’s first vision in any published material in the 1830’s. . . . From all this it would appear that the general church

membership did not receive information about the first vision until the 1840’s and that the story certainly did not hold the prominent place in Mormon thought that it does today. . . .

As far as missionary work is concerned, it is evident that here, too, the story of the first vision had little, if any, importance in the 1830’s. . . . it was not considered necessary for prospective converts to Mormonism to know the story. . . .

To summarize what has been said so far, it is apparent that the story of Joseph Smith’s first vision was not given general circulation in the 1830’s. Neither Mormon nor non-Mormon publications made reference to it, and it is evident that the general membership of the Church knew little, if anything, about it. Belief in the story certainly was not a prerequisite for conversion, and it is obvious that the story was not being used for the purpose of illustrating other points of doctrine. In this respect, at least, Mormon thought of the 1830’s was different from Mormon thought of later years. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, pp. 30-34)

Dr. Hugh Nibley claimed that Joseph Smith told his great-grandfather the story of the First Vision. Our curiosity was aroused, and we wrote to Joseph Fielding Smith, who was Church Historian at the time. As we indicated on page 11 of this book, he refused to give us a copy of this journal, and Dr. Nibley admitted that he was also “refused” access to it (see photograph of his letter on page 12).

A great deal of pressure was put on the Church Historian’s Office concerning the journal kept by Alexander Neibaur (Nibley’s great-grandfather), and finally Paul Cheesman, of Brigham Young University, was able to quote a portion of it in his thesis. We immediately printed this excerpt in our book *Joseph Smith’s Strange Account of the First Vision*. In April, 1970, James B. Allen was allowed to quote a larger portion of the journal in an article published in the *Improvement Era*. This excerpt reads as follows:

“Br Joseph told us the first call he had a Revival Meeting his Mother, Br & Sister got Religion He wanted to get Religion too wanted to feel & shout like the Rest but could feel nothing, opened his Bible & the first Passage that struck him was if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally & upbraideth not went into the Wood to pray kneels himself down his tongue was closet cleavet to his roof could utter not a word, felt easier after a while—saw a fire toward heaven came near & nearer saw a personage in the fire light complexion blue eyes a piece of white cloth drawn over his shoulders his right arm bear after a while a other person came to the side of the first Mr. Smith then asked must I join the Methodist Church—No—they are not my People, They have gone astray there is none that doeth good no not one, but this is my Beloved son harken ye him, the fire drew nigher Rested upon the tree enveloped him comforted Indeavoured to arise and felt Uncomen feeble—got into the house told the Methodist priest & said this was not a age for god to Reveal himself in Vision Revelation has ceased with the New Testament.” (*Improvement Era*, April 1970, p. 12, n. 12)

Paul Cheesman states that the entry was not recorded in the journal until May 24, 1844, and James B. Allen observed that “Neibaur did not become associated with Joseph Smith until the Nauvoo period, in the 1840’s, and that the experience referred to did not take place until well after the other accounts of the vision, including Joseph Smith’s, had been written and published” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, pp. 34-35).

Besides being later in date than the *Times and Seasons* version, the journal of Alexander Neibaur contradicts the official version on at least two points. It says that one personage appeared and that “after a while another person came to the side of the first,” whereas Joseph Smith’s printed account says: “When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages.”

Notice also that Neibaur has the Father give the message

and then introduce the Son. This is very interesting since Joseph Fielding Smith, who later became President of the Church, has stated that this type of procedure would have proven the story a fraud:

The Father and the Son appeared unto him, but it was not the Father who answered his question! The father introduced Joseph to his Son, and it was the Son who answered the important question and gave the instruction.

Had Joseph Smith come home from the grove and declared that the Father and the Son appeared to him and that the Father spoke to him and answered his question while the Son stood silently by, then we could have accepted the story as a fraud. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 28)

The fact that Alexander Neibaur gives the story the other way around—the Father giving the message instead of the Son—may have been one of the reasons that Joseph Fielding Smith suppressed the journal.

The Apostle LeGrand Richards claimed that his grandfather, Joseph Lee Robinson, wrote concerning the First Vision before Joseph Smith published his account in the *Times and Seasons*. In a letter to William E. Berrett, dated August 29, 1960, Richards stated:

... —my great grandfather's diary ... indicated the Prophet Joseph had seen the Father and the Son and this was written back in 1840.

LeGrand Richards instructed the Genealogical Library not to allow us to see this journal, but some time later, contrary to his instructions, we were permitted to read it. We found that it was not written until 1883, which is some 39 years after Joseph Smith's death and 63 years after the First Vision was supposed to have occurred!

### “Strange” Accounts

For years the Mormon leaders publicly maintained that Joseph Smith told only one story concerning the First Vision. Preston Nibley declared:

Joseph Smith lived a little more than twenty-four years after this first vision. During this time he told but one story—... (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, 1944, p. 30)

At the very time that Preston Nibley made this statement the Mormon leaders were suppressing at least two accounts of the First Vision which were written prior to the account which Joseph Smith published in the *Times and Seasons*. Levi Edgar Young, who was the head of the Seven Presidents of Seventies in the Mormon Church, told LaMar Petersen that he had examined a “strange” account of the First Vision and was told not to reveal what it contained. The following is from notes by LaMar Petersen of an interview with Levi Edgar Young which was held on Feb. 3, 1953:

A list of 5 questions was presented. Bro. Young indicated some surprise at the nature of the questions but said he heartily approved of them being asked. Said they were important, fundamental, were being asked more by members of the Church, and should be asked. Said the Church should have a committee available where answers to such questions could be obtained. He has quit going down with his own questions to Brother Joseph Fielding (Smith) because he was laughed at and put off.

His curiosity was excited when reading in Roberts' Doc. History reference to “documents from which these writings were compiled.” Asked to see them. Told to get higher permission. Obtained that permission. Examined the documents. Written, he thought, about 1837 or 1838. Was told not to copy or tell what they contained. Said it was a “strange” account of the First Vision. Was put back in vault. Remains unused, unknown.

We became interested in the “strange” account and wrote to Joseph Fielding Smith, who was the Church Historian, enclosing \$1.00 and asking for a photocopy of it. Unfortunately, this letter

was never answered, and we had almost given up hope of ever seeing this document. To our great surprise, however, two “strange” accounts of the First Vision have now come to light. The first appeared in the thesis, “An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions,” by Paul R. Cheesman. Mr. Cheesman was a student at the Brigham Young University, and he evidently wrote his thesis as a rebuttal to statements we had made concerning the First Vision in some of our publications. Although he tries to support the First Vision story, he has reproduced a document written by Joseph Smith himself which not only proves that he did not see the Father and the Son in 1820, but also casts a shadow of doubt upon his entire story of the origin of the church. This document was reproduced in Appendix D of Paul R. Cheesman's thesis. Cheesman states that it “appears to be the earliest written account” of the first vision. On page 64 of his thesis, Mr. Cheesman states:

This account was never published or referred to by any of the authorities of the church as far as the writer has been able to determine. . . . Instead of going back over and revising, Joseph Smith evidently dictated the story later as we have it in Appendix A. (“An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 64)

Below is a photograph of the “earliest written account” of the First Vision. Joseph Smith wrote this in the early 1830's. This picture is taken from the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, page 281.

marvelous even in the likeness of him who created heaven  
and when I considered upon these things my heart exclaim-  
ed well hath the wise man said <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ fool <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ in  
his heart there is no God my heart exclaimed all all  
these bear testimony and they speak an omnipotent  
and omnipresent power a being who made all things and  
descent and descent all things in their bodies who  
fulfill all things who was and is and will be from all  
eternity to eternity and when I considered all these things  
and that being <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ such to worship him as was  
high him in spirit and in truth therefore exist and  
the Lord for many for them we now do to whom I could go  
to obtain mercy and the Lord heard my cry in the wilderness  
and while in a state of calling upon the Lord, a pillar of  
fire light above the brightness of the sun at noon day  
came down from above and rested upon me and I was filled  
with the spirit of God and the Lord opened the heavens upon  
me and I saw the Lord and he spake unto me saying  
Joseph thy sins are forgiven thee go thy way in my  
shoes and keep my commandments to hold I am the  
Lord of glory I was crucified for the world that all they  
who believe on my name may have eternal life <sup>in the world</sup>  
with in sin <sup>at</sup> ~~at~~ their time and none death hath in  
not one they have turned aside from the Gospel and  
keep not <sup>my</sup> commandments they draw near to me with their  
lips while their hearts are far from me and mine anger  
is kindling against the inhabitants of the earth to visit  
them according to their iniquities and to bring to pass  
that which <sup>has</sup> ~~has~~ been spoken by the mouth of the prophet  
Isaiah and O that I could see you and I come quickly as it was  
written of me in the Gospel in the glory of my Father  
and my soul was filled with love and for many days I  
could rejoice with great joy and the Lord was with me  
but could find more that would believe the heavenly  
vision nevertheless I pondered these things in my heart  
and I have written them down and I have written them down

In 1965 we published this early account of the First Vision under the title, *Joseph Smith's Strange Account of the First Vision*. Because the document was so unusual, some members of the Mormon Church doubted its authenticity. Although the Mormon leaders would make no public statement concerning



the document, Professor James B. Allen, who later became Assistant Church Historian, admitted that the document was genuine. In an article published in 1966 he commented:

One of the most significant documents of that period yet discovered was brought to light in 1965 by Paul R. Cheesman, a graduate student at Brigham Young University. This is a handwritten manuscript apparently composed about 1833 and either written or dictated by Joseph Smith. It contains an account of the early experiences of the Mormon prophet and includes the story of the first vision. While the story varies in some details from the version presently accepted, enough is there to indicate that at least as early as 1833 Joseph Smith contemplated writing and perhaps publishing it. The manuscript has apparently lain in the L.D.S. Church Historian's office for many years, and yet few if any who saw it realized its profound historical significance. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 35)

The Mormon leaders suppressed this account of the First Vision for over 130 years, but after we printed it thousands of copies were distributed throughout the world. Finally, four years after we published the document, the Church Historian's Office made a public statement confirming the authenticity of the manuscript. Dean C. Jessee, "a member of the staff at the LDS Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City," claims that the document was written in 1831 or 1832:

On at least three occasions prior to 1839 Joseph Smith began writing his history. The earliest of these is a six-page account recorded on three leaves of a ledger book, written between the summer of 1831 and November 1832. . . .

The 1831-32 history transliterated here contains the earliest known account of Joseph Smith's First Vision. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 277-278)

At first Dean Jessee assumed that "the narrative was penned by Frederick G. Williams, scribe to the Prophet," but after a more thorough analysis he became convinced that the document is actually in Joseph Smith's own handwriting:

A closer look at the original document has shown that while Williams wrote the beginning and end of the narrative, Joseph Smith wrote the remainder, including the portion containing the details of his First Vision. This is the only known account of the Vision in his own hand. Most of his writings were dictated, which is not to say that other accounts are less authentic. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1971, p. 86)

Writing in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, page 462, Jessee says that "This six-page account is the only history containing the actual handwriting of Joseph Smith, a fact that was not detected when this account was previously analyzed." It is certainly interesting that the only account of the First Vision in Joseph Smith's own handwriting is the account which mentions only one personage!

Now that *Brigham Young University Studies* has published a photograph of this document (see page 145 of this book), we no longer have to depend upon Cheesman's typed copy. Below is the important part of this document taken directly from the photograph of the original document:

. . . the Lord heard my cry in the wilderness and while in the attitude of calling upon the Lord in the **16th year of my age** a pillar of light above the brightness of the sun at noon day come down from above and rested upon me and I was filled with the spirit of god and the Lord opened the heavens upon me and **I saw the Lord** and he spake unto me saying Joseph my son thy sins are forgiven thee. go thy way walk in my statutes and keep my commandments behold I am the Lord of glory I was crucified for the world that all those who believe on my name may have Eternal life behold the world lieth in sin at this time and none doeth good no not one they have turned asside from the gospel and keep not my commandments they draw near to me with

their lips while their hearts are far from me and mine anger is kindling against the inhabitants of the earth to visit them according to this ungodliness and to bring to pass that which hath been spoken by the mouth of the prophets and Apostles behold and lo I come quickly as it was w[r]itten of me in the cloud clothed in the glory of my Father . . .

A careful examination of this document reveals why the church leaders have "never published or referred" to it. (We have published Cheesman's typescript of the entire document in our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 100-104.) To begin with, Joseph Smith said that prior to the time he received his First Vision he knew that all the churches were wrong:

. . . by Searching the Scriptures I found that mankind did not come unto the Lord but that they had apostatised from the true and living faith and there was no society or denomination that built upon the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the new testament . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," Paul R. Cheesman, Master's Thesis, 1965, p. 128, as quoted in *Case*, vol. 1, p. 104)

In the account Joseph Smith wrote later, however, he claimed that he went to the Lord to find out which church was right:

My object in going to enquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right? that I might know which to join . . . (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong.) . . . (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 748)

In the 1972 edition of this book we pointed out that the clause, "for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong," had been entirely deleted from the story as it appears in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*. Strange as it may seem, in the new printing of the *Pearl of Great Price* in the triple combination (Joseph Smith—History 1:18), the clause which was previously suppressed has been reinserted in its proper place.

In the account of the First Vision which is now published in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith devotes a great deal of space to tell of a religious revival which stirred him to go out into the woods to pray. In the account which has been suppressed (the 1832 account), Smith does not even mention the revival which was supposed to have played such a major role in the First Vision story. In the first account Smith did not mention an evil power trying to overcome him, but in the printed version he says that he "was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction" (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, verse 15).

In the account which was suppressed, Joseph Smith said that his first vision was "in the 16th year of my age." In the version he wrote later, however, he said that the vision occurred when he was in his "fifteenth year" (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, verse 7). This is very interesting because the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe argued that the First Vision had to occur in 1820 when Joseph Smith was fourteen years old:

Clearly, knowledge of the first vision was current in the early days of the Church, and was dated as the Prophet says, in 1820, when he was not yet fifteen years old. . . . Whatever opinion may be held as to what he saw on that occasion, it must have occurred in 1820. Any other view would make liars of these witnesses, or make them connivers in untruth with the Prophet. (*Gospel Interpretations*, p. 119)

On page 132 of the same book John A. Widtsoe stated:

All acceptable evidence within and beyond the Church confirms the Prophet's story that his first vision occurred when he was between fourteen and fifteen years of age in the year 1820 and before the Book of Mormon revelations occurred.

The most serious contradiction between the account which was suppressed and the account published by the church today



is the number of personages in the vision. In the first account Joseph Smith only mentions one personage: "... I saw the Lord. ..." In the version which is published in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith said: "... I saw two personages."

In the first account Joseph Smith related that the Lord said he was "crucified for the world." This, of course, would mean that the personage was Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is plain to see that Joseph Smith did not include God the Father in his first account of the vision. James B. Allen stated: "In this story, only one personage was mentioned, and this was obviously the Son, for he spoke of having been crucified" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 40).

Writing in the *Improvement Era*, April 1970, pages 6-7, James B. Allen observed:

Whenever new historical information is published, a host of questions demand answers, and the disclosure that Joseph Smith told his story more than once has been no exception. . . . When all of the accounts are combined, only two areas appear that may need some explanation: (1) the time of the vision and (2) the fact that the first account appears to make specific reference to only one personage. . . . If in his preliminary effort to record the story in 1831-32 he said he was 15 instead of 14 when the vision occurred, he simply made a slight correction in his more carefully prepared history. . . .

In the earliest narrative Joseph Smith simply said, "I was filled with the spirit of God and the Lord opened the heavens upon me and I saw the Lord and he spake unto me saying Joseph my son thy Sins are forgiven thee. . . ." . . . Remembering that the 1831-32 manuscript is a rough, unpolished effort to record the spiritual impact of the vision on him, that this was probably the first time Joseph Smith had even tried to commit his experience to writing, and that in the other narratives the important message was delivered by the Son, it is probable that in dictating to his scribe the Prophet simply emphasized "the Lord" and his message. (*Improvement Era*, April 1970, pp. 6-7)

Paul R. Cheesman tries to excuse the fact that the account which was suppressed only mentions one personage by stating: "As he writes briefly of the vision, he does not mention the Father as being present; however, this does not indicate that He was not present" ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," p. 63).

This explanation by Paul Cheesman does not seem reasonable. Actually, in the first account Joseph Smith quotes the Lord as saying more words than in the printed version. James B. Allen comments:

Another impressive fact is that the 1831-32 version, which was the first to be recorded, is actually the most comprehensive of all. This early narrative includes all the essential elements of the more carefully prepared Manuscript History and contains more additional details than any other source. (*Improvement Era*, April 1970, p. 6)

Speaking of the "account of 1832," the Mormon writer Milton V. Backman says:

It is possible that after dictating the account, Joseph recognized the desirability of modifying certain statements... Often when people record biographical sketches or historical incidents, they write and rewrite until their ideas are clearly expressed. (*Joseph Smith's First Vision*, Salt Lake City, 1971, p. 124)

While it is true that many people have to "write and rewrite until their ideas are clearly expressed," we do not feel that Joseph Smith could have left out the most important part of the story by accident. If God the Father had really appeared in this vision, Joseph Smith certainly would have included this information in his first account. It is absolutely impossible for us to believe that Joseph Smith would not have mentioned the Father if He had actually appeared.

The only reasonable explanation for the Father not being mentioned is that Joseph Smith did **not** see God the Father, and that

he made up this part of the story after he wrote the first manuscript. This, of course, throws a shadow of doubt upon the whole story.

After this "strange" account came to light, a Mormon Seminary teacher told us that there was still another account of the First Vision which the Mormon leaders were suppressing. To our great surprise, this account was published in an article by James B. Allen in the Autumn 1966 issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Professor Allen said that

[the document] has recently been brought to light by a member of the staff of the Church Historian's office. It is located in the back of Book A-1 of the handwritten manuscript of the History of the Church (commonly referred to as the "Manuscript History"). . . . it was apparently written in 1835 by someone other than Joseph Smith, for it records the day-to-day events in the prophet's life in the third person, as if it were a scribe recording them as he observed them... The importance of the manuscript here lies in the fact that the scribe wrote down what Joseph Smith said to his visitor... Again, the details of the story vary somewhat from the accepted version, but the manuscript, if authentic, at least demonstrates that by 1835 the story had been told to someone. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, pp. 35-36)

Although this was certainly an important discovery, it was overshadowed in 1971 when Dean C. Jessee, of the Church Historian's Office, reported that this same story (this time written in the first person) had been found in Joseph Smith's own diary. Below is a photograph of the important part of this story as it appears in *Joseph Smith's 1835-36 Diary* under the date of Nov. 9, 1835.

2<sup>d</sup> and looked around, but saw no person or thing that was calculated to produce the noise of wind. Being, I thrust again my mouth was closed and my tongue liberated, and I called on the Lord in my heart, a pillar of fire appeared above my head, it pointed by itself down upon me, and filled me with joy unspeakable, a personage appeared in the middle of this pillar of flame which was spread all around, and yet nothing consumed, another personage soon appeared like unto the first, he said unto me thy sins are forgiven thee, he testified unto me that Jesus Christ is the son of God, I was about 14 years old when I received this first communication. When I was about 17 years old I saw another vision of angels in the night season after these things had been told to him, but was not a seer, and was not.

The reader will find photographs of three pages of this account of the First Vision and the discovery of the Book of Mormon plates in our publication, *Joseph Smith's 1835-36 Diary*.

Dean C. Jessee prepared a typescript of this "strange" account of the First Vision for *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1971. It is printed on page 87 and reads as follows:

. . . while setting in my house between the hours of ten & 11 this morning, a man came in, and introduced himself to me, calling himself by the name of Joshua the Jewish minister, his appearance was something singular, having a beard about 3 inches in length which is quite grey, also his hair is long and considerably silvered with age I should think he is about 50 or 55 years old, tall and strait slender built of thin visage blue eyes, and fair complexion, he wears a sea-green frock coat, & pantaloons of the same, black fur hat with narrow brim, and while speaking frequently shuts his eyes with a scowl on his countenance: I made some enquiry after his name but received no definite answer; we soon commenced talking upon the subject of religion and after I had made some remarks concerning the bible I commenced giving him a relation of the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, as follows

— being wrought up in mind, respecting the subject of religion and looking at the different systems taught the children of men, I knew not who was right or who was wrong and I considered it of the first importance that I should be right, in matters that involve eternal consequences; being thus perplexed in mind I retired to the silent grove and bow'd down before the Lord, under a realising sense that he had said (if the bible be true) ask and you shall receive knock and it shall be opened seek and you shall find and again, if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbradeth not; information was what I most desired at this time, in the place above stated or in other words I made a fruitless attempt to pray, my tounge seemed to be swollen in my mouth, so that I could not utter, I heard a noise behind me like some person walking towards me, I strove again to pray, but could not the noise of walking seemed to draw nearer, I sprung upon my feet, and looked around, but saw no person or thing that was calculated to produce the noise of walking, I kneeled again my mouth was opened and my tounge liberated, and I called on the Lord in mighty prayer, a pillar of fire appeared above my head, it presently rested down upon me and filled me with joy unspeakable, a personage appeared in the midst of this pillar of flame which was spread all around, and yet nothing consumed, another personage soon appeared like unto the first, he said unto me thy sins are forgiven thee, he testified unto me that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and I saw **many angels** in this vision I was about 14 years old when I received this first communication. . . .

In this account of the First Vision there is absolutely nothing to show that the personages were God and Christ. The statement, “he testified unto me that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” would seem to show that the personages were **not** the Father and the Son. If Joseph Smith had intended to show that the personage who spoke was Jesus, he probably would have said something like this: “He testified also unto me that He was the Son of God.” On the other hand, if he intended to show that the personage who spoke was the Father, he would probably have said something like this: “He testified also unto me that Jesus Christ was His son.”

As if this is not bad enough, Joseph Smith states that there were “many angels in this vision.” Neither of the other versions indicate that there were “many angels.”

We now have three different handwritten manuscripts of the First Vision. They were all written by Joseph Smith or his scribes, and yet every one of them is different. The first account says there was only one personage. The second account says there were many, and the third says there were two.

It is interesting to note that the portion of Joseph Smith’s diary which mentions the visit of “Joshua the Jewish minister” was used as the basis for Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 304. In the diary we read:

I commenced giving him a relation of the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the book of Mormon, as follows [At this point Joseph Smith gave an account of the First Vision and other visions he received]. . . .

While I was relating this brief history of the establishment of the Church of Christ in these last days, Joshua seemed to be highly entertained.

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 304, we find almost exactly the same wording:

. . . I commenced giving him a relation of the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, as recorded in the former part of this history.

While I was relating a brief history of the establishment of the Church of Christ in the last days, Joshua seemed to be highly entertained.

From this comparison it is plain to see that Joseph Smith’s diary was the original source for the published *History*, yet over 800 words were **not** included in the printed version. In order to

make this deletion the words “as follows” were changed to “as recorded in the former part of this history.”

The story that was related in the diary, however, differs from that “recorded in the former part of this history”—the official account which appears in the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, pages 5-6. Joseph Smith or those who compiled this portion of the *History* apparently felt that this version of the First Vision had to be suppressed because it differed from the official account.

## An Important Change

*Joseph Smith’s 1835-36 Diary* and the “Manuscript History” of the Church also provide some important evidence concerning another reference to the First Vision which has been changed in the printed version of the *History of the Church*. Fawn M. Brodie made this statement concerning this reference:

Under the date of November 15, 1835 in the *History of the Church* appears the following statement by Joseph Smith: “I gave him [Erastus Holmes] a brief relation of my experience while in my juvenile years, say from six years old up to the time I received my first vision, which was when I was about fourteen years old . . .” (vol. 2, p. 312). But Joseph admittedly did not begin writing his history until 1838, and the editors of this history do not state from what manuscript source in the Utah Church library this journal entry came. Access to all these important manuscripts is denied everyone save authorities of the Mormon Church. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 24, footnote)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe tried to defend this reference from the *History of the Church* by stating:

In 1835 he told one Erastus Holmes of his “First Vision which was when I was fourteen years old.” Clearly the story of the First Vision was common knowledge among members of the Church. The proponents of the theory that the Prophet invented the First Vision in 1838 doubt the accuracy of the Holmes and similar references, because they hold that the Church History, the journal of Joseph Smith, has been tampered with by later workers. It is sad when a drowning man does not even have a straw to which he may cling! that seemed and seems to be the need of these critics. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, pp. 24-25)

In spite of John A. Widtsoe’s statement, a woman who was doing research at the Utah State Historical Society searched through a microfilm of the early *Deseret News* and found information which proves that the Mormon Historians deliberately altered Joseph Smith’s statement. In the 1850’s the *Deseret News* (the Mormon Church’s newspaper) was publishing Joseph Smith’s *History*. In the issue for May 29, 1852, the following statement by Joseph Smith appeared:

This afternoon, Erastus Holmes, of Newbury, Ohio, called on me to inquire about the establishment of the church, and to be instructed in doctrine more perfectly. I gave him a brief relation of my experience while in my juvenile years, say from six years old up to the time I received the **first visitation of angels**, which was when I was about fourteen years old; also the revelations that I received afterwards concerning the Book of Mormon, and a short account of the rise and progress of the church up to this date. (*Deseret News*, vol. 2, no. 15, May 29, 1852)

Because this statement by Joseph Smith contradicted the teaching that the Father and the Son appeared to him in the First Vision of 1820, the Mormon Church Historians altered the words of Joseph Smith when they reprinted them in recent editions of the *History of the Church*. They changed the wording so that the word “angels” was completely left out. The following is a comparison of the way this reference was originally published in the *Deseret News* and the way it has been changed to read in recent printings of the *History of the Church*. In the *Deseret News*, May 29, 1852, Joseph Smith’s



# DESERET NEWS.

"Truth and Liberty."

VOL. 2.] GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, U. T., SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1852. [NO. 15.

From Poems by J. NACK, a Deaf Mute.

### The Battle of the Snakes.

AN EPIQUE TO CATHARINE.

DEAR KATE—more dear than I can tell  
No matter, though—you know it well—  
Dear Kate—in this delicious weather,  
I wish, don't you? we were together;  
That we might wander, hand in hand,  
And those acorns of fairy land,  
Which now, to glad thy vision, rise  
And fancy pictures to my eyes!  
To climb the hill—the woods explore,  
Or ramble by the sea-beat shore,  
Where ringing waves delight thy ear  
With music mine shall never hear;  
Or rove where sweetest flowers embower  
My pretty Kate, "a sweeter flower"  
While balmy zephyrs kiss thy brow  
Of beauty—(might I kiss it now?)

'Mid scenes like these, one summer's day,  
A lonely serpent wound his way;  
From Rattle's line of length he came,  
And glared in a fit of fame;  
His pointed tongue, his sparkling eyes,  
His gorgeous robe of thousand dyes—  
All these with rapture swelled his hide,  
For snakes, like other fools, have pride.  
While winding through a tangled brake,  
He chanced to meet another snake,  
Who wore a suit of sober black,  
Which might become a doctor's back,  
And, coiled in many a ring, reclined,  
While thoughts as rapid perplexed his mind.  
"Good person Black! ah, it is you?"  
Quoth Rattle blunt, "How d'ya do?"  
"Oh, well, I think you do."

While fond my look upon thee lingers,  
Then, while enraptured, I trace  
Affection breathing from thy face—  
Oh, then I feel in deep delight  
"There is a music for this sight!"  
Which I would not exchange for all  
That ever on the ear may fall.

[Copyright Secured.]

### LIFE OF JOSEPH SMITH.

Saturday morning, 14th. Thus came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, Verily thus saith the Lord unto my servant Joseph, concerning my servant Warren, behold his sins are forgiven him, because of his desire to do the works of righteousness. Therefore, inasmuch as he will continue to hearken unto my voice, he shall be blessed with wisdom, and with a sound mind, even above his fellows. Behold it shall come to pass in his day, that he shall see great things show forth themselves unto my people; he shall see much of my ancient records, and shall know of hidden things, and shall be endowed with a knowledge of hidden languages; and if he desires and shall seek it in my hands, he shall be privileged with writing much of my word, as a scribe unto me for the benefit of my people; therefore this shall be his calling until I shall order it otherwise in my wisdom; and it shall be said of him in time to come, behold Warren, the Lord's scribe, for the Lord's scribe, whom he hath appointed in Israel. Therefore, if he will keep my commandments, he shall be lifted up at the last day; even so, amen.

This afternoon, Erastus Holmes, of Newbury, Ohio, called on me to inquire about the establishment of the church, and to be instructed in doctrine more perfectly. I gave him a brief relation of my experience while in my juvenile years, any from six years old up to the time I received the first visitation of angels, which was when I was about fourteen years old; also the revelations that I received afterwards concerning the Book of Mormon, and a short account of the rise and progress of the church up to this date. He listened very attentively, and seemed highly gratified, and intends to unite with the church.

On Sabbath morning, 15th, he went with me to meeting, which was held in the school house, as the chapel was not finished plastering.—President Rigdon preached on the subject of

mon's being called to preach the gospel, their qualifications, &c. We had a fine discourse; it was very interesting indeed. Mr. Holmes was well satisfied, and returned and dined with me. Said Holmes has been a member of the Methodist church, and was excommunicated before receiving the elders of the Latter Day Saints into his house. Went to meeting in the afternoon, before partaking of the sacrament, Isaac Hill's case was agitated again, and settled after much controversy, and he retained in the church, by making a humble acknowledgment before the church, and consenting to have his confession published in the "Messenger and Advocate," after which the ordinance of the Lord's supper was administered, and the meeting closed late. Returned home and spent the evening.

Monday, the 16th, at home. Dictated the following letter for publication in the "Messenger and Advocate."

### TO THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH OF LATTER DAY SAINTS.

I have shewn unto you, in my last, that there are two Jerusaaloms spoken of in holy writ, in a manner I think satisfactorily to your minds; at any rate I have given my views upon the subject, I shall now proceed to make some remarks from the sayings of the Savior, recorded in the 13th chapter of his gospel according to St. Matthew, which, in my mind, afford us an understanding upon the important subject of the gathering; as anything recorded in the Bible. At the time the Savior spoke those

parables arise because of the word, by and by, he is offended. He also that receiveth seed among thorns, is he that receiveth the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful; but he that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. Thus the Savior himself explains unto his disciples the parable, which he put forth, and left no mystery or darkness upon the minds of those who firmly believe on his words.

We draw the conclusion, then, that the very reason why the multitude, or the world, as they were designated by the Savior, did not receive an explanation upon his parables, was because of unbelief. To you he says, (speaking to his disciples) It is given you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; and why? Because of the faith and confidence they had in him. This parable was spoken to? Illustrate the efforts that are produced by the preaching of the word; and we believe that it has an allusion directly, to the commencement, or the setting up of the kingdom in that age; therefore we shall continue to trace his sayings concerning this kingdom from that time forth, even unto the end of the world.

Another parable put he forth unto them saying, (which parable has an allusion to the setting up of the kingdom, in that age of the world also). The kingdom of heaven is likened

to a mustard seed. Behold, then, is not this the kingdom of heaven that is raising its head in the last days, in the majesty of its God; even the Church of the Latter Day Saints; like an impenetrable, immovable rock in the midst of the mighty deep, exposed to the storms and tempests of Satan, but has, thus far, remained steadfast, and is still braving the mountain waves of opposition, which are driven by the tempestuous winds of sinking crafts, which have and are still dashing with tremendous foam across its triumphant brow; urged onward with redoubled fury by the enemy of righteousness, with his pitchfork of lies, as you will see fairly represented in a cut contained in Mr. Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled?" And we hope that this adversary of truth will continue to stir up the sink of iniquity, that the people may the more readily discern between the righteous and the wicked.

We also would notice one of the modern sons of Seeva, who would fain have made people believe, that he could cast out devils, by a certain pamphlet, (viz, the "Millennium Harbinger") that went the rounds through our country; who felt so fully authorized to brand "Jo" Smith with the appellation of Elymas the sorcerer; and to say with Paul, O full of all subtlety, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? We would reply to this gentleman, Paul we know, and Christ we know, but who are ye? And with the best of feelings would say to him in the language of Paul to those who said they were John's disciples, but had not so much as heard there was a Holy Ghost, to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins by those who have legal authority, and under their hands you shall receive the Holy Ghost, according to the scriptures.

Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. Acts 8: 17.—And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Acts 19: 6. Of the doctrines of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Hebrews 6: 2. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a proscriber? And how shall

We again make a remark here, for we find that the very principles upon which the disciples were accounted blessed, was because they were permitted to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears; and the condemnation which rested upon the multitude, which received not his saying, was because they were not willing to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears; not because they could not, and were not privileged to see and hear, but because their hearts were full of iniquity and abominations; as your fathers did, so do ye. The Prophet, foreseeing that they would thus harden their hearts, plainly declared it; and herein is the condemnation of the world; that light hath come into the world, and men choose darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. This is so plainly taught by the Savior, that a wayfaring man need not mistake it.

And again; hear ye the parable of the sower. Men are in the habit, when the truth is exhibited by the servants of God, of saying, all is mystery; they are spoken in parables, and, therefore, are not to be understood; it is true they have eyes to see, and see not; but none are so blind as those who will not see; and although the Savior spoke this parable to such characters, yet unto his disciples he expounded it plainly; and we have reason to be truly humble before the God of our fathers, that he hath left these things on record for us, so plain, that notwithstanding the exertions and combined influence of the priests of Baal, they have not power to blind our eyes, and darken our understanding, if we will but open our eyes, and read with candor, for a moment.

But listen to the explanation of the parable; when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. Now mark the expression; that which was before sown in his heart; this is he which receiveth seed by the way side; men who have no principle of righteousness in themselves, and whose hearts are full of iniquity, and have no desire for the principles of truth, do not understand the word of truth when they hear it. The devil taketh away the word of truth out of their hearts, because there is no desire for righteousness in them. But he that receiveth seed in stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anew, with joy receiveth it, yet hath he no root in himself, but endureth for a while, for when tribulation or

persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by, he is offended. He also that receiveth seed among thorns, is he that receiveth the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful; but he that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. Thus the Savior himself explains unto his disciples the parable, which he put forth, and left no mystery or darkness upon the minds of those who firmly believe on his words.

We also would notice one of the modern sons of Seeva, who would fain have made people believe, that he could cast out devils, by a certain pamphlet, (viz, the "Millennium Harbinger") that went the rounds through our country; who felt so fully authorized to brand "Jo" Smith with the appellation of Elymas the sorcerer; and to say with Paul, O full of all subtlety, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? We would reply to this gentleman, Paul we know, and Christ we know, but who are ye? And with the best of feelings would say to him in the language of Paul to those who said they were John's disciples, but had not so much as heard there was a Holy Ghost, to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins by those who have legal authority, and under their hands you shall receive the Holy Ghost, according to the scriptures.

Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. Acts 8: 17.—And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Acts 19: 6. Of the doctrines of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Hebrews 6: 2. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a proscriber? And how shall

kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one. Now let our readers mark the expression, the field is the world; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world. Let them carefully mark this expression, the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.

Now men cannot have any possible grounds to say that this is figurative, or that it does not mean what it says; for he is now explaining what he had previously spoken in parables; and according to this language, the end of the world is the destruction of the wicked, the harvest and the end of the world have an allusion directly to the human family in the last days, instead of the earth, as many have imagined; and that which shall precede the coming of the Son of Man, and the restitution of all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began; and the angels are to have something to do in this great work, for they are the reapers. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world; that is, as the servants of God go forth warning the nations, both priests and people, and as they harden their hearts and reject the light of truth, these first being delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, and the law and the testimony being closed up, as it was in the Jews, they are left in darkness, and delivered over unto the day of burning; thus being bound up by their creeds, and their hands being made strong by their priests, are prepared for the fulfillment of the saying of the Savior, The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. We understand that the work of the gathering together of the wheat into barns, or garners, is to take place while the tares are being bound over, and reaping for the day of burning; that after the day of burnings, the righteous shall shine forth like the sun, in the kingdom of their Father;—Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

But to illustrate more clearly upon this gathering. We have another parable: Against the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, he hath sold all that he hath, and bought that field, for he may work after this pattern. See the church of the

A photograph of the *Deseret News*, May 29, 1852. Notice that Joseph Smith stated that it was angels that appeared to him when he was fourteen years of age. This reference has been changed in recent editions of the *History of the Church*. The word *angels* has been removed.



statement read:

... I received **the first visitation of angels**, which was when I was about fourteen years old; . . .

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 312, this has been changed to read:

... I received **my first vision**, which was when I was about fourteen years old; . . .

Dr. Hugh Nibley states that even God Himself, when he visits the earth, could be called an angel; however, he admits that Joseph Smith was being “evasive” about the matter:

Not to labor the point, it is perfectly correct usage to refer to any heavenly visitor as an angel. So when Joseph Smith, reviewing the past in “a brief relation” to a stranger, passes over the first vision as his “first visitation of angels” he is being both correct and evasive. Remember that this was some years before he was finally “induced” to come out with a public statement about the first vision; . . . (*Improvement Era*, November 1961, p. 868)

On page 866 of the same article, Dr. Nibley admits that Joseph Smith’s use of the word “angels” was “ambiguous,” and that the editors of the *Deseret News* ran the “risk of a misunderstanding” by using this term. He does not, however, tell the reader that this “ambiguous” term has been deleted in modern editions of the *History of the Church*. Paul Cheesman fails to deal with this problem in his thesis. He quotes the statement Joseph Smith made concerning his First Vision, but his quotation is taken from the *History of the Church*, and he does not say anything concerning the change which has been made in it. It would appear that the Mormon writers are unwilling to face this problem.

The church has absolutely no manuscript evidence to support this change in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church*. The original handwritten manuscript for this part of the *History* reads exactly like the *Deseret News*: “. . . I received **the first visitation of angels** . . .” (Manuscript History, Book B-1, p. 642). In addition to this, *Joseph Smith’s 1835-36 Diary*, page 37, provides supporting evidence for the word “angels”: “. . . I received **the first visitation of angels** . . .”

The fact that Mormon historians had to make such a serious change in Joseph Smith’s *History* after his death tends to further weaken the case for the First Vision.

## Revision Required

At least one Mormon writer suggests that because of the release of the new documents Fawn Brodie may have to revise her argument that the First Vision was invented sometime after 1834. We feel that this criticism is a little unfair. Actually, the Mormon leaders are the ones who should revise their arguments. They are the ones that said Joseph Smith “told but one story,” and they are the ones who suppressed the two “strange” accounts of the vision. We are sure that Fawn M. Brodie would have used these documents if the Mormon leaders had made them available to her. In fact, in a Supplement to the new edition of her book she did reproduce and discuss these documents (see *No Man Knows My History*, N.Y., 1971, pp. 405-410). These documents fit perfectly into her thesis that Joseph Smith made up the vision many years after it was supposed to have occurred. She had said that the “awesome vision he described in later years may have been the elaboration of some half-remembered dream stimulated by the early revival excitement and reinforced by the rich folklore of visions circulating in his neighborhood. Or it may have been sheer invention, created some time after 1834 . . .” On page 22 of the older edition she stated that “Lesser visions than this were common in the folklore of the area.” She then goes on to explain that others claimed they saw the

Lord, but Joseph’s vision of both the Father and the Son “dwarfed all these experiences.” If Fawn Brodie would have had access to the “strange” account written in the early 1830’s, she would have had the missing link to make her thesis complete. The fact that Joseph Smith only mentions Christ as being present in the vision makes it very similar to other visions “of the area.” Mormon writers admit that the thing that makes Joseph Smith’s account unique is that **both** the Father and the Son appeared. Paul R. Cheesman says that “Joseph Smith’s account is unique in that the Father and the Son appeared together and they both spoke. To those who accept the Bible and the Book of Mormon as authentic, nowhere in these histories do we have another example that parallels this experience in this respect” (“An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith’s Early Visions,” p. 18).

Now that we have Joseph Smith’s first account of his vision we know that it was **not** unique. In 1816 a minister by the name of Elias Smith published a book in which he told of his conversion. Notice how similar it is to Joseph Smith’s first account:

... I went into the woods...after a stick of timber; after taking it on my shoulder . . . as I walked along on a large log . . . my foot slipped . . . the timber fell one end on the log and the other on the snow, and held me, . . . While in this situation, a light appeared from heaven, . . . My mind seemed to rise in that light to the throne of God and the Lamb, . . . The Lamb once slain appeared to my understanding, and while viewing him, I felt such love to him as I never felt to any thing earthly. . . . It is not possible for me to tell how long I remained in that situation, . . . (*The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Sufferings of Elias Smith*, Portsmouth, N.H., 1816, pp. 58-59)

Alexander Campbell wrote the following on March 1, 1824, concerning a “revival in the state of New York”:

Enthusiasm flourishes, . . . This man was regenerated when asleep, by a vision of the night. That man heard a voice in the woods, saying, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” A third saw his Saviour descending to the tops of the trees at noon day. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 1, pp. 148-49)

The noted revival preacher Charles G. Finney, like Joseph Smith, went out “into the woods” to pray. That night he came into a room and though there “was no fire, and no light, in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face” (*Charles G. Finney*, pp. 15-21). This vision occurred in the early 1820’s, and since Finney was so popular in New York, Joseph Smith probably knew his story. Gilbert Seldes stated: “The story of his conversion spread and the grove in which he had communed with the Holy Spirit was frequented by other anxious souls who imitated him in prayer with equally successful results” (*The Stammering Century*, p. 104). We present other information concerning this matter in our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 108-109.

In a book published in 1830, Stephen H. Bradley told that he thought he “saw the Savior” when he was fourteen years old. William James cites this book in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pages 157-58.

Asa Wild claimed to have a revelation which is very similar to the story Joseph Smith published. It was published in the *Wayne Sentinel* (the paper to which the family of Joseph Smith apparently subscribed) on October 22, 1823:

It seemed as if my mind...was struck motionless, as well as into nothing, before the awful and glorious majesty of the Great Jehovah. He then spake . . . He also told me, that every denomination of professing christians had become extremely corrupt; . . . He told me further, that he had raised up, and was now raising up, that class of persons signified by the Angel mentioned by the Revelator, xiv. 6, 7, which flew in the midst of heaven; having the everlasting gospel to preach: . . . Furthermore he said that all the different denominations of professing christians, constituted the New Testament Babylon; . . .

Much more the Lord revealed, but forbids my relating it in this way. (*Wayne Sentinel*, October 22, 1823)

It is plain to see, then, that the story Joseph Smith told in the early 1830's is not much different than the visions related by others. It was only when he added the part about the Father appearing with the Son that the story began to sound unique.

### First History

In the early years of the Mormon Church the members were taught that the first vision Joseph Smith had was in 1823 when he was seventeen years of age, and that the personage who appeared was an angel (not God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ) who told him about the Book of Mormon. Oliver Cowdery, who was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and the first Church Historian, wrote a history of the church which was published in the *Messenger and Advocate*. This history shows that the story of the visit of the Father and the Son was not taught to the Mormon people. Francis W. Kirkham, in his book, *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 1, page 17, says:

The first published consecutive account of the origin of the Church began in the October, 1834, issue of the *Messenger and Advocate*. It consists of eight letters written by Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps. This account is very important as Oliver Cowdery claims in a letter published in the October, 1834, issue, but dated September 7, 1834, that Joseph Smith assisted him in the writing of the letters.

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus states that the *Messenger and Advocate* was "the official Church organ between 1834 and 1837" (*God, Man and the Universe*, Salt Lake City, 1968, p. 48). In the *Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, page 13, the following statement was made concerning this history:

... we have thought that a full history of the rise of the church of the Latter Day Saints, and the most interesting parts of its progress, to the present time, would be worthy the perusal of the Saints. . . .

That our narrative may be correct, and particularly the introduction, it is proper to inform our patrons, that our brother J. Smith jr. has offered to assist us. . . . With his labor and with authentic documents now in our possession, we hope to render this a pleasing and agreeable narrative, well worth the examination of the Saints.—

On page 42 the reader was promised that this history would contain a correct account of events that have transpired:

Since, then, our opposers have been thus kind to introduce our cause before the public, it is no more than just that a correct account should be given; and since they have invariably sought to cast a shade over the truth, . . . it is also proper that it should be vindicated, by laying before the world a correct statement of events . . .

You will recollect that I informed you, . . . this history would necessarily embrace the life and character of our esteemed friend and brother, J. Smith Jr. . . . for information on that part of the subject, I refer you to his communication . . . I shall, therefore, pass over that, till I come to the 15th year of his life. . . . One Mr. Lane, a presiding Elder of the Methodist church, visited Palmyra, and vicinity. Elder Lane was a tallented man . . . There was a great awakening, or excitement raised on the subject of religion, and much enquiry for the word of life. Large additions were made to the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches.—Mr. Lane's manner of communication was peculiarly calculated to awaken the intellect of the hearer, . . . in common with others, our brother's mind became awakened . . . his mother, one sister, and two of his natural brothers, were persuaded to unite with the Presbyterians. . . .

In the February 1835 issue of the *Messenger and Advocate*, Oliver Cowdery continued the history. He stated, however, that

there had been a typographical error and that the revival had really occurred in 1823:

You will recollect that I mentioned the time of a religious excitement, in Palmyra and vicinity to have been in the 15th year of our brother J. Smith Jr's age—that was an error in the type—it should have been in the **17th**.—You will please remember this correction, as it will be necessary for the full understanding of what will follow in time. This would bring the date down to the year **1823**. . . . while this excitement continued, he continued to call upon the Lord in secret for a full manifestation of divine approbation, and for, to him, the all important information, **if a Supreme being did exist**, to have an assurance that he was accepted of him . . .

On the evening of the 21st of September, 1823, previous to retiring to rest, our brother's mind was unusually wrought up on the subject which had so long agitated his mind—his heart was drawn out in fervent prayer, . . . While continuing in prayer for a manifestation in some way that his sins were forgiven; endeavoring to exercise faith in the scriptures, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a purer and far more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room.— . . . and in a moment a personage stood before him . . . he heard him declare himself to be **a messenger** sent by commandment of the Lord, to deliver a special message, and to witness to him that his sins were forgiven, . . . (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, pp. 78-79)

Several things should be noted concerning this history. First, that it claimed to be a "correct account." Second, that Joseph Smith assisted in the writing of this history. Third, that the date of the religious excitement in Palmyra was 1823. Fourth, that Joseph Smith desired to know at this time "if a Supreme being did exist." Fifth, that a "messenger sent by commandment of the Lord" appeared to him and told him that his sins were forgiven.

Mormon writers seem to be somewhat divided concerning this history. Dr. Hugh Nibley suggests that Joseph Smith may not have given Oliver Cowdery a "full account" of the First Vision and that this may account for the confusion:

If William Smith and Oliver Cowdery give confusing accounts of the first vision, we must remember that the Prophet knew from the first that those men were not to be trusted with too much information. . . . Were such men to be trusted with a full account of the first vision before it was officially given to the world? (*Improvement Era*, Nov. 1961, pp. 868-869)

This explanation for Oliver Cowdery's silence concerning the First Vision is not reasonable; if Cowdery was so unreliable, why was he chosen to be one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon? Could it be possible that Joseph Smith would not trust Oliver Cowdery—the first Church Historian—with the true history of the church? Actually, Joseph Smith trusted Cowdery with some of his most important secrets. The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin stated: "...the Prophet testified 'that Oliver Cowdery had been his bosom friend, therefore he entrusted him with many things'" (*Conflict at Kirtland*, M.A. thesis, BYU, 1966, p. 166).

Dr. Richard L. Anderson, of Brigham Young University, seems to disagree with Dr. Nibley. He claims that Cowdery was well aware of Joseph Smith's early account of the First Vision (i.e., the "strange" account), but feels that it was left out "for a reason":

Since Oliver Cowdery and William Smith narrated early Church history without mentioning the First Vision, it has been assumed that their silence proves that the event did not occur. Both associate Joseph Smith's revival investigations with 1823 instead of 1820, . . . Cowdery made the first public attempt to narrate pre-1830 Church history in letters to the 1834-35



*Messenger and Advocate*. It is incorrect to say that he wrote without an awareness of the First Vision. It may be that the reason for leaving it out is ambiguous, but . . . the initial manuscript history of the First Vision was entered in official Church records at least two years before Cowdery's history. When he stated that he would utilize "authentic documents now in our possession," it is virtually certain that he was alluding to the 1831-32 account. . . . at two points where the Prophet's personal experiences are narrated, identical phrases or structural similarities betray Cowdery's use of the earlier document. . . . added to these is a precise sequence of events that indicates that Cowdery composed his sketch of Joseph's first religious investigations with the 1831-32 manuscript before him: . . .

If Oliver Cowdery demonstrably followed the 1831-32 document in rehearsing the background of the First Vision, why didn't he report the full event as found in that history? . . . By date and verbal dependence, it is known that Cowdery had access to the 1831-32 document, which described two different prayers and two responding visions. Because the logical Cowdery presented differing prayer situations but an answer to only one of them, it must be assumed that he left out reference to the First Vision for a reason.

It is hard to avoid the impression that the second elder was corrected by Joseph Smith and exercised his editorial privilege of saving face. The installment of December 1834, in which the First Vision background was given, dated the "excitement raised on the subject of religion" in the "15th year" of the Prophet's life, . . . Pleading "an error in the type," the editor said that the above events happened "in the 17th" year of Joseph Smith's life. . . .

Since Cowdery knew of the First Vision and began to describe its circumstances, his failure to continue implies a correction. One might envision a reprimand for giving public details of a sacred experience, though that is inconsistent with Joseph Smith's open description of the event for the Jewish minister Joshua some months afterward. . . . The absence of the First Vision in these circumstances is an accident of presentation never rectified because the letter-presentation of early history was terminated some months afterward. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 393-398)

It is rather obvious that Mormon writers do not know how to deal with this early history. One Mormon writer has maintained that Joseph Smith was not responsible for the contents of this history (see *Dialogue*, Spring 1969, pp. 84-86). President Joseph Fielding Smith, however, admitted that this history was written under the "personal supervision" of Joseph Smith. He even used it to prove where the Hill Cumorah is located:

The quibbler might say that this statement from Oliver Cowdery is merely the opinion of Oliver Cowdery and not the expression of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It should be remembered that these letters in which these statements are made were written at the Prophet's request and under his personal supervision. Surely, under these circumstances, he would not have permitted an error of this kind to creep into the record without correction. . . .

Later, during the Nauvoo period of the Church, and again under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, these same letters by Oliver Cowdery, were published in the *Times and Seasons*, without any thought of correction. . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 236)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts said that "Joseph Smith's association with Cowdery in the production of these letters make them, as to the facts involved, practically the personal narrative of Joseph Smith" (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 78).

## Too Many Stories

Prior to the time Paul Cheesman wrote his thesis at Brigham Young University, Mormon writers were emphatically proclaiming that Joseph Smith "told but one story" of the First Vision. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: "The earliest available written official account of the First Vision dates from 1838 when Joseph Smith began to write the history of the Church" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 19).

We may never know if John A. Widtsoe knew of the two "strange" accounts of the vision which were written prior to 1838, but one thing is certain, some of the Mormon leaders did know that the account written in 1838 was not the only one in the Historian's Office. In other words, certain leaders deliberately suppressed this information.

Now that these "strange" accounts have been printed and widely circulated, Mormon apologists are forced to admit their existence and authenticity. Dr. Richard L. Anderson, of the Brigham Young University, has gone a step further, however. He not only acknowledges the authenticity of the "strange" accounts, but he also classifies them as "official accounts of the First Vision from the Prophet":

Before one can prove that Joseph Smith contradicts history, he must be sure of what Joseph Smith claimed. There are **four official accounts** of the First Vision from the Prophet. The three manuscript texts are printed in Dean Jessee's article in this issue. As he shows, their dates of composition are 1831-32, 1835, and 1838. This 1838 account was published as the "History of Joseph Smith" in 1842. The fourth account is Joseph Smith's "Wentworth Letter," also published in 1842. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 374)

Dr. Anderson even goes so far as to state that "The most striking insight into the earliest religious experiences of the Prophet comes from the 1831-32 manuscript history" (*Ibid.*, p. 375).

The Mormon newspaper, *Deseret News*, has now admitted the authenticity of the "strange" accounts, but it is made to appear that they are new discoveries:

Dean C. Jessee, a staff member at the Church historian's office in Salt Lake City, searched through documents of the Church historian's library concerning events of the 1820s. He located and analyzed three early accounts of Joseph Smith's first vision dictated by the Prophet himself. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, May 3, 1969, p. 15)

This article gives the impression that Dean C. Jessee just discovered the "strange" accounts. Actually, for many years some of the Mormon leaders have been aware of the fact that the printed account was not the only account written by Joseph Smith. The reader will remember that Levi Edgar Young had seen some documents containing a "strange" account of the First Vision prior to the interview with LaMar Petersen in 1953, but that he was "told not to copy or tell what they contained." The reader will also remember that we printed the first "strange" account in 1965.

The church has suppressed these documents for over 130 years, but now Mormon apologists are trying to make it appear that they are proud of them. Dr. Truman G. Madsen, of the Brigham Young University, claims that the harmony of these documents is impressive:

Now that we have copies of the three early manuscript accounts of the First Vision bound in this single volume, we are impressed with their harmony considering the very different circumstances of their writing: . . . (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 240)

Richard L. Bushman admits that there are some variations



in the story, but he states:

The reasons for reshaping the story usually have to do with changes in immediate circumstances. We know that Joseph suffered from attacks on his character . . . Small wonder that afterwards he played down his prayer for forgiveness in accounts of the vision. . . . One would expect variations in the simplest and truest story. (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 83)

On page 91 of the same article, Dr. Bushman says that “there are bound to be variations in the reports of any event, simply because the narrator emphasizes one portion or another of the story. Simple slips may account for other differences. In the 1831 story, for example, Joseph places the first vision in his sixteenth year instead of his fifteenth, a mistake I for one can easily excuse considering how I always have to stop to calculate just how old one is in his fifteenth year.”

While it is true that it would have been easy for Joseph Smith to have made a few mistakes in relating the vision, we must agree with Wesley P. Walters when he states that “The matter is far deeper than a mere lapse of memory as to dating, for it enters into the very fabric of the story itself” (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 70).

We would, of course, expect some variations in any story, but we feel that there are so many variations in Joseph Smith’s story and they are of such a nature that they make it impossible to believe. The reader will remember that in the first written account Joseph Smith stated that only **one** personage appeared to him. The second account says there were **many**, and the third account says there were **two**. How can we reconcile such discrepancies?

In the Supplement to the new edition of her book, page 409, Mrs. Brodie stated:

Devout Mormon scholars have made it clear that they believe the differences between the three versions are of no consequence. But to the non-devout the differences are evidence of Joseph Smith’s exuberant talent for improvisation before a stimulating audience and his lack of care about consistency of detail. They bear out my original speculation that the first vision, if not an invention, was an evolutionary fantasy beginning in “a half-remembered dream stimulated by the early revival excitement and reinforced by the rich folklore of visions circulating in his neighborhood.”

## Doctrinal Change

When Lauritz G. Petersen, Research Supervisor at the Church Historian’s Office, was asked concerning the different accounts of the First Vision, he wrote a letter in which he stated:

We are not concerned really with which of the two Versions of the First Vision is right. . . . Personally I would take the version which the Prophet Joseph gave himself when he stated that he saw two personages. Regardless[s] whether he saw one or two the fact remains that Jesus Christ is mentioned in both of them.

It is obvious from this statement that Mormon apologists are beginning to retreat from the idea that God the Father appeared to Joseph Smith. This is actually a very important matter, for Mormon leaders have used this vision as evidence for their doctrine of a plurality of gods. They have stated that this vision proves that God and Christ are two distinct personages and that they both have a body. They use this vision to prove that God Himself is only an **exalted man**. George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made this statement in 1883:

There was no man scarcely upon the earth that had a true conception of God; . . . But all this was swept away in one moment by the appearance of the Almighty Himself—by the appearance of

God, the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, to the boy Joseph. . . . In one moment all this darkness disappeared, and once more there was a man found on the earth, embodied in the flesh, who had seen God. . . . This revelation dissipated all misconceptions and all false ideas, and removed the uncertainty that had existed respecting these matters. The Father came accompanied by the Son, thus showing that there were two personages of the Godhead, . . . Joseph saw that the Father had a form; that He had a head; that He had arms; that He had limbs; that He had feet; that He had a face and a tongue . . . There can be no faith that is not built upon a true conception of God our Father. Therefore, before even angels came, He came Himself, accompanied by His Son, and revealed Himself once more to man upon the earth. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 24, pp. 371-72)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

This was the prophet’s first vision. From this we learn among other truths, that God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, are separate and distinct personages, and that man is literally created in the image of God. (*A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, 1966, p. 12)

President Joseph Fielding Smith has said that “There is no account in history or revelation extant, where ever before both the Father and the Son appeared in the presence of mortal man in glory” (*Essentials in Church History*, pp. 46-47).

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe commented:

It was an extraordinary experience. Never before had God the Father and God the Son appeared to mortal man. . . .

The First Vision . . . shattered many a false doctrine taught throughout the centuries. . . .

A few, and a very few, had conceived God to be a personage. This view had ordinarily been laid aside, since it made God more nearly like man in body and powers. Men had held up their hands in horror at an anthropomorphic God, whatever that may have meant. . . .

The First Vision clarified this whole matter. . . . It answered the centuries’ old query about the nature of God. The Father and the Son had appeared to Joseph as persons, like men on earth in form. . . .

From the early days of Christianity, the erroneous doctrine of the nature of God had led to . . . the conception that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Godhead, were One, a unity. . . .

This false doctrine was laid low by the first vision. Two personages, the Father and the Son, stood before Joseph. . . . There was no mingling of personalities in the vision. Each of the personages was an individual member of the Godhead. Each one separately took part in the vision. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, pp. 4-7)

Actually, the fact that the first written account of the First Vision only mentioned **one** personage is consistent with what Joseph Smith believed about God when he wrote the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon, which was first published in 1830, taught that there was but one God:

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, . . . (*Book of Mormon*, Mosiah 15:1, 2, 5)

The Book of Mormon tells of a visitation of the Father and the Son to the “brother of Jared.” The Father and the Son mentioned, however, are **not** two separate personages. Only **one** personage appears, and this personage says:

Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have light, . . . (Ether 3:14)

The Book of Mormon clearly teaches that God the Father is a **spirit**, and the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* also contained a reference which stated that God is a Spirit.

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith did not believe that God the Father had a body at the time he wrote his first account of the vision in the “wilderness.” Towards the end of his life, however, Joseph Smith changed his mind and decided that God was just an exalted man. In 1844 he maintained: “First, God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is a man like unto one of yourselves, . . .” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 613).

Since Joseph Smith had changed his mind concerning the Godhead, he evidently decided to change his story concerning the First Vision.

### Source of Confusion

After Joseph Smith’s death the Mormon leaders made some very confusing statements concerning the First Vision. Now that we have Joseph Smith’s first written accounts of the vision we are able to understand why they were in such a state of confusion. Wesley P. Walters states: “. . . the shift from an angel to Christ, then to angels, and finally to two personages introduced such haziness that even the Mormon leaders appeared confused as to the nature of the story itself” (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 73).

Below are a few examples which show the confusion concerning the First Vision which existed after Joseph Smith’s death.

In 1855 Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, gave a sermon in which he denied that the Lord came to Joseph Smith in the First Vision:

But as it was in the days of our Savior, so was it in the advent of this new dispensation. It was not in accordance with the notions, traditions, and pre-conceived ideas of the American people. The **messenger** did not come to an eminent divine of any of the so-called orthodoxy, he did not adopt their interpretations of the Holy Scriptures. The Lord did not come with the armies of heaven, in power and great glory, nor send His messengers panoplied with aught else than the truth of heaven, to communicate to the meek, the lowly, and the youth of humble origin, the sincere enquirer after the knowledge of God. But he did send **his angel** to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith jun., who afterwards became a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and informed him that he should not join any of the religious sects of the day, for they were all wrong; that they were following the precepts of men instead of the Lord Jesus; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 171)

John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, made the following statement on March 2, 1879:

. . . when the Prophet Joseph asked **the angel** which of the sects was right that he might join it. The answer was that none of them are right. What, none of them? No. We will not stop to argue that question; the angel merely told him to join none of them that none of them were right. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 167)

George A. Smith, who was sustained as first counselor in the First Presidency in 1868, made the following statement in November of the same year:

When Joseph Smith was about fourteen or fifteen years old, . . . there was a revival of religion, and the different sects in the portion of the State— . . . He had read the Bible and had found that passage in James which says, “If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not,” and taking this literally, he went humbly before the Lord and inquired of Him, and the Lord answered his prayers, and revealed to Joseph, by the **ministration of angels**, the true condition of the religious world. When the holy angel

appeared, Joseph inquired which of all these denominations was right and which he should join, and was told they were all wrong,— . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, pp. 333-334)

Heber C. Kimball, the First Counselor to Brigham Young, made the following statement: “Do you suppose that God in person called upon Joseph Smith, our Prophet? God called upon him; But **God did not come himself** and call, . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 29). Heber C. Kimball went on to explain that rather than God coming Himself, He sent messengers to Joseph Smith. He went on to state:

Why did he not come along? Because he has **agents** to attend to his business, and he sits upon his throne and is established at headquarters, and tells this man, “Go and do this;” and it is behind the veil just as it is here. You have got to learn that. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 29)

Many other confusing statements about the First Vision were made by Mormon leaders after Joseph Smith’s death (see our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 119-128).

The Mormon writer Richard L. Bushman admits that members of the Mormon Church may not have understood that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith:

Until 1838, in accounts for non-Church members he called the beings in the first vision **personages or angels**, covering the fact that he claimed to see the Father and the Son. Only in the private narrations for his history written in 1831 and 1838 did he frankly say the **Lord** had come to him. As Mr. Walters rightly points out, some Church members in the early years may have been unaware of the actual identity of the heavenly visitors. (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 84)

It is interesting to note that even Joseph Smith’s own brother, William Smith, said that it was an angel that first appeared to him:

In 1822 and 1823, the people in our neighborhood were very much stirred up with regard to religious matters by the preaching of a Mr. Lane, . . . Joseph, then about seventeen years of age, had become seriously inclined, . . .

At length he determined to call upon the Lord . . . He accordingly went out into the woods . . . While engaged in prayer a light appeared in the heavens, and descended until it rested upon the trees where he was. It appeared like fire. But to his great astonishment, did not burn the trees. **An angel** then appeared to him and conversed with him upon many things. He told him that none of the sects were right; . . .

The next day I was at work in the field together with Joseph . . . Joseph looked pale and unwell, . . . and sat down by the fence, when the **angel** again appeared to him, . . . (*William Smith on Mormonism*, Lamoni, Iowa, 1883, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, pp. 414-415)

On June 8, 1884, William Smith again spoke of the personage who appeared in the First Vision as “an angel.” He also said that “Joseph was but about eighteen years old at this time, too young to be a deceiver” (*The Saints’ Herald*, vol. 31, no. 40, p. 643).

Richard L. Anderson, of Brigham Young University, makes this comment concerning William’s statements:

One cannot be certain that Joseph Smith told his vision of 1820 to young William—or that the boy would have been receptive to such a religious experience. . . . In 1823 Joseph stood before the family and probably recounted both experiences on the same occasion. It is likely that the two experiences merged in William’s mind because he first heard them together. William relates all the elements of the visions described separately by his brother and mother, but he telescopes every detail into a single experience. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 399-400)

## An Evolving Story

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe and other Mormon writers taught that from the beginning Joseph Smith openly proclaimed the fact that he had seen the Father and the Son. New evidence, however, has forced Mormon apologists to retreat from this position. They now state that Joseph Smith kept the story a secret most of his life. In some of his later sermons Joseph Smith tried to prove the doctrine of a plurality of Gods, but he did **not** use his own vision to prove the point. James B. Allen made this statement:

Present-day Mormons use it to demonstrate . . . the concept of God and Christ as distinct and separate physical beings. It is clear, of course, that Joseph Smith taught these doctrines, but it is of special interest to note that, as far as any recorded material reveals, he never used the story of his vision specifically to illustrate them.

When did church members begin to make such use of the story? Apparently the early teachers of the Church relied upon scriptural evidence alone to demonstrate the Mormon doctrine of God, and not until well into the Utah period did they begin to use Joseph Smith's story to illustrate it. One of the earliest recorded sermons to make this use of the story was given by George Q. Cannon on October 7, 1883. . . .

Probably there were earlier sermons or writings that used the story of the first vision to demonstrate the Mormon doctrine of God. Evidence indicates, however, that they were **rare** in these early days and that only gradually did this use of the story find place in the traditions of the Church. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, pp. 38-39)

In 1852 Orson Pratt stated that "both the Father and the Son" appeared to Joseph Smith, but Mormon scholars have been unable to locate any sermon by Brigham Young in which he identifies the personages as God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. As we have shown before, in one sermon Brigham Young said that "The Lord did not come . . . But he did send his angel to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith jun., . . ." (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 171). Even Dr. Nibley has to admit that Brigham Young never used the First Vision to prove the doctrine of a plurality of Gods:

A favorite theme of Brigham Young's was the tangible, personal nature of God, which he **never** illustrates by any mention of the first vision. (*Improvement Era*, November 1961, p. 868)

James B. Allen wrote:

It has been demonstrated that an understanding of the story of Joseph Smith's vision dawned only **gradually** upon the membership of the Church during his lifetime, and that new and important uses were made of the story **after** his death. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 45)

Today the First Vision has become of such importance that a person must believe it to be considered a good Mormon. J. Reuben Clark, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this emphatic declaration:

No teacher who does not have a real testimony of the truth of the Gospel as revealed to and believed by the Latter-day Saints, and a testimony of the Sonship and Messiahship of Jesus, and of the divine mission of Joseph Smith—including in all its reality the First Vision—has any place in the Church school system. If there be any such, and I hope and pray there are none, he should at once resign; if the Commissioner knows of any such and he does not resign, the Commissioner should request his resignation. The First Presidency expect this pruning to be made. (*Improvement Era*, Sept. 1938, as quoted in "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," M.A. thesis, by Owen Kendall White, Jr., University of Utah, 1967 p. 162)

Thus we see that to be in good standing a Mormon must believe in Joseph Smith's First Vision. David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church, stated that the First Vision is the very "foundation of this Church" (*Gospel Ideals*, p. 85). In his thesis, page 75, Paul R. Cheesman has stated that the Mormon Church "must stand or fall on the authenticity of the First Vision and the appearance of the Angel Moroni." John A. Widtsoe stated: "The story of the First Vision need only be studied from original sources to assure the seeker not only of its truth, but also of the time of its occurrence" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 26). When we examine the original sources, however, we find that the First Vision story rests on a very sandy foundation.

Dr. Hugh Nibley once criticized anti-Mormon writers for omitting the words "This is my beloved Son" when giving Joseph Smith's story. If Dr. Nibley had read Joseph Smith's first account of the vision, perhaps he would not have been so eager to criticize others, for Joseph Smith not only omitted the "all-important" words, but he also left God the Father completely out of the vision!

The second account by Joseph Smith also did not contain the "all important" words; in fact, it contained words which seem to show that it was **not** the Father and the Son.

An examination of the first published history of the church makes matters even worse, for it does not even mention the First Vision. Moreover, Oliver Cowdery claimed that in 1823 Joseph Smith did not even know "if a Supreme being did exist." Certainly, if Joseph Smith had seen the Father and the Son in 1820, he would know in 1823 that a Supreme being did exist!

Besides all this, falsification has been found in the *History of the Church*. We have found that Joseph Smith told Erastus Holmes about his "**first visitation of angels**," but later Mormon historians have altered this to read: "**my first vision**."

We have also found that Joseph Smith's "brief history" which he related to "Joshua the Jewish minister" (more than 800 words) has been left out of the printed version of the *History of the Church*.

It is very difficult to believe in the authenticity of Joseph Smith's First Vision when there is so much evidence against it.

Those who argue that the "strange" accounts of the First Vision can be harmonized with Joseph Smith's printed account might do well to read a speech given by S. Dilworth Young, of the First Council of the Seventy. This speech was given sometime before the "strange" accounts became known to the public. We quote the following from this speech:

I cannot remember the time when I have not heard the story, . . . concerning the coming of the Father and the Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . .

I am concerned however with one item which has recently been called to my attention on this matter. There appears to be going about our communities some writing to the effect that the Prophet Joseph Smith evolved his doctrine from what might have been a vision, in which he is supposed to have said that he saw **an angel**, instead of the Father and Son. According to this theory, by the time he was inspired to write the occurrence in 1838, he had come to the conclusion that there were two beings.

This rather shocked me. I can see no reason why the Prophet, with his brilliant mind, would have failed to remember in sharp relief every detail of that eventful day. I can remember quite vividly that in 1915 I had a mere dream, and while the dream was prophetic in its nature, it was not startling. It has been long since fulfilled, but I can remember every detail of it as sharply and clearly as though it had happened yesterday. How then could any man conceive that the Prophet, receiving such a vision as he received, would not remember it and would fail to write it clearly, distinctly, and accurately? (*Improvement Era*, June 1957, p. 436)



Now that we have the “strange” accounts we find that the First Vision story did evolve. The story was changed from one personage to two, and Joseph Smith once referred to the vision as a “visitation of Angels.”

### No Revival in 1820

Joseph Smith claimed that just before he received his First Vision there was a great revival in his neighborhood:

Some time in the second year after our removal to Manchester, there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. It commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all sects in that region of country, indeed the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people, . . .

I was at this time in my fifteenth year. My father’s family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith, and four of them joined that church, namely, my mother Lucy, my brothers Hyrum, Samuel, Harrison, and my sister Sophronia.

During this time of great excitement my mind was called up to serious reflection . . . So in accordance with this my determination, to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, pp. 727-28)

In 1967 the Utah Christian Tract Society published Wesley P. Walters’ study, *New Light on Mormon Origins From The Palmyra (N.Y.) Revival*. In the foreword to this work, Mr. Walters states:

Mormons account for the origin of their movement by quoting from a narrative written by their prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. in 1838. In this account he claims that a revival broke out in the Palmyra, New York area in 1820 . . .

Information which we have recently uncovered conclusively proves that the revival did not occur until the fall of 1824 and that no revival occurred between 1819 and 1823 in the Palmyra vicinity.

On pages 5, 8, 11 and 12 of the same pamphlet we find these statements by Wesley Walters:

However, the point at which one might most conclusively test the accuracy of Smith’s story has never been adequately explored. A vision, by its inward, personal nature, does not lend itself to historical investigation. A revival is a different matter, especially one such as Joseph Smith describes, in which “great multitudes” were said to have joined the various churches involved. Such a revival does not pass from the scene without leaving some traces in the records and publications of the period. In this study we wish to show by the contemporary records that the revival, which Smith claimed occurred in 1820, did not occur until the fall of 1824. We also show that in 1820 there was no revival in any of the churches in Palmyra or its vicinity. In short, our investigation shows that the statement of Joseph Smith, Jr. can not be true when he claims that he was stirred up by an 1820 revival to make his inquiry in the grove near his home. . . .

An even more surprising confirmation that this revival occurred in 1824 and not in 1820 has just recently come to light. While searching through some dusty volumes of early Methodist literature at a nearby Methodist college, imagine our surprise and elation when we stumbled upon Rev. George Lane’s own personal account of the Palmyra revival. It was written, not at some years distance from the event as the Mormon accounts all were, but while the revival was still in progress and was printed a few months later. Lane’s account gives us not only the year, 1824, but even the month and date. . . .

By September 1825 the results of the revival for Palmyra had become a matter of record. The Presbyterian church reported 99 admitted on examination and the Baptist had received 94 by baptism, while the Methodist circuit showed an increase of 208. . . .

When we turn to the year 1820, however, the “great multitudes” are conspicuously missing. The Presbyterian Church in Palmyra certainly experienced no awakening that year. Rev. James Hotchkin’s history records revivals for that church as occurring in the years 1817, 1824, 1829, etc., but nothing for the year 1820. The records of Presbytery and Synod give the same picture. . . . Since these reports always rejoice at any sign of a revival in the churches, it is inconceivable that a great awakening had occurred in their Palmyra congregation and gone completely unnoticed.

The Baptist Church records also show clearly that they had no revival in 1820, for the Palmyra congregation gained only 5 by baptism, while the neighboring Baptist churches of Lyons, Canandaigua and Farmington showed net losses of 4, 5 and 9 respectively. . . .

The Methodist figures, though referring to the entire circuit, give the same results, for they show net losses of 23 for 1819, 6 for 1820 and 40 for 1821. This hardly fits Joseph Smith’s description of “great multitudes” being added to the churches of the area. In fact, the Mormon Prophet could hardly have picked a poorer year in which to place his revival, so far as the Methodists were concerned. (*New Light On Mormon Origins*, pp. 5, 8, 11, 12)

Mormon scholars became very concerned when they saw Wesley P. Walters’ study. They were so disturbed, in fact, that a team was sent back east to do research concerning the First Vision and other matters dealing with the history of the Mormon Church in New York.

Richard L. Bushman, who was on the committee headed by Truman G. Madsen, made these interesting statements regarding Walters’ work:

The Reverend Mr. Walters’ article on the first vision raised quite a stir among Mormon scholars when an early version circulated about a year and a half ago. . . . Mr. Walters’ purpose, like that of many of his predecessors, was to discredit Joseph Smith’s account of the first vision and all that depended on it. But the style of his attack was both refreshing and disconcerting. . . . it was free of the obvious rancor characteristic of anti-Mormon writers. . . . They cannot resist twisting the knife. Mr. Walters, by contrast, sticks to his facts. . . .

The article also set us back because Mr. Walters took an entirely new track and followed it with admirable care. . . . he . . . concentrated on a brand-new question: Were there revivals in 1819-20 in the vicinity of Palmyra as Joseph said? Everyone up until now had assumed that of course there were. Walters said no, and the sources of his answer were impressive. They stood apart from the biased materials on which most anti-Mormon work is based. They were contemporaneous with the event, and they were right to the point. Our consternation was a genuine compliment to the quality of Mr. Walters’ work.

While Mr. Walters has put us on the spot for the moment, in the long run Mormon scholarship will benefit from his attack. Not only was there an immediate effort to answer the question of an 1819 revival, but Mormon historians asked themselves how many other questions remain unasked as well as unanswered. Not long after we saw his essay, a committee on “Mormon History in New York” sent a group of scholars east for special research. . . . Without wholly intending it, Mr. Walters may have done as much to advance the cause of Mormon history within the Church as anyone in recent years.

Meanwhile, of course, we have to assess the damage he

has done to Joseph's story of the first vision. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, pp. 82-83)

Although the scholars who went east "scoured libraries, studied newspapers, and sought to find private individuals who might uncover hitherto unknown source materials" (*BYU Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 242), they were unable to find evidence of a revival in Palmyra in 1820. In their article, "Mormon Origins in New York," James B. Allen and Leonard J. Arrington (who later became Church Historian) reported:

What evidence do we have, other than the word of Joseph Smith, that there was "an unusual excitement on the subject of religion" in the vicinity of Palmyra in 1820? Up to this point little such evidence has been uncovered, and Walters challenged the story in the article referred to above. Milton Backman, however, has discovered interesting new material which he presents in his important article on the historical setting of the First Vision. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 272)

Richard L. Anderson, of the Brigham Young University, makes some rather strange statements with regard to Joseph Smith's account of the revival:

If years of religious activity are summarized in the short sentences of abbreviated accounts, did Joseph Smith's 1838 history really intend to portray all revival events as happening just before his vision? In that narrative the Prophet identifies the "unusual excitement" as beginning "in the second year after our removal to Manchester," but the outcome may move considerably beyond this sequence. Beginning in the Smith's area, revival spread through "that region of country," then to the "whole district of country." Even though Joseph alludes to himself as fifteen then, it is possible that "this time of great excitement" may refer to the entire period of revivals in his youth, with special reference to excesses, irrespective of chronology. . . . There is no reason why Joseph Smith might not have viewed the intense 1824-25 Palmyra revivals as part of a period beginning earlier than his vision. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 375-376)

In his article, "Awakenings in the Burned-over District: New Light on the Historical Setting of the First Vision," Milton V. Backman, Jr., seems unable to provide evidence that there was a revival in Palmyra. He indicates, however, that Joseph Smith may have heard or read of revivals in other portions of the state:

Although membership records provide one indication of religious activity in a community, occasionally an unusual religious excitement occurred in a neighborhood without resulting in an immediate increase in church membership. . . . Some "outpourings of the Spirit" have vanished from mankind's memory because a contemporary failed to record the "extension of the power of godliness" or because the primary source was not preserved. . . . A careful reading of the Prophet's account indicates that the great increase in membership occurred in "the whole district of country," meaning possibly western New York or eastern and western New York and not necessarily Palmyra, Farmington, or just the neighborhood where he lives. Joseph undoubtedly learned that many revivals were occurring in New York in 1819 and 1820. . . . In the summer and early fall of 1820, for example, descriptive accounts of awakenings occurring in central and upstate New York were published in the *Palmyra Register*, . . . The June 7, 1820, issue carried a brief report of "Great Revivals in Religion" in the eastern part of the state. This revival was more fully reported on in a later issue. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 315-16)

Dr. Backman cites three issues of the *Palmyra Register*—i.e., June 7, 1820; August 16, 1820; and September 13, 1820. The reader will note that these are the same issues that we cited in our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, page 113:

In briefly looking over the *Palmyra Register* we have found no evidence of a revival in Palmyra in 1820. The issue for June 7, 1820 tells of a revival in the towns of Stillwater, Malta, Ballston, Schenectady, Amsterdam and Galway, but no mention is made of Palmyra or Manchester. The issue for August 16, 1820 tells of a revival in Homer, New York, but again there is no mention of a local revival. The issue of September 13, 1820 also speaks of revivals in cities in New York, but there is no mention of any revivals in Palmyra or Manchester.

We feel that it is very significant that the Mormon research team has been unable to find any reference to a local revival in the *Palmyra Register*. The fact that the *Palmyra Register* devoted space to revivals that occurred in other parts of the state and did not mention any local revival seems to prove that there was no revival in Palmyra in 1820. Richard L. Bushman makes these comments concerning this matter:

Mr. Walters' main argument is that no revival occurred in Palmyra itself. But even that fact cannot be established absolutely. It is a negative claim and depends on negative evidence, which is always tenuous. Mr. Walters relies on the absence of revival reports, but just because someone failed to write a report of an event does not mean it did not occur. . . . lots of things happen that are never recorded. . . . The news included in the Palmyra paper depended on the taste and inclinations of the editor. . . . The point is that although we think a revival should have been recorded, there are many reasons why it could have been missed. We cannot know for sure that an event did not occur unless reliable witnesses on the scene say so, and thus far Mr. Walters has found none such to testify. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, p. 87)

Richard L. Bushman states that "Mr. Walters relies on the absence of reports in newspapers and general histories to reach his conclusion of no revivals" (*Ibid.*, pp. 89-90). Wesley P. Walters, however, shows that the denominational magazines would have mentioned a revival if one had actually occurred:

Another significant lack of information concerning an 1820 revival lies in the area of the religious press. The denominational magazines of that day were full of reports of revivals, some even devoting sections to them. These publications carried more than a dozen glowing reports of the revival that occurred at Palmyra in the winter of 1816-17. Likewise, the 1824-25 revival is covered in a number of reports. These magazines, however, while busily engaged in reporting revivals during the 1819 to 1821 period, contain not a single mention of any revival taking place in the Palmyra area during this time. It is unbelievable that every one of the denominations which Joseph Smith depicts as affected by an 1820 revival could have completely overlooked the event. Even the Palmyra newspaper, while reporting revivals at several places in the state, has no mention whatever of any revival in Palmyra or vicinity either in 1819 or 1820. The only reasonable explanation for this massive silence is that no revival occurred in the Palmyra area in 1820. (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 67)

Richard Bushman claims that Mr. Walters is judging by a wrong standard:

In assessing Mr. Walters' second line of reasoning, the inferior size of the 1819-20 revivals, two considerations must be kept in mind. The first is that the revivals of 1824 were not the standard for people in 1819. In his article, Mr. Walters tells us first of the hundreds converted in the later years and then goes back to 1819 to show how insipid by comparison. . . . Without knowing anything greater, did the excitement of 1819 strike him as unusual? Did the reports of conversions in the surrounding area sound like great multitudes joining the churches? Remember that he was just developing personal religious concerns and, judging by the

1831-32 narrative of the first vision, was sensitive to religious sincerity and hypocrisy. Would reports of awakenings and conversions, however modest by comparison to later revivals, have registered with this sensitized man as unusual and great? (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 99)

In rebuttal Mr. Walters stated:

... he mistakenly suggests that “the revivals of 1824 were not the standard for the people in 1819.” Actually, the Palmyra Presbyterian Church received more converts in their 1817 revival (“126 have been hopefully born again, and 106 added”) than they did in the 1824 revival (99 added). Most of the people who lived through this 1817 revival were still living in 1819 and in 1824, Joseph’s own family to name just one example. (*Ibid*, pp. 95-96)

### Lane and Stockton

According to the first history of the church, published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, in 1834-35, a Methodist minister by the name of Lane participated in the revival in Palmyra:

One **Mr. Lane**, a presiding Elder of the Methodist church, visited Palmyra, and vicinity. . . . There was a great awakening, or excitement raised on the subject of religion, . . . Large additions were made to the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches. (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 42)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed that both Rev. Lane and Rev. Stockton were present at the revival, which he claims occurred in the spring of 1820:

In the spring of 1820 the ministers of the several churches in and about Palmyra decided upon a “union revival,” in order to “convert the unconverted.” The Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists were the sects represented, and the Reverend **Mr. Stockton** of the Presbyterian church was the leading spirit of the movement, and chairman of the meetings. . . . The Reverend Mr. Stockton, however, insisted that the work done was largely Presbyterian work as he had been a dominating influence in the movement, and presided at the meetings. The Reverend **Mr. Lane** of the Methodist church preached a sermon on the subject, “What church shall I join?” He quoted the golden text of James—. . .

The text made a deep impression on the mind of the Prophet. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1930, vol. 1, pp. 51-53)

Wesley P. Walters shows that this could not have occurred in 1820 as B. H. Roberts maintained:

The records, however, of both the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, to which Mr. Stockton and Mr. Lane respectively belonged, make it clear that **neither** of these men were assigned to the Paymyra [sic] area until **1824**. Rev. Benjamin B. Stockton from March 4, 1818 until June 30, 1822 was serving as pastor of the church at Skaneateles, N.Y. While he did visit Palmyra for a speech to the youth missionary society in October 1822, the Palmyra newspaper still describes him as “Rev. Stockton of Skaneateles.” The earliest contemporary reference to his ministering in the Palmyra area is in connection with a wedding November 26, 1823, just a week after Alvin Smith’s death. Following this date there are several references to his performing some service there, but he was not installed as pastor of the Presbyterian Church until February 18, 1824. It is in this latter year, 1824, that Rev. James Hotchkin, in cataloging the revivals that occurred in the churches of Geneva Presbytery, writes under the heading of the Palmyra church, that a “copious shower of grace passed over this region in **1824**, under the labors of **Mr. Stockton**, and a large number were gathered into the church, some of whom are now pillars in Christ’s house.”

In the summer of 1819 Rev. Lane, whom Mormon writers have correctly identified as Rev. George Lane, was assigned to serve the Susquehanna District in central Pennsylvania, over 150 miles from Palmyra. He served this area for 5 years and not until **July of 1824** did he receive an appointment to serve as Presiding Elder of the Ontario District in which Palmyra is located. This post he held only until January of 1825 when ill health in his family forced him to leave the ministry for a while. Any revival, therefore, in which both Lane and Stockton shared, as the accounts of Oliver Cowdery and William Smith both indicate, has to fall in the latter half of the year 1824, and not in the year 1820. (*New Light on Mormon Origins From the Palmyra (N.Y.) Revival*, by Wesley P. Walters, 1967, pp. 7-8)

The Mormon writer Larry C. Porter has made a study concerning Rev. George Lane. His research tends to confirm Wesley Walters’ study:

For eight days, July 1, 1819 to July 8, 1819, George Lane was in attendance at the annual Genesee Conference at Vienna, New York (now Phelps), some fifteen miles southeast of the Smith farm at Manchester. . . .

From July 1819 to July 1823, Lane served as supervising elder of the Susquehanna District. During the interval from July 1823 to July 1824, his appointment was the Wyoming circuit. In July 1824 he was once more assigned as a presiding elder, this time, however, to the Ontario District. . . . For an entire year, then, July 1824 to July 1825, Lane presided over the district within the confines of which the Smith family resided (Manchester was probably on the Ontario circuit). (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 335-336)

James Allen and Leonard Arrington frankly admit that the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts was in error about Lane serving in Palmyra in 1820 but feel there is a “possibility” he passed through the vicinity:

Are we Mormons willing to admit that some of our writers have made mistakes in trying to reconcile conflicting accounts of Joseph Smith’s early experience? A case in point is B. H. Roberts’ description of the setting for Joseph Smith’s First Vision. Roberts based his conclusion upon an attempted correlation of the accounts of Joseph Smith, William Smith, and Oliver Cowdery. He said that it was in 1820 that a certain Reverend Lane so affected Joseph Smith by his preaching that he was induced to utter the prayer which resulted in that First Vision. . . . It is probable that Roberts came to his conclusion because the revival described by Cowdery seemed similar to the 1820 religious excitement later described by Joseph Smith. Clearing up the confusion of dates does not seem as important here as a frank recognition that there is such confusion. The inconsistencies in early sources do not affect the credibility of Joseph Smith, but our failure to discuss them perpetuates the myth that Mormon writers are not willing “to face the facts.” . . . Larry Porter, in his fine essay in this issue, effectively challenges some of Walters’ inferences by showing the possibility that Lane may have passed through the Palmyra vicinity in 1820. But more research is needed before a final conclusion can be reached. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1969, pp. 271-272)

Wesley P. Walters makes this statement concerning this matter:

Except for Elder Lane’s brief presence at the 1819 meeting that appointed him to serve in Pennsylvania, there seems to be no evidence whatever that he even came near the Palmyra area during the 1819-20 period. Since the assigned fields of labor, for both Lane and Stockton, were so far from Palmyra, any revival in which both of these men shared must fall in the latter half of the year **1824**, and not in the year 1820. (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, pp. 63-64)



The Mormon writer Richard L. Anderson seems to be willing to concede that Lane did not minister in Palmyra in 1820: “As shown by Larry Porter’s accompanying article, this Methodist leader had no Palmyra ministry until several years after 1819-20” (*BYU Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 398). Mormon writers now find themselves in an embarrassing position regarding Reverend Lane. Before Walters’ work appeared they had tried to show that Lane was involved in the revival. Hyrum Andrus, for instance, made this statement:

It was during this contest that a Methodist minister, **Reverend Lane**, preached a sermon on “What church shall I join?” He admonished the people to ask God, using the text, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . .” (*Joseph Smith, the Man and the Seer*; Salt Lake City, 1965, p. 65)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed that “Reverend Mr. Lane” was “at least the most active minister of the Methodist persuasion in the revival” and that it was “he who had preached the sermon on ‘What church shall I join;’ and had used James 1:5 as his text” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 56, n. 10). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe emphatically maintained that George Lane was ministering in Palmyra when Joseph Smith had his First Vision:

The preacher to whom he told his story was **Reverend George Lane**, who was the leader of the Palmyra revival and who had quoted the saying from James, which had so deeply affected the lad.

It is only reasonable to suppose that Reverend Lane told others of Joseph’s story. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, pp. 16-17)

On page 22 of the same book, the Apostle Widtsoe claimed that Oliver Cowdery confirmed the date of Rev. Lane’s work in Palmyra: “Oliver Cowdery in his letters confirms the story of Reverend Lane and the date of his work in Palmyra.”

Actually, Oliver Cowdery did **not** confirm the date as 1820. Instead, he insisted that the correct date should be 1823:

You will recollect that I mentioned the time of a religious excitement, in Palmyra and vicinity to have been in the 15th year of our brother J. Smith Jr’s. age—that was an error in the type—it should have been in the 17th. —You will please remember this correction, as it will be necessary for the full understanding of what will follow in time. This would bring the date down to the year 1823. (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 78)

In footnote 10 on page 22 of his book, *Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, the Apostle Widtsoe stated: “Reverend Lane himself confirms the dates of the revival. It was 1820, not 1823.”

Notice that John A. Widtsoe gives no source for this statement. Now that Mormon writers are beginning to admit that Lane “had no Palmyra ministry until several years after 1819-20” (*BYU Studies*, Spring 1969, page 398), they are casting a shadow of doubt upon the honesty of the Apostle Widtsoe. When Wesley P. Walters wrote the LDS Church Historian’s Office asking for documentation for Apostle Widtsoe’s statement, he received a letter from Lauritz G. Petersen, Assistant Librarian. In this letter Petersen stated:

The letter that you sent to Mr. Earl Olson was handed to me to answer. I checked all the footnotes or found the footnot[es] for Mr. Widtsoe’s book on Joseph Smith.

The reference made by Mr. Widtsoe on page 22 n. 10 could **not** be verified. I asked Mr. Widtsoe not to insert it in the book, but he did anyway. (Letter by Lauritz G. Petersen, December 7, 1966)

## Moving the Revival

Before Mr. Walters’ study appeared Mormon writers taught that the revival occurred right in Palmyra, but since the Mormon research team has been unable to find evidence of a revival

in Palmyra, Mormon apologists are now beginning to forsake Palmyra and search elsewhere for a revival. Lauritz G. Petersen, Research Supervisor at the Church Historian’s Office, made these statements in a letter dated November 1, 1968:

Now let me ask you a question. Where was the revival? In Palmyra? He doesn’t mention a revival at all. He mentions an unusual excitement [sic] in the “Whole district of country.” Could an excitement [sic] be caused by a revival somewhere near the area? He doesn’t mention being to a revival. If there was a revival somewhere outside of Palmyra and the news of it had already excited the village, would or could it be possible that the Smith family have travelled there to sell root beer and cakes? (Letter from Lauritz G. Petersen, November 1, 1968)

Although it is true that Joseph Smith does not use the word “Palmyra,” his description makes it very clear that he was referring to this area. He states that there “was in the place **where we lived** an unusual excitement on the subject of religion” (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 2). In 1843 Joseph Smith told a reporter that the revival occurred right in his “neighborhood”: “There was a reformation among the different religious denominations in the neighborhood where I lived, and I became serious, and was desirous to know what church to join” (*New York Spectator*, September 23, 1843, as quoted in *Joseph Smith the Prophet*, by Preston Nibley, pp. 30-31).

Since Joseph Smith said that the revival occurred in “the neighborhood where I lived,” we feel that he must have been referring to Palmyra. Furthermore, the first printed “history of the rise of the church” published in the *Messenger and Advocate*—the official church organ—in 1834-35 plainly stated that the revival was in “Palmyra, and vicinity” (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 42). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts definitely stated that the revival was in “Palmyra” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 35). On page 51 of the same volume, Mr. Roberts claimed that the “churches in and about Palmyra decided upon a ‘union revival,’ in order to ‘convert the unconverted.’”

Since Mormon apologists have been unable to prove that the revival took place in Palmyra, they have tried to find reasons why Joseph Smith would have been in another city. Some Mormon writers have suggested that Joseph Smith might have been present at Conference meetings held in Vienna (now known as Phelps). Wesley P. Walters, however, has answered this argument in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, p. 69.

Mormon writers are not only trying to move the location of the revival from Palmyra to Vienna, but they are also trying to change the date of the revival. In the past it was taught that the revival occurred in 1820. Joseph Smith stated that he was in his “fifteenth year” at the time of the excitement (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 3). Also, that he had had his first vision “early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty.” The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts dated the revival in the “spring of 1820” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 51). The Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: “Palmyra, a village in western New York State, near his home, was swept in the winter and spring of 1820 by a religious revival” (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 1). Many other references could be cited, but these are enough to illustrate that the Mormon leaders have always taught that the revival occurred in 1820. That they are trying to revise this date is obvious from Richard Bushman’s answer to Mr. Walters, for he speaks of the “question of an 1819 revival” (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 83). In his book, *Joseph Smith—the Man and the Seer*, Hyrum L. Andrus claimed that the revival occurred in “the spring of 1820” (page 63). In his latest book, however, Andrus speaks of the revival as “the revival of 1819-1820” (*God, Man and the Universe*, 1968, p. 42), and on page 41 of the same book we find

this statement: “Joseph Smith evidently attended the Methodist revival meetings in the woods near Vienna, in the summer of 1819.”

Although Dr. Andrus still maintains that the revival came to Palmyra, it is plain to see that he is trying to explain away the fact that the churches in Palmyra did not increase in membership as they would have if a revival had actually occurred:

There were some features about the revival of 1819-1820 which caused it to end on a negative note, particularly in the area of Manchester and Palmyra. . . . Joseph Smith wrote that “great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people.” This does not necessarily mean that they became members of the existing churches. . . . The revival of 1819-1820 was an abortive affair that failed to produce many positive results for the existing churches. It was an emotional upsurge that ended on a negative note. (*God, Man, and the Universe*, pp. 42-43)

Wesley P. Walters makes this interesting observation in regard to this argument:

A second approach maintains that the revival was at some distance from the area where the Smiths lived, that it caused considerable stir in their immediate neighborhood, but ended “on a negative note.” It consequently left no visible traces either in the local or denominational papers of 1820 or in terms of substantial membership gains for the churches of the Palmyra and Manchester area. . . . The point of the Prophet’s story is not that there were revivals occurring throughout the state that year—for this was true every year. His point was that “an unusual excitement” was going on right there “in the place where we lived.” Multitudes of his neighbors became “converts” and “united” with the various churches of his community, and it was this situation that led him to ask “which I should join.”...

It is further suggested by those who approach the problem by this method that when Joseph spoke of great multitudes “uniting with the different religious parties,” he did not necessarily mean that they joined the various churches, but rather that they split up into little cliques which merely took sides in a general controversy. To put such a construction on the word “parties” is to fail to notice that the Prophet uses this very term to refer to the various denominations. In the “war of words” among Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, Joseph speaks of the denominations as “endeavoring to establish their own tenets and disprove all others” and this leads him to ask, “Who of all the parties are right?” Even members of his own family had been “proselyted” to the Presbyterian faith, while “converts” flied off to the different parties. That these converts actually joined the churches of Palmyra and vicinity is made clear when the Cowdery-Smith account states that “large additions were made to the Methodists, Presbyterian and Baptist churches.” To suggest that these multitudes merely aligned themselves with various feuding groups and that consequently the revival was “abortive” and ended “on a negative note” is to completely miss one of the main points of Joseph’s narrative. The entire thrust of his story is that right there where he lived multitudes were joining the various churches, but with so much conflict in their tenets he was at a loss which one to join himself. The year 1820, however, was not the period when any great multitudes were joining the churches of Palmyra and vicinity. It is not until the revival of 1824-25 that we find a situation that matches the conditions described in this official first vision story. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, pp. 68-70)

In trying to explain the lack of evidence for a revival in Palmyra, Richard L. Bushman states:

The second consideration is that admissions to membership do

not necessarily measure the intensity of a revival. . . . There might be an unusual excitement about a religion and only a few people actually qualify for admission. High admissions are a good sign of a revival; absence of admissions does not necessarily mean no religious excitement. . . . The “great multitudes” joining churches occurred in “the whole district of country.” The excitement may have been an awakening or a prospect of a revival, not a shower of grace itself with the resulting increase in memberships and reports in the national religious press. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, p. 88)

## A Changing Story

Before Wesley P. Walters’ work appeared, Mormon writers claimed to have a great deal of evidence to prove that the revival occurred in Palmyra in 1820. Preston Nibley, who later became Assistant Church Historian, claimed there were “several accounts of the religious revival which took place at Palmyra in the spring of 1820” (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1944, p. 21).

Preston Nibley offers three accounts to prove that there was a revival “in Palmyra in the Spring of 1820.” One of the accounts is the one published by Joseph Smith in the *Times and Seasons*. Another is a statement by Joseph Smith’s brother, William Smith. Preston Nibley quotes from an interview which a “Brother Briggs” had with William Smith:

“What caused Joseph to ask for guidance as to what church he ought to join?” asked Bro. Briggs. William answered as follows:

Why there was a joint revival in the neighborhood between the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians and they had succeeded in stirring up quite a feeling, and after the meeting the question arose which church should have the converts. Rev. Stockton was the president of the meeting and suggested that it was their meeting and under their care and they ought to join the Presbyterians, but as father did not like Rev. Stockton very well, our folks hesitated . . . (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, pp. 23-24)

If Preston Nibley had quoted the paragraph just before it would have overthrown his argument that the revival occurred in the spring of 1820. This paragraph, which was published in the *Deseret News*, January 20, 1894, read as follows:

“Hyrum, Samuel, Katharine and mother were members of the Presbyterian church. My father would not join. He did not like it because a **Rev. Stockton** had preached my brother’s funeral sermon and intimated very strongly that he had gone to hell, for Alvin was not a church member, but he was a good boy and my father did not like it.”

Notice that William Smith tells that his father would not join the Presbyterian church because Reverend Stockton had intimated that Alvin “had gone to hell.” Now, since Alvin did not die until 1823, this would mean that the revival could not have started before 1823. Thus we see that when the statement is taken in context it proves that the revival did not occur in the spring of 1820.

President Nibley’s only other evidence for a revival in 1820 is taken from a book written by Willard Bean, a Mormon writer. Mr. Nibley states:

I shall reproduce first the account as related in “The Beginning of Mormonism.”

In the year 1819 a sort of religious awakening started in Massachusetts, gradually moving down the eastern seaboard, gathering momentum as it spread, . . . After reaching New York it spread to the rural districts upstate, reaching Palmyra and



vicinity in the Spring of 1820. It appears that Rev. Jesse Townsend, a young Yale graduate, but recently set apart for the ministry and assigned to the pastorate of the new Presbyterian Church of Palmyra, was the first in these parts to catch the religious fervor, and accordingly started a revival. He was soon joined by the Presbyterian minister of East Palmyra, closely followed by the Baptist minister and two Methodist ministers of Palmyra.

The revival started the latter part of April, before the rural people could get onto their land to begin spring plowing, which gave the farmers a chance to attend the meetings. Even business and professional men neglected their work and all but shut up shop. By the first of May, the revival was well under way with scores of people confessing religion, and each new convert becoming a self-appointed missionary to solicit friend and neighbor. The prevailing question among people of the neighborhood was, "What shall I do to be saved?"

. . . The revival had been even more successful than the ministers had anticipated. I quote from the "Religious Advocate" of Rochester: "More than 200 souls have become hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra, Macedon, Manchester, Lyons and Ontario since the late revival commenced. This is a powerful work. It is among young as well as old people. Many are ready to exclaim— 'What hath God wrought?' " It is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. The cry is yet from many, 'Come over and help us. . . . Such intelligence must be pleasing to every child of God who rightly estimates the value of immortal souls, and wishes well to the cause of Zion.' "

A week later (from the same publication) . . . "It may be added that in Palmyra and Macedon, including Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, more than 400 have already confessed that the Lord is good. The work is still progressing. In neighboring towns, the number is great and still increasing. Glory be to God on high; and on earth peace and good will to all men."

During the second week in May the revival began to show signs of breaking up, and the many converts were solicited by the different preachers to join their respective churches. (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, pp. 21-22)

Upon first examination it would appear that this is definite proof that there was a revival in Palmyra and Manchester in 1820. A more careful examination, however, reveals that these references from the *Religious Advocate* do not refer to a revival in 1820, but rather to the one in 1825!

Wesley P. Walters shows that the quotation from the *Religious Advocate* of Rochester could not have appeared in that publication in 1820 because "the *Religious Advocate* did not begin publication at Rochester until about 1825, . . ." (*Dialogue*, Spring 1969, p. 67). In footnote 51 in the same article Mr. Walters states: "The *Religious Advocate* began publication in 1822 at Saratoga Springs, N.Y., moving to Rochester about October 1824."

This, of course, means that the quotations from the *Religious Advocate* of Rochester could **not** have appeared before the 1824-25 Palmyra revival. That they did not appear until 1825 is verified by the fact that both references were printed in the *Wayne Sentinel* under the date of March 2, 1825. In other words, these references have been used to support the date of 1820 for a revival, when in reality they have to do with a revival that took place in 1825. Below is a comparison which proves that the references are the same ones which appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* in 1825.

Purported 1820 References	Wayne Sentinel - 1825
I quote from the <i>Religious Advocate</i> of Rochester: " <b>More than 200 souls</b> have become hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra, Macedon, <b>Manchester, Lyons and Ontario</b> since the late revival commenced. This is a powerful work. It is among young as well as old people. Many are ready to exclaim— 'What had	The Revival.—The <i>Religious Advocate</i> published at Rochester, contains the following account as just received from Ontario: " <b>More than two hundred souls</b> have become the hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra, Macedon, <b>Manchester, Phelps, Lyons, and Ontario</b> , since the late revival commenced.— This is a powerful work; it is among old

God wrought?" It is the **Lord's doing** and it is marvelous in our eyes. **The cry is yet** from many 'Come over and help us. . . . Such intelligence must be pleasing to every child of God who rightly estimates the value of immortal souls, and wishes well to the cause of Zion.'" (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, pp.21-22)

and young, but mostly among young people. Many are ready to exclaim, 'what hath God wrought!' It is the **Lord's doing** and it is marvelous in our eyes. **The cry is yet** from various parts, 'come over and help us.' There are large and attentive congregations in every part, who hear as for their lives. Such intelligence must be pleasing to every child of God, who rightly estimate the value of immortal souls, wishes well to the cause of Zion!" (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 2, 1825)

A week later (from the same publication) . . . "**It may be added that in Palmyra, and Macedon, including Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, more than 400** have already confessed that the **Lord is good**. The work is still progressing. In neighboring towns, the number is great and still increasing. Glory be to God on high; and on earth peace and good will to all men!" (*Joseph Smith the Prophet*, p. 22)

Religious.—An article in the *Religious Advocate* gives the pleasing fact that a **revival** of religion had taken place in the towns of Palmyra, Macedon, Manchester, Phelps, Lyons and Ontario, and that more 200 souls had become hopeful subjects of Divine Grace &c. **It may be added that in Palmyra and Macedon, including Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, more than 400** have already testified that the **Lord is good**. The work is still progressing. In the neighboring towns, the number is great and fast increasing. Glory be to God on high; and on earth, peace and good will to all men! (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 2, 1825)

Mormon writers were apparently so hard pressed to prove there was a revival in Palmyra in 1820 that they used material concerning the 1825 revival to try to prove there was a revival in 1820. In the quotation Preston Nibley takes from Willard Bean's book, it talks of "Jessee Townsend, a young Yale graduate," starting the revival. Wesley P. Walters makes these comments concerning Bean's account:

Bean, a Mormon . . . has put together an account that Mormon writers are still appealing to. According to Mr. Bean, a revival did break out in "the spring of 1820," sparked under the ministry of Reverend Jesse Townsend, whom he describes as "a young Yale graduate, but recently set apart for the ministry." "The revival started the latter part of April" and by the first of May was well under way. Bean adds an account from "the Religious Advocate of Rochester" to show how extensive the awakening was. All this sounds very authentic until one begins to examine the story more closely. Jesse Townsend was not a "young Yale graduate" in 1820, since he was fifty-four years old and thirty years had expired since his graduation from Yale. He was not "recently set apart for the ministry" for he had been ordained in 1792. Instead of sparking a revival in Palmyra in "the spring of 1820," he was in reality on his way west, arriving near Hillsboro, Illinois, May 25, 1820. Furthermore, the *Religious Advocate* did not begin publication at Rochester until about 1825, and the account which Mr. Bean quotes from that journal is the same one which appeared in the Palmyra newspaper in March of 1825 in reference to the 1824-25 revival. We do not believe that this avenue of approach will yield any fruitful results. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, pp. 67-68)

The Mormon Apostle Gordon B. Hinckley, who recently became a member of the First Presidency, wrote a book entitled *Truth Restored*. This book, which was reprinted by the church in 1969, has a beautiful representation of Joseph Smith's First Vision on the cover. Unfortunately, however, the references which were written concerning the 1824-25 revival were still used as though they applied to a revival in 1820:

In 1820 it reached western New York. The ministers of the various denominations united in their efforts, and many conversions were made among the scattered settlers. One week a Rochester paper noted: "More than two hundred souls have become hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra,



Macedon, Manchester, Lyons, and Ontario since the later revival commenced.” The week following it was able to report “that in Palmyra and Macedon . . . more than four hundred souls have already confessed that the Lord is good.” (*Truth Restored*, Salt Lake City, 1969, p. 2)

In the 1972 edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* we commented: “It will be interesting to see whether the Mormon leaders will continue to use these references now that it is obvious that their own research team has been unable to verify them.” An examination of the most recent printing of *Truth Restored* shows that the Mormon leader Gordon B. Hinckley has stubbornly refused to face the facts. In 1979 the church issued a revised edition of his book which still contains these discredited references about the First Vision. If the references Hinckley uses had really been written concerning a revival in 1820 they would have furnished the strongest type of evidence possible. They would, in fact, have proved that a revival occurred in Palmyra in 1820. As it is, however, we can show that they appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on March 2, 1825, and had absolutely nothing to do with a revival in 1820.

It would appear, then, that all evidence for a revival in Palmyra and vicinity has fallen, and that Wesley P. Walters’ work has been vindicated. All that the Mormon research team have been able to do is to confirm his original findings. Mr. Walters makes this interesting observation:

Joseph made his great mistake when he tried to alter the course of history by moving a whole revival back some 4 years. This defect places his entire movement upon a crumbling foundation. For our part we agree that “life is too short to follow something false, when we can follow what is true” (Richard Evans). We urge all to find in Christ alone “the way, the truth and the life.” (*The Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, pp. 114-115)

In our pamphlet, *The First Vision Examined*, we presented additional information showing that the Mormon research team failed in their effort to establish a revival in Palmyra in 1820. The reader should also see the articles on the First Vision by Wesley P. Walters and Richard L. Bushman which were published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, pp. 59-100)

### Joseph a Methodist?

Wesley P. Walters has not only shown that there was no revival in 1820, but he has produced evidence to show that neither Joseph nor his family took the message of the First Vision seriously. The reader will remember that in the vision Joseph Smith was told to join none of the churches:

I was answered that I must **join none of them**, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; . . .

He again forbade me to join with any of them; . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, verses 19-20)

Now, if Joseph Smith had really received such a message, we would expect to find that he had nothing to do with other churches after his First Vision. Furthermore, if his family believed his story we would expect to find that they did not support other churches after 1820.

Joseph Smith claims that just before he had his First Vision, his “father’s family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith, and four of them joined that church, namely, my mother, Lucy; my brothers Hyrum and Samuel Harrison; and my sister Sophronia” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, verse 7).

Joseph Smith would have us believe that this happened in 1820, but since the revival did not occur until 1824-25 we must assume that they joined the church at that time. Stanley B. Kimball states that the volume of Presbyterian records which “would probably give the exact date the Smiths joined, has been missing since at least 1932” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1970, p. 121).

Nevertheless, vol. 2 of the “Session Records” for the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra has been located, and this volume shows that the Smiths were still involved with the Presbyterian Church in 1828. Fawn M. Brodie made this interesting observation in the Supplement to the new edition of her book:

Of greater significance is the Reverend Mr. Walters’s recent discovery, in the records of the Palmyra Presbyterian Church for 1830, that Joseph Smith’s mother, and his brothers Hyrum and Samuel, were active members of this church for at least eight years after 1820, the official date of the first vision. The Palmyra records point out that these three members of the Smith family began to neglect “public worship and the sacrament of the Lord’s supper” about **September 1828**. The 1830 proceedings of this church for March 3, 10, and 29 make it clear that they were accused of this neglect and abandonment “for the last eighteen months,” and that finally, at the end of March 1830, they were suspended as members of the Presbyterian Church.

This raises a question that has never been seriously studied: whether or not Joseph Smith’s own family took his religious mission seriously before his alleged discovery or unearthing of the golden plates. (*No Man Knows My History*, 1971, pp. 410-411)

The Mormon writer Stanley B. Kimball seems willing to admit that the Smiths were involved with the Presbyterians many years after the First Vision:

. . . Lucy, Hiram, and Samuel Harrison were indeed members of the Palmyra congregation, that sometime during the translation of the Book of Mormon they had become inactive and that by early March of 1830 they were being charged with “Neglect of public worship and the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1970, p. 122)

Milton V. Backman, Jr. and James B. Allen state that the Smith family “had not actively involved themselves in the affairs of the Presbyterian church since September, 1828, which was just a year after Joseph had received the plates . . .” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1970, p. 483).

While it is true that the Smiths became inactive in the Presbyterian Church in 1828, we wonder why they would have remained in it so long after Joseph Smith was supposed to have received his First Vision.

As if this is not bad enough, Wesley P. Walters presents evidence that in 1828 Joseph Smith himself took steps towards becoming a member of the Methodist Church. The Utah Christian Tract Society has prepared an article from material furnished by Wesley P. Walters (see the newsletter for July-August, 1971). In this article we find the following:

Joseph Smith’s 1838 account which is recorded in the pamphlet of “his own story” claims that in 1820 he had seen “two glorious personages” identified as the Father and the Son, and that he was informed that all the creeds of all the “sects,” or various denominations, “were an abomination” and he was twice forbidden to join any of them. . . .

Perhaps the death of his first-born son on June 15, 1828 induced him to seek membership in the Methodist Church to which his wife belonged since she was seven years old. The “prophet” Joseph’s role as a Methodist member did not last very long, however, only three days—according to statements made by his wife’s cousins, Joseph and Hiel Lewis. In their local newspaper at Amboy, Illinois, they told of their earlier years with Joseph Smith in Pennsylvania and of his uniting with the Methodist class:

He presented himself in a very serious and humble manner, and the minister, not suspecting evil, put his name on the class book, in the absence of some of the official members. (*The Amboy Journal*, April 30, 1879, p. 1).

When Joseph Lewis, who was 21 at the time (about a year and a half younger than Smith), learned of this act, he felt that Joseph's manner of life rendered him unfit to be a member and told him either to "publicly ask to have his name stricken from the class book, or stand a disciplinary investigation." Mr. Lewis gave further details about the incident a month after the first article appeared in the Amboy paper, and he wrote:

I, with Joshua McKune, a local preacher at the time, I think in June, 1828, heard on Saturday, that Joe Smith had joined the church on Wednesday afternoon, (as it was customary in those days to have circuit preaching at my father's house on week-day). We thought it was a disgrace to the church to have a practicing necromancer, a dealer in enchantments and bleeding ghosts, in it. So on Sunday we went to father's, the place of meeting that day, and got there in season to see Smith and talked to him some time in father's shop before the meeting. Told him that his occupation, habits, and moral character were at variance with the discipline, that his name would be a disgrace to the church, that there should have been recantation, confession and at least promised reformation—That he could that day publicly ask that his name be stricken from the class book, or stand investigation. He chose the former, and did that very day make request that his name be taken off the class book. (*The Amboy Journal*, June 11, 1879, pg. 1).

Mr. Lewis' more detailed statement was called forth because the original statement he and his brother had made had been challenged by a local Mormon elder from the Reorganized Church. This elder, Mr. Edwin Cadwell, was a neighbor of Mr. Michael Morse, the brother-in-law of Joseph Smith. Mr. Cadwell stated that Mr. Morse told him that "Smith's name remained on the class book . . . for about six months, when it was simply 'dropped' as Smith did not seek to become a full member." (*The Amboy Journal*, May 21, 1879, pg. 1).

Mr. Morse had been the "class leader" at that time and had been the one who had taken Smith's name for recording in the class book. (*The Amboy Journal*, July 2, 1879, pg. 1). To the statement of Mr. Morse, Joseph Lewis replied that, "If said Morse was a leader at that time, and Smith's name remained on the class book six months, the class leader carelessly or wickedly neglected his duty." (*The Amboy Journal*, June 11, 1879, pg. 1).

Like so many of the early Methodist records, the early class books of Harmony (now Lanesboro) Church are lost, so we will never know for certain whether Joseph Smith remained a member for only three days or for six months. However, there was never any dispute that he had become a member, and by this one act he completely undercut the story he later put forth claiming that God in a special vision had instructed him not to join any of the existing churches, . . .

From the evidence presented it would appear that Joseph Smith did not complete all the steps to become "a full member" of the Methodist Church, but he had certainly started the process when he joined the Methodist class in Pennsylvania. Milton V. Backman, Jr., gives some information on Methodist classes in his book *Joseph Smith's First Vision*, p. 70: "At the time of the First Vision these classes, which usually consisted of less than thirty members, met in homes, barns, schools, and groves."

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith stated that before his First Vision his "mind became somewhat partial to the Methodist sect, and I felt some desire to be united with them; . . ." (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 3). There is some evidence that Joseph Smith joined a Methodist class sometime before he moved to Pennsylvania. Pomeroy Tucker stated:

At one time he joined the probationary class of the Methodist Church in Palmyra, and made some active demonstrations of engagedness, though his assumed convictions were insufficiently grounded or abiding to carry him along to the saving point of conversion, and he soon withdrew from the class. (*Origin of Mormonism*, pp. 17-18, as quoted in *BYU Studies*, Spring 1969, p. 384)

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus is willing to admit that

It is possible that Joseph Smith was affiliated with this organization for a time and served on the local level in the area of Palmyra and Manchester. Turner's statement that Joseph Smith became a "passable exhorter" for Methodism points to this possibility. The *History of Wayne County* also states: "Revivals occurred, and Smith joined a class of probationers in the Methodist church of Palmyra, but soon withdrew." (*God, Man, and the Universe*, pp. 41-42)

Although no dates are given as to when Joseph Smith joined the Methodist class in Palmyra, Andrus maintains that Joseph Smith's "affiliation with the Methodist cause occurred shortly before the First Vision" (*Ibid.*, p. 41).

However this may be, Joseph Smith's affiliation with the Methodists in Pennsylvania occurred eight years after he was supposed to have received his First Vision and at the very time he was translating the Book of Mormon! We must agree that "by this one act he completely undercut the story he later put forth claiming that God in a special vision had instructed him not to join any of the existing churches, . . ."

The newsletter published by the Utah Christian Tract Society, July-August, 1971, also points out that in "retelling" the story of the First Vision "to Alexander Neibaur on May 24, 1844, Joseph specifically singled out the Methodist Church as being unworthy of his membership." Neibaur's journal reads: ". . . Mr. Smith then asked must I join the Methodist Church—No—they are not my People, They have gone astray . . ." (*Improvement Era*, April 1970, p. 12, n. 12).

It is interesting to note that although Joseph Smith took steps towards becoming a Methodist in 1828, by 1835 he was condemning a member of the church who "confessed that he had been in temptation, and fallen into error, so much as to join the Methodists; . . ." Joseph Smith made this comment concerning this matter:

I spoke of the impropriety of turning away from the truth, and going after a people so destitute of the spirit of righteousness as the Methodists. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 319)

For more information against the authenticity of the First Vision see our *Case*, vol. 1, pp. 88-130.

## Joseph Changed His Mind

Earlier in this chapter we wrote:

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith did not believe that God the Father had a body at the time he wrote his first account of the vision in the "wilderness." Towards the end of his life, however, Joseph Smith changed his mind and decided that God was just an exalted man. . . . Since Joseph Smith had changed his mind concerning the Godhead, he evidently decided to change his story concerning the First Vision.

Just after we published the 1972 edition of this book, Marvin S. Hill, of the Department of History at Brigham Young University, wrote an article in which he admitted that Joseph Smith may have changed his mind about the Godhead. Hill, however, was still unwilling to concede that this shows fraud on Joseph Smith's part:

Brodie's assumption of a deceitful prophet was supported by her discovery that early Mormons did not relate the first vision story consistently, and, as she maintained in 1945, the earliest version by the prophet was not written until 1838. She has had to revise the argument somewhat since it is now known that the earliest account extant was written in 1832. But there are, undeniably, differences in the several accounts, not all of them minor from the standpoint of Mormon theology. . . . To focus upon



the discrepancies touching the personages of the Godhead in the first vision story, whether one or two personages, is to concentrate on a theological question and to miss its historical significance. . . . Brodie and others have been preoccupied with the first vision's theological implications which were the product of Joseph Smith's and the Mormon people's **later thinkings**. This has caused them to miss the important implications as to the social and religious origins of Mormonism which may be the essential point. If over the years Joseph's conception of the Godhead **changed**, this is not evidence of fraud any more than the adaptation of other aspects of his theology in later years proves to be. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1972, pp. 78-79)

While we feel that Marvin Hill has still not faced the real implications of this matter, it is refreshing to see a noted Mormon writer admit that "Joseph's conception of the Godhead" might have changed.

### Clandestine's Errors

The anonymous Mormon historian whom we refer to as "Dr. Clandestine" has made a pathetic attempt to save Joseph Smith's credibility with regard to the First Vision. Clandestine apparently realizes the serious nature of the discrepancies in Joseph Smith's accounts of the First Vision. Unlike Mormon apologists Dr. Hugh Nibley and Apostle John A. Widtsoe, Dr. Clandestine seems willing to concede that there are "varying accounts by Joseph Smith of that experience," and instead of giving any convincing defense for the claim that Joseph Smith saw both God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ in 1820, he tries to minimize the importance of the vision:

A crucial question that is the starting point for interpreting the First Vision is: What significance did this experience (as related in any and all descriptions of it by Joseph Smith) have for Mormonism as a movement and the claim of the LDS Church to be a prophet-led restoration of the ancient Church of Christ? . . . The First Vision experience of Joseph Smith, Jr. had no significance for his later claims about the Book of Mormon, his prophetic calling, or the concept of a divinely restored priesthood and church. . . . it is a personal experience to be connected with Mormonism only because it had occurred to the translator of the Book of Mormon . . .

The accounts of the First Vision consistently describe an experience that was intensely personal for Joseph Smith, rather than a revelation of significance for his followers. . . . Mormon historians have made the whole issue vulnerable to attack by putting too much emphasis on the spring of 1820 as the date of the First Vision. The obvious uncertainty of the adult Joseph Smith's memory and the ambiguity of his descriptions of age provide a possible time-frame for the First Vision that extends from the spring of 1818 prior to his fourteenth birthday ("I was about 14 years old") to the spring of 1822 ("In the 16th year of my age"). . . .

I acknowledge freely the sketchy character of Joseph Smith's accounts of his early religious experiences and that some Mormon writers have been wrong or inadequate in their use of the sources of history. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, pp. 29-31, 34, 39)

Dr. Clandestine's whole treatment of the First Vision appears to be a desperate attempt to salvage at least something out of a mass of contradictory material. His attempt to play down the importance of the vision will probably not set well with orthodox Mormons. While a recent convert may fall for Dr. Clandestine's reasoning, those who have been in the church for any length of time know that the First Vision has been proclaimed as the very foundation of the church. Apostle Widtsoe said that "The First Vision of 1820

is of first importance in the history of Joseph Smith. Upon its reality rest the truth and value of his subsequent work" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 19). President David O. McKay plainly stated: "The appearing of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith is the foundation of this church" (*Gospel Ideals*, p. 85). That Dr. Clandestine would attempt to minimize the importance of the First Vision is almost beyond belief. We feel that this amounts to a vindication of our work on this vision. In a letter dated February 26, 1980, G. Homer Durham, Managing Director of the Church Historical Department, had to admit that Dr. Clandestine had gone too far in his concessions on the First Vision:

The appellation adopted by the anonymous author to whom you refer was self-adopted and carries no authority except the opinion of an anonymous writer. Many style themselves as "Mormon historians" but they all speak on their own responsibility. The most responsible historians of the LDS faith known to me have views contrary to the anonymous statement that Mormon historians "have put too much emphasis on the spring of 1820 as the date of the First Vision." Rather, they support the statement of the Prophet noted above, as do I.

On pages 30-32 of his rebuttal, Dr. Clandestine goes so far as to try to separate the First Vision from Joseph Smith's divine calling. In the face of all the evidence to the contrary, Dr. Clandestine says that

the distinction between private experience and divine calling explains the contrasting publicity given to the Angel Moroni story and the story of the First Vision. . . . the private experience of the First Vision that had nothing to do with the rise of Mormonism, except that it (like the bone surgery incident Joseph Smith included in one of the manuscript histories of his early life) was one of a mass of autobiographical details that would be of interest to persons trying to understand the life of the man who brought forth the Book of Mormon and Mormonism itself. When Joseph Smith finally published an account of the First Vision, he appropriately titled it (in significant contrast to Cowdery's 1834 narrative): "History of Joseph Smith." (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, pp. 31-32)

Dr. Clandestine would apparently have us believe that since Joseph Smith titled his account "History of Joseph Smith," instead of "History of the Church" in the *Times and Seasons*, we do not have to believe that it had anything to do with the rise of Mormonism. If he had read the paragraph which appears just above the title, Dr. Clandestine could have never made such a grave error:

In the last number I gave a brief history of the rise and progress of the Church. I now enter more particularly into that history, and extract from my journal. JOSEPH SMITH. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 726)

If Dr. Clandestine had turned to the April 15, 1842, issue of the *Times and Seasons*, page 753, he would have discovered the same title ("History of Joseph Smith"), yet he would have found the account of the Angel Nephi—later changed to Moroni—telling Joseph Smith about the "gold plates" from which he translated the Book of Mormon. The logical extension of Clandestine's reasoning would be that the story of the Book of Mormon has nothing to do with the Mormon Church.

Earlier in this chapter we presented information showing that Wesley P. Walters demonstrated that "in 1820 there was no revival in any of the churches in Palmyra or its vicinity." Dr. Clandestine seems to realize that it would be difficult to maintain there was a revival in 1820 in light of Walters' research. Therefore, he tries to fit Joseph Smith's story into



the framework of a revival which occurred in 1817:

The combined data from the 1838 and the 1832 accounts therefore establish the possibility that the religious revivals that impressed Joseph Smith had occurred as early as 1817-1818. Despite their insistence on the year 1820, the Tanners themselves present information that supports the above possibility: On page 65 they quote the 1887 book of M. T. Lamb that the revival occurred “sixty or seventy years ago” (1817 to 1827), and on page 156 they quote Reverend Walters’ verification that a revival did occur in Palmyra in 1817. . . . the ambiguity of Joseph Smith’s own dating does not allow the year 1820 to be seized upon as the only date for the revival, the vision, or both. . . . Many Mormon writers until recent years interpreted Joseph Smith’s 1838 reference to the location of the religious excitement (“ . . . in the place where we lived . . . in that region of country, indeed the whole district of Country seemed affected by it . . .”) as meaning that there was a religious revival in Palmyra in 1820. Reverend Walters has demonstrated that there was no revival in Palmyra in 1820, and therefore he and the Tanners claim that they have refuted the historicity of the First Vision, when all they have done is show that Mormon writers have misinterpreted the sketchy descriptions of the First Vision. (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism*, pp. 35-36)

Since Joseph Smith would have only been 11 years old at the time of the 1817 revival, we doubt that many people will take Dr. Clandestine’s reconstruction seriously. Joseph Smith’s 1838 account says that he was in his “fifteenth year” at the time of the “great excitement” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, verses 7-8). It is interesting to note that Clandestine admits that Joseph Smith’s earliest account of the First Vision “does not mention revivals or religious excitement beyond his own, . . .” (p. 35).

Mormon writers have always depended on the book by Joseph Smith’s mother to prove that the First Vision actually occurred. Dr. Clandestine says that “when Lucy Mack Smith came to the early visions of her son Joseph Smith, she (or her ghost writers, Howard and Marthy Coray) simply quoted from the published version in the *Times and Seasons*” (*Jerald and Sandra Tanner’s Distorted View of Mormonism*, p. 20). The fact that Mrs. Smith’s book used Joseph Smith’s official account of the First Vision has convinced many Mormons that she knew no other story. Wesley P. Walters, however, has recently examined a “preliminary draft” of Lucy Smith’s manuscript in the Church Historical Department. Instead of a vision of the Father and Son in the woods, Joseph Smith’s mother reports that it was an angel who appeared to Joseph Smith in his bedroom and told him all churches were wrong. We feel that this manuscript destroys the value of Lucy Smith’s book as evidence for the First Vision.

Wesley P. Walters has written an excellent response to Dr. Clandestine’s work on the First Vision (see *Answering Dr. Clandestine: A Response to the Anonymous LDS Historian*, pp. 53-55).

### Professor Hill’s Speech

At the 1981 Sunstone Theological Symposium, Marvin S. Hill, Professor of History at Brigham Young University, gave an extremely interesting speech concerning the First Vision. In this speech Professor Hill, who is one of the top Mormon scholars, tried to deal with some of the objections to the First Vision which appear in this book. While Hill feels that we are biased in our presentation, he concedes some major points—i.e., that the revival did not occur in 1820 and that Joseph Smith probably changed his view of the Godhead between 1832 and 1838:

After weighing the arguments in this long and sustained controversy, where does one come down with respect to the Walters, Tanner, Bachman, Crawley debate? . . . It is my belief that both sides have overlooked some important points and that a plausible argument can be made for the basic church chronology despite some contradictions in some sources, provided that concessions be made with respect to some inaccuracies in the 1838 account. It seems to me that everybody has approached the issue from the wrong end, by taking as the point of departure the 1838 official version when the account that they should be looking at is that of 1832. Merely on the face of it, the 1832 version stands a better chance to be accurate and unembellished than the 1838 account which was intended as a public statement streamlined for publication. When Joseph dictated his 1838 version, if he did dictate it, he was aware of what had been previously published by Oliver Cowdery and aware of his stature as a prophet of a new and important religious movement. It would be natural for him to smooth out the story to make it more logical and compelling than perhaps it seemed in 1820. But let me react first to the Walters - Bachman war of words. It seems to me that Walters has scored some important points, although not nearly as many as he professes. I am inclined to agree with him that the turmoil that Joseph describes that led to some family members joining the Presbyterians and that led to much sectarian bitterness, does not fit well into the 1820 context detailed by Bachman. For one thing, it does not seem likely that there would have been so much sectarian strife in 1820 and then have a joint revival where all was harmony in 1824. In addition, as Walters notes, Lucy Mack Smith says the revival where she became interested in a particular sect, came after Alvin’s death, thus almost certainly in 1824. . . . She would not be likely to make up such a personal reaction of her own or the family’s, nor mistake the time when it happened. I am persuaded that it was 1824 when Lucy joined the Presbyterians, and that, of course, is a critical point for dating the revival. . . . Larry Porter’s argument that Lane passed through in July 1820 and that everything occurred at that time, does not fit what Joseph said, for he indicated that . . . he did attend the revival meetings as often as occasion would permit. The revival Joseph is describing was a protracted one, covering several days. It would take some time to generate the kind of excitement that Joseph recalled; a one night stand won’t do. Walters maintains that an 1824 revival destroys the credibility of Joseph Smith’s whole story, since the revival occurred after Moroni’s visit. Here Walters appears more the anti-Mormon missionary than the objective scholar. An 1824 revival creates problems for the 1838 account, but not that of 1832. Walters overlooks the fact that Joseph said nothing in his 1832 account about a revival prompting his prayer. . . . Not only does this account ignore the revival, so, too, does the 1835 account . . . Neither does Lucy Mack Smith mention a revival when she describes Joseph’s first vision, where an angel told him that the churches are man-made and also told him about the plates. She indicates that this vision occurred during the third year after their move to Manchester, which would make it 1820, . . . The Walters/Tanner argument that Lucy’s joining the Presbyterians, and Joseph’s the Methodists, destroys Joseph’s credibility, fails to consider that unlike 1838, the 1832 version says nothing about Joseph’s being forbidden to join a church. . . . there is no great inconsistency as Walters and Tanners assume, when Lucy Mack Smith joins the Presbyterians or Joseph tried to become a Methodist in 1828. Joseph was fairly convinced that all were wrong, but perhaps responded to the urgings of his wife, Emma, who had very close ties with the Methodists in Harmony, Pennsylvania. . . . At any rate, if Joseph Smith in 1838 read back into 1820 some of the details about a revival that actually occurred in 1824, there is no reason to conclude that he invented his religious experiences. . . . Giving priority to the 1832 account also makes it more understandable why Oliver Cowdery got his story tangled. . . . Another point deserves

comment here: If initially Joseph said one personage came to him in 1820, it thus became easier for Oliver Cowdery to confuse this visit with the coming of Moroni than it would have been a few years later when Joseph taught emphatically that there were three separate personages in the Godhead. The Tanners make much of the argument that Joseph Smith changed his view of the Godhead. There is a good deal of evidence that his understanding grew on many points of theology; his view of man and his potential; his view of salvation, of what it consists and how it is obtained. If, as the Tanners argue, Joseph grew in his understanding in the nature of the Godhood, this does not provide evidence of his disingenuousness. I do not agree with the Tanners that the 1835 narrative is no evidence that Joseph believed in two separate personages by that time. It is true, as the Tanners note, that the two personages are not specifically named, and it seems unlikely that Joseph would have distinguished between the two personages and the many angels he said he saw, unless he thought that the two personages were something different. The 1835 version with its two personages, stands at odds with the statement in Lectures on Faith that God is a spirit. This is a conflict that nobody has really reconciled or explained. It seems to me that if the Latter-day Saints can accept the idea that Joseph gained his full understanding of the nature of God only after a period of time, not immediately in 1820, then most of the difficulties with chronology can be resolved.

The reader will notice that in this speech Marvin Hill wants the church to accept Joseph Smith's 1832 version of the First Vision as more accurate than the 1838 version. In a response to Professor Hill's paper, James B. Allen commented:

... in asking Mormons to accept the primacy of the 1832 account over the official version written in 1838 he may be unrealistic with respect to how far the church can go.

Since the 1838 version became scripture when it was canonized in the *Pearl of Great Price*, the Mormon leaders would find it very difficult to say that the account mentioning only one personage is more accurate. Apostle Boyd K. Packer made this very clear when he denounced the liberal Mormon historians:

There are qualifications to teach or to write the history of this church. If one is lacking in any one of these qualifications, he cannot properly teach the history of the Church. . . .

I will state these qualifications in the form of questions so that you can assess your own qualifications.

Do you believe that God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ personally appeared to the boy prophet, Joseph Smith, Jr., in the year 1820?

Do you have personal witness that the Father and the Son appeared in all their glory and stood above that young man and instructed him according to the testimony that he gave to the world in his published history? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1981, pp. 272-273)

Although it is very unlikely that the church leaders will accept Professor Hill's ideas, his speech is certainly a step in right direction. We have been informed that it will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*.



## 9. The Godhead

In the book of Isaiah 44:8 we read: “. . . Is there a God besides me? yea, **there is no God; I know not any.**” Joseph Smith’s first published work, the Book of Mormon, seems to be in harmony with the teachings of the Bible, for it states that there is only one God. In Alma 11:26-31 we read as follows:

Now Zeezrom said unto him: Thou sayest there is a true and living God? And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now, Zeezrom said: **Is there more than one God? And he answered, No.** Now Zeezrom said unto him again: How knowest thou these things? And he said: An angel hath made them known unto me.

The Bible teaches that God is a Spirit. In John 4:24, Jesus himself said: “**God is a spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.” In Jeremiah 23:24 we read: “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.” The Book of Mormon also teaches that God is a Spirit. In Alma 18:26-28, we read as follows: “And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a **Great Spirit?** And he said, Yea, And Ammon said: **This is God.**”

The Book of Mormon also teaches that Christ was God himself manifest in the flesh. In Mosiah 15:1, 2 and 5 we read the following:

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,** . . .

This is also in harmony with the Bible, for in 2 Corinthians 5:19 we read as follows: “To wit, that **God was in Christ,** reconciling the world unto himself, . . .”

It is interesting to note that the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon finished their testimony with the following statement: “And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which **is one God.** Amen” (Book of Mormon, Preface).

### From One to Many

By the year 1844 Joseph Smith had completely disregarded the teachings of the Book of Mormon, for he declared that God was just an exalted man and that men could become **Gods.** He stated as follows:

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, . . . You have got to **learn how to be Gods yourselves;** . . . No man can learn you more than what I have told you. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, pp. 613-614)

The best way to illustrate Joseph Smith’s change of mind concerning the Godhead is to compare the Book of Moses with

the Book of Abraham. Both of these books are printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church. The Book of Abraham was supposed to have been given some years after the Book of Moses. Both books are supposed to contain a direct revelation concerning the creation of the world. While the Book of Moses states that “I, God” created the heavens and the earth, the Book of Abraham states that “they (the Gods)” created them.

#### Book of Moses

. . . the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. . . .

And **I, God,** said: Let there be light; and there was light. . . .

And **I, God,** called the dry land Earth; . . .

And **I, God,** made the beasts of the earth after their kind, . . .

And I, **the Lord God,** planted a garden eastward in Eden, . . . (Moses 2:1, 3, 10, 25; 3:8)

#### Book of Abraham

And the Lord said unto me: Abraham, I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words . . .

And they (**the Gods**) said: Let there be light; and there was light. . . .

And **the Gods** pronounced the dry land, earth; . . .

And **the Gods** organized the earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind, . . .

And **the Gods** planted a garden in Eden, . . . (Abraham 3:15; 4:3, 10, 25; 5:8)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this statement concerning the Mormon doctrine of a plurality of Gods: “If we should take a million of worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that there are **more Gods** than there are particles of matter in those worlds” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 345).

The Mormon Church teaches that God the Father had a Father, and that God’s Father also had a Father, and so on. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

He [God] 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.

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

It appears ridiculous to the world, under their darkened and erroneous traditions, that God has once been a **finite being;** . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 333)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, made these observations:

. . . then we shall go back to our Father and God, who is connected with one who is still farther back; and this Father is connected with one still further back, **and so on;** . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 19)

. . . for our **God is a natural man,** . . . the first of all mechanics. Where did he get his knowledge from? **From his Father,** just as we get knowledge from our earthly parents. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 211)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these statements:



The **Gods** who dwell in the Heaven . . . have been **redeemed** from the grave in a world which existed before the foundations of this earth were laid. They and the Heavenly body which they now inhabit were once in a **fallen state**. . . they were exalted also, from **fallen men** to Celestial **Gods** to inhabit their Heaven forever and ever. (*The Seer*, p. 23)

We were begotten by our Father in Heaven; the person of our Father in Heaven was begotten on a previous heavenly world by **his Father**; and again, He was begotten by a still more **ancient Father**; and so on, from generation to generation, from one heavenly world to another still more ancient, until our minds are wearied and lost in the multiplicity of generations and successive worlds, and as a last resort, we wonder in our minds, how far back the genealogy extends, and how the first world was formed, and the **first Father** was begotten. (*The Seer*, p. 132)

The Mormon Church also teaches that men can become Gods. Brigham Young made these statements:

The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming **Gods like Himself**; . . . We are created, . . . to become **Gods** like unto our Father in heaven. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 93)

. . . **man is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in embryo.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 223)

In his book, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, Milton R. Hunter (of the First Council of the Seventy) makes the following statements concerning the plurality of Gods:

Mormon prophets have continuously taught the sublime truth that God the Eternal Father was once a **mortal man** who passed through a school of earth life similar to that through which we are now passing. He **became** God—an exalted being—through obedience to the same eternal Gospel truths that we are given opportunity today to obey. (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, Salt Lake City, 1958, p. 104)

The Mystery Religions, pagan rivals of Christianity, taught emphatically the doctrine that “men may become Gods.” . . . Hermes declared: “We must not shrink from saying that a man on earth is a mortal god, and that God in heaven is an immortal man.” This thought very closely resembles the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith and of President Lorenzo Snow. (*Ibid.*, p. 110)

. . . 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 Godhead? In the first place, aeons ago God undoubtedly took advantage of every opportunity to learn the laws of truth . . . From day to day He exerted His will vigorously, . . . 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 . . .

No prophet of record gave more complete and forceful explanations of the doctrine that men may become Gods than did the American Prophet, . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 114-115)

Bruce R. McConkie, who is also a member of the First Council of Seventy, makes these statements:

. . . God . . . is a personal Being, a holy and exalted **Man**, a glorified, **resurrected** Personage having a tangible body of flesh and bones, an anthropomorphic Entity, . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 250)

. . . as the Prophet also taught, there is “a God **above** the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 322)

Those who “are raised to become gods” (*Teachings*, p. 312) will progress . . . until they are “glorified in truth” and know “all things.” . . . God himself, the Father of us all, is a glorified, exalted, immortal, **resurrected Man!** (*Ibid.*, pp. 642-643)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, made these statements:

**God is an exalted Man.** Some people are troubled over the

statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith . . . The matter that seems such a mystery is the statement that our Father in heaven at one time passed through a **life and death** and is an **exalted Man**. This is one of the mysteries, . . . The Prophet taught that **our Father had a Father** and so on. Is not this a reasonable thought, especially when we remember that the promises are made to us that we may become like him? (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 10, 12)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made this statement in a letter written in 1966:

There is a statement often repeated in the Church, and while it is not in one of the Standard Church Works, it is **accepted as church doctrine**, and this is:

**As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.** (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, July 14, 1966)

As we showed on page 26, one of Joseph Smith’s revelations, *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 121, has had some serious changes made in it concerning the Godhead. If Joseph Smith falsified the revelation before it was published, as Garland E. Tickemyer suggests, then he was secretly teaching the doctrine of a plurality of Gods before he moved to Illinois. But however this may be, we know that he was teaching this doctrine while he was at Nauvoo, Illinois. We can establish this from both Mormon and anti-Mormon writings. For instance, the *Nauvoo Expositor* for June 7, 1844, contained this information:

Resolved 2nd, Inasmuch as . . . Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and many other official characters . . . have introduced false and damnable doctrines into the Church, such as a **plurality of Gods** above the God of this universe, and his liability to **fall with all his creations**; . . . we therefore are constrained to denounce them as apostates from the pure and holy doctrines of Jesus Christ.

In a letter written from the “Vicinity of Nauvoo,” June 16, 1844, Sarah Scott stated:

Joseph says there are **Gods** above the God of this universe as far as he is above us, and if He should transgress the laws given to Him by those above Him, He would be hurled from **His Throne to Hell**, as was Lucifer and all his creations with him. (*Among the Mormons*, by Mulder and Mortensen, 1958, p. 44)

## The Heavenly Mother

Because of their belief that God is just an exalted man, Mormon leaders teach that He had a mother as well as a wife. Brigham Young stated:

Brother Kimball quoted a saying of Joseph the Prophet, that he would not worship a God who had not **a father**; and I do not know that he would if he had not **a mother**; the one would be as absurd as the other. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 286)

Although the Mormon leaders do not worship God’s wife, they teach that she is our “Eternal Mother.” Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

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

This doctrine that there is a **Mother in heaven** was affirmed in plainness by the First Presidency . . . they said that “man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, . . .” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 516)

Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy, made these statements:

The stupendous truth of the existence of a **Heavenly**

**Mother**, as well as a Heavenly Father, became established facts in Mormon theology. (*The Gospel Through The Ages*, 1958, p. 98)

The Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

... Pres. Petersen told of an incident which he often heard Zebedee Coltrin relate. One day the Prophet Joseph asked him and Sidney Rigdon to accompany him into the woods to pray. When they had reached a secluded spot Joseph laid down on his back and stretched out his arms. He told the brethren to lie one on each arm, and then shut their eyes. After they had prayed he told them to open their eyes. They did so and saw a brilliant light surrounding a pedestal which seemed to rest on the earth. They closed their eyes and again prayed. They then saw on opening them, the Father seated upon a throne; they prayed again and on looking saw the **Mother** also; after praying and looking the fourth time they saw the Savior added to the group. He had auburn brown, rather long, wavy hair and appeared quite young. ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," August 25, 1890)

Although we cannot take this purported vision very seriously, it is interesting because it illustrates how far the Mormon leaders would go to establish an unscriptural doctrine. At any rate, President Joseph Fielding Smith still maintains that there is an **Eternal Mother**:

The fact that there is no reference to a **Mother** in heaven either in the Bible, Book of Mormon or Doctrine and Covenants, is not sufficient proof that no such thing as a **Mother** did exist there. . . . does not common sense tell us that we must have had a **Mother** there also? (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 3, p. 142)

### Serious Changes

As we pointed out in chapter 5, the Mormons claim that a voice from heaven told the witnesses to the Book of Mormon that the translation was "correct." In spite of this Joseph Smith tried to change the Book of Mormon to support his concept of a plurality of Gods. Four important changes were made in the second edition of the Book of Mormon concerning the Godhead. One of the most significant changes was made in 1 Nephi 13:40. In the 1830 edition it was stated that the very purpose of the Nephite records was to make known that Christ is the Eternal Father:

... These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Eternal Father and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto Him, or they cannot be saved; (Book of Mormon, 1830 Edition, p. 32, lines 5-12)

In the current Utah Edition, 1 Nephi 13:40, three words have been interpolated:

... These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is **the Son of** the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.

Another important change was made in 1 Nephi 11:18; this is page 25 of the 1830 edition. In the first edition it read: "... Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother **of God**, after the manner of the flesh." In modern editions it has been changed to read: "... Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother **of the Son of God**, after the manner of the flesh." Notice that the words "**the Son of**" have been inserted in the middle of the sentence. Verse 21 of the same chapter originally read: "And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even **the Eternal Father!**" It was changed to read: "And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even **the Son of the Eternal Father!**" Verse 32 of the same chapter, which is on page 26 of the original edition, was also changed. In the 1830 edition it read: "... the Everlasting

unto me, Knowest thou the condescension of God? And I said unto him, I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things. And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin which thou seest, is the mother of God, after the manner of the flesh.

And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the spirit; and after that she had been carried away in the spirit for the space of a time, the angel spake unto me, saying, look! And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms. And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw? And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things. And he spake unto me, saying, Yea, and the most joyous to the soul. And after that he had said these words, he said unto me, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Son of God going forth among the children of men; and I saw many fall down at his feet and worship him.

And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I also beheld that the tree of life was a representation of the love of God. And the angel said unto me again, Look and behold the condescension of God! And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of which my father had spoken; and I also beheld the prophet, which should prepare the way before him. And the Lamb of God went forth, and was baptized of him; and after that he was baptized, I beheld the Heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down out of Heaven and abode upon him in the form of a dove. And I beheld that he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory; and the multitudes were gathered together to hear him; and I beheld that they cast him out from among them. And I also beheld twelve others following him.

And it came to pass that they were carried away in the spirit, from before my face, that I saw them not. And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the children of men; and they did minister unto them. And he spake unto me again, saying, look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among

A photograph of page 25 of the original 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. At the two places where the arrows point the words "the Son of" have been added in later editions.

God, was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record." It was changed to read: "... **the Son of** the everlasting God was judged of the world: and I saw and bear record."

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, claims that the words "the son of" were in the original handwritten manuscript, and that they were accidentally omitted when the first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed:

Mr. Budvarson may be forgiven for some errors, but on pages 14 to 17 of his brochure he makes mistakes that few scholars would forgive him for. He exhibits photo reproductions of pages 25 and 32 of the First Edition of the Book of Mormon, underlining "doctrinal statements concerning God" which he contends were changed in later editions of the Nephite record. Now we grant that the three statements he underlines were changed in later editions, but let us examine the statements and see what possible significance he is entitled to attach to them. . . . Why were these changes made in the text? . . . the early leaders of the Church . . . knew that **typographical errors** had crept into the 1830 edition in the course of printing. So they attempted to correct those errors by comparing the original manuscripts with the 1830 text. The changes they made in the statements underlined by you on pages 14 and 15 of your brochure are simple corrections of errors in the First Edition. They are corrections (including grammar) such as might be made in the second edition of any book. That the italicized words above were, . . . accidental omissions in the First Edition is also proved by the fact that the manuscript of the Book of Mormon written by Oliver Cowdery and now in the possession of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints at Independence, Missouri, **contains the added words.** (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 197-198)

This statement by Dr. Sperry is very misleading for



evidence shows that the Book of Mormon manuscript (which the Reorganized LDS Church has in its possession) has been tampered with. Those who have examined this manuscript (or photographs of it) in the RLDS Church Library, claim that the words “the son of” have been added into the original manuscript in two places. These interpolations are written above the line and were obviously not in the manuscript at the time the Book of Mormon was first published. If they had been there the printer would have included them in the First Edition.

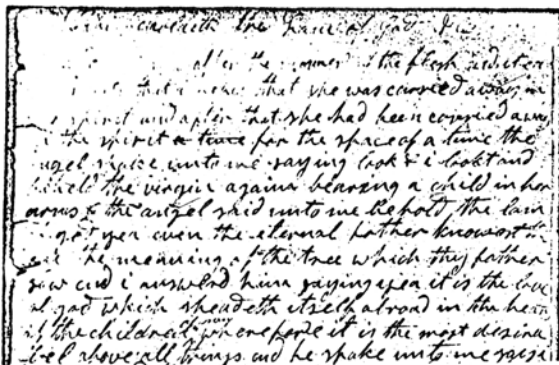
It is interesting to note that interpolations were only made in two places in the manuscript, whereas the words “the Son of” were added into the printed text of the Book of Mormon in four different places. The fact that the interpolations do not appear in these two places certainly seems to give the whole thing away.

Richard P. Howard, RLDS Church Historian, has recently made these revealing statements about this matter:

While it appears likely that the major emphases in the 1830-1837 emendation on the E MS [the manuscript owned by the RLDS Church] were grammatical and stylistic, it can also be demonstrated that theological considerations were operative. For example, note the following two places in 1 Nephi which reflect Joseph Smith’s clarification in 1837 of his post-1830 understanding of the Godhead, at least insofar as God and Christ were thought to be involved at those points . . .

It should be noted that the preceding two revisions of the 1830 text were written into the manuscript for the 1837 printer, as evidenced in column 3. However, two very similar changes involving the identical interpolation were included in the 1837 edition but **not recorded in the manuscript.** (*Restoration Scriptures*, pp. 47-48)

It is very interesting to note that Dr. Sperry says nothing of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon which his own church has in its possession. Before the Book of Mormon was ever published another handwritten copy was made in case the first one was stolen. The RLDS Church has one manuscript and the Utah Mormon Church has a small portion of the other. This portion which the Utah Mormon Church has includes three of the four places we are discussing. Photographs reveal that the words “the Son of” do **not** appear in any of these places. Below is an actual photograph of the handwritten manuscript of the Book of Mormon which is in the LDS Church Historian’s Library. The arrow points to the line which is printed in 1 Nephi 11:21. Notice that the manuscript reads: “. . . even the eternal father.” This is in harmony with the 1830 Edition of the Book of Mormon, and proves that the reading found in current editions (“. . . even **the Son of** the Eternal Father!”) has been falsified.



Thus we see that the claim that the printer accidentally omitted these words in the first edition cannot be supported by the evidence furnished from the manuscripts.

## Removing the Lectures

In 1835 the “Lectures on Faith,” which were originally delivered before a class of the Elders, in Kirtland, Ohio, were printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In these lectures it was

definitely stated that God the Father was a personage of **spirit**. In the fifth lecture we find this statement about the Godhead:

. . . the **Father being a personage of spirit**, glory, and power, possessing all perfection and fullness, the Son, . . . a personage of tabernacle, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, p. 53)

The “Lectures on Faith” not only taught that God the Father is a **spirit**, but also that God is omnipresent—i.e., present everywhere at the same time. In the second lecture the following statement is made: “2. We here observe that God is the only supreme governor and independent being in whom all fullness and perfection dwells; who is omnipotent, **omnipresent**, and omniscient; without beginning of days or end of life; . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, p. 12)

On page 26 of the 1835 Edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* the following is stated: “. . . he is omnipotent, **omnipresent**, and omniscient; without beginning of days . . .”

President Joseph Fielding Smith admits that Joseph Smith helped prepare these lectures:

Now the Prophet did know something about these Lectures on Faith, because he helped to prepare them, and he helped also to revise these lectures before they were published, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 195)

These “Lectures on Faith” were printed in all of the early editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, but they have been **removed** from recent editions. John William Fitzgerald, in his thesis “A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants,” states as follows:

The reasons for the omission of these Lectures from *The Doctrine And Covenants* beginning with the 1921 edition and from all subsequent editions as given to the writer by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith were as follows:

- They were not received as revelations by the Prophet Joseph Smith.
- They are instructions relative to the general subject of faith. They are explanations of this principle but not doctrine.
- They are not complete as to their teachings regarding the Godhead. More complete instructions on this point of doctrine are given in section 130 of the 1876 and all subsequent editions of *The Doctrine And Covenants*.
- It was thought by Elder James E. Talmage, chairman, and other members of the committee who were responsible for their omission that to avoid confusion and contention on this vital point of belief, it would be better not to have them bound in the same volume as the commandments or revelations which make up *The Doctrine And Covenants*. (“A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants”, M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, p. 344)

The reasons Joseph Fielding Smith gave John William Fitzgerald as to why the “Lectures on Faith” were removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants* are very interesting. Reason (a), that they “were not received as revelations” could hardly be considered a reason at all. If every section that is not a revelation was removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants*, it would be a much shorter book. There are at least nine, if not more, sections in the *Doctrine and Covenants* that are not revelations; they are sections 102, 113, 121, 123, 128, 131, 134 and 135.

Reason (b), that they were “not doctrine” does not agree with the statement on page 256 of the 1835 Edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. This statement reads as follows: “. . . that the lectures were judiciously arranged and compiled, and **were profitable for doctrine**; . . .”

Joseph Smith himself signed a statement which was printed in the Preface to the 1835 Edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In this statement we read:

The first part of the book will be found to contain a series of Lectures as delivered before a Theological class in this place, and in consequence of their embracing the important **doctrine of salvation**, we have arranged them into the following work.

Reason (c), “that they are not complete as to their



teachings regarding the Godhead” is getting much closer to the truth than the first two reasons. A more correct way of wording this, however, might be, “they contradict what is now taught concerning the Godhead in the Mormon Church.”

Actually, these lectures were considered complete with regard to their teachings concerning the Godhead at the time they were given. On page 58 of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* the following question and answer appear:

Q. Does the foregoing account of the Godhead lay a sure foundation for the exercise of faith in him unto life and salvation?

A. **It does.**

Now that the Mormon Church teaches a plurality of Gods and that men become Gods, these lectures are considered “not complete” as to their teachings on the Godhead. Actually, they contradict what is presently taught by the church leaders with regard to this subject.

Reason (d), that to avoid “confusion and contention on this vital point of belief, it would be better not to have them bound in the same volume,” is probably the true reason they were left out. Certainly it would cause confusion and contention in the Mormon Church if one of the elders started to teach that God is a personage of **spirit** and is everywhere present at the same time, as the Lectures on Faith taught.

To avoid “confusion and contention” the Mormon leaders slyly removed the Lectures on Faith from the *Doctrine and Covenants*, even though Joseph Smith had thought them important enough to be included. John William Fitzgerald states as follows on page 345 of his 1940 BYU thesis, “A Study of the Doctrine & Covenants”:

The “Lectures on Faith” were voted on unanimously by the conference assembled August 17, 1835 to be included in the forthcoming book of doctrine and covenants. The writer could find no documentary evidence that they were voted on by a general conference of the Church to be omitted in the 1921 and all subsequent editions of *The Doctrine [and] Covenants*.

### “Inspired” Correction

In our book, *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, we deal extensively with Joseph Smith’s “Inspired Version of the Bible.” In this chapter we will consider a few changes he made concerning the Godhead. Since the Inspired Revision of the Bible is a product of Joseph Smith’s earlier thinking, it does not contain the idea that there are many Gods or the doctrine that men can become Gods.

Joseph Smith made a very interesting change in Luke 10:22 (verse 23 of the Inspired Revision); in the King James Version it reads: “. . . no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.” Joseph Smith changed this to read as follows: “. . . no man knoweth that **the Son is the Father, and the Father is the Son**, but him to whom the Son will reveal it.”

As Joseph Smith began to develop the idea of a plurality of Gods, he also began to ignore the changes he had made in his “Inspired Version.” Revelation 1:6 was one of the verses Joseph Smith changed in the Inspired Version of the Bible. In the King James Version it read: “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; . . .”

With an improper understanding of the language used in the scriptures, it would be possible to read this verse with the understanding that God himself had a Father. This is because of the fact that the word “and” is used between the words “God” and “his Father.” In the Inspired Version of the Bible, Joseph Smith left out the word “and” so that this verse could not be used to support the idea of a plurality of Gods. He worded it as follows: “. . . and hath made us kings and priests unto God, his Father.”

In 1844, after Joseph Smith had developed the idea of a plurality of Gods, he decided that the rendition given in the King James Version of the Bible was correct; thus repudiating his own “inspired” rendition of this verse. In a sermon delivered June 16, 1844, and recorded in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 473, we read as follows:

President Joseph Smith read the 3rd chapter of Revelation, and took for his text 1st chapter, 6th verse—“And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Now, after quoting this text from the King James Version, Joseph Smith remarked that the translation of it was correct: “It is **altogether correct** in the translation” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 473). Thus he completely ignored his own “inspired” rendition of this verse, and went on to preach a sermon on the plurality of Gods, using this as a text. On page 474 of the same volume, Joseph Smith stated:

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose.

Our text says “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.”

If Abraham reasoned thus—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**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 474-476)

Because of the fact that the Reorganized LDS Church gained possession of the original manuscripts of the “Inspired Revision” and did not print them until after Joseph Smith’s death, it has been suggested that they “altered the text of Revelation 1:6” because they did not believe in the plurality of Gods. Recently, however, the RLDS Church has released a photograph of the original manuscript which clearly shows that Joseph Smith did remove the word “and” from the text. They have allowed the Utah Mormon Church to reproduce this photograph in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1971, page 265. Below is a copy of the important portion of this photograph.

*the first begotten of the dead, & the prince of the living, the one who made him who loved us, be glory, who washed us from our sins in his own blood, & hath made us kings & priests unto God, his Father, to him be glory & dominion, for ever & ever*

The Utah Mormon scholar Robert J. Matthews has written an excellent article concerning the Inspired Version in which he concedes that the RLDS Church did **not** alter Revelation 1:6. He states:

An important doctrinal concept is involved in this passage. Perhaps no verse in the printed editions of the Inspired Version of the Bible has been so critically examined and has been so much the subject of discussion as Revelation 1:6. . . . On June 16, 1844, the Prophet Joseph is reported to have said in a public discourse that the King James Version of Revelation 1:6 is “altogether correct in the translation.”

Because the printed Inspired Version as published by the RLDS differs in the text of Revelation 1:6 from what the Prophet said was the correct translation, the RLDS have been accused of deliberately altering the text. . . . Since the original manuscripts have not been available for examination, the conclusion has persisted through the years since the first publication of the Inspired Version in 1867. However, at our most recent request, Richard P. Howard, RLDS Church Historian, graciously supplied a photocopy of the manuscript page in question. . . . Critical examination of the original manuscript does **not** give any evidence that it has been altered. The writing is relatively small and the letters are close together and neatly written and any alteration would be immediately obvious. It is this writer’s conclusion that the original manuscript **does not and never did contain** the said “**and**” in this particular phrase of Revelation 1:6 and that the printed editions of the Inspired Version correctly represent the text of the original manuscript. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1971, p. 264)

Robert J. Matthews admits that there is a “discrepancy” between Joseph Smith’s rendition in the Inspired Version and his sermon of June 16, 1844:

How to account for this discrepancy the writer does not know, but several explanations can be offered. It may be that there occurred

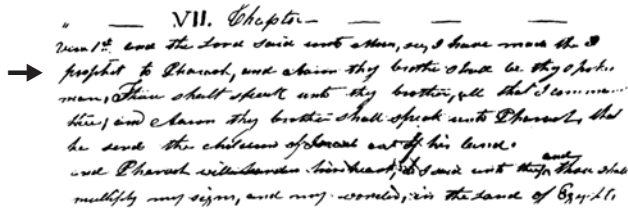
an unintentional omission of “and” in the mechanical process as the scribe recorded what the Prophet dictated. It may be that the scribe recorded what he heard, but that the Prophet did **not possess as much knowledge about the plurality of Gods** when he dictated the Bible revision in 1833 as he did eleven years later in 1844 when he delivered a special discourse on the subject. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1971, pp. 263, 264, 267)

The reader will notice from the photograph of the original manuscript of Revelation 1:6 that a comma which was not in the King James Version has been added between the words “God” and “his.” Therefore, it seems very unlikely that the word “and” was accidentally omitted. Robert J. Matthews’ second explanation seems far more likely—i.e., Joseph Smith did not “possess” the same ideas about the Godhead in the early 1830’s as he did in later years.

Another interesting change that Joseph Smith made in the Bible is found in Exodus 7:1. In the King James Version it reads as follows: “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: . . .” In his “Inspired Version,” Joseph Smith changed this verse to read: “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a **prophet** to Pharaoh; . . .” Joseph Smith was apparently trying to destroy the idea of Moses being a god, so he changed the verse to read that Moses was a prophet. In 1844, however, he again changed his mind and decided that Moses was a God:

The scriptures are a mixture of very strange doctrines to the Christian world, who are blindly led by the blind. I will refer to another scripture. “Now,” says God, when He visited Moses in the bush, (Moses was a stammering sort of a boy like me) God said, “Thou shalt be a God unto the children of Israel.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 478)

That Joseph Smith had originally changed the word “god” to “prophet” is verified by a photograph of the original manuscript which is published by Merrill Y. Van Wagoner in his book *The Inspired Revision of the Bible*, page 22. Below is a reproduction of that photograph.



The reader will notice that the arrow points to the word “prophet.”

### Elohim

In 1844 Joseph Smith claimed that the word Elohim, which is usually translated God in the Bible, should really be translated “Gods”:

In the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation. It is a great subject I am dwelling on. The word Eloheim ought to be in the plural all the way through—**Gods**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 476)

This criticism is not confined to Mormon scholars. William McCarthy, a critic of the Bible, made this statement:

The first verse of the bible is an example: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” The earliest text was: “In the beginning Elohim created . . .” Had these compilers been honest, they would have said: “In the beginning the gods created . . .” . . . The bible’s compilers lied more than twenty-five hundred times by changing the plural, Elohim, gods, into the singular “god.” (*Bible, Church and God*, by William McCarthy, Truth Seeker Co., New York, N.Y., 1946, p. 174)

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 475, we find this statement by Joseph Smith:

. . . Eloheim is from the word Eloi, God, in the singular number; and by adding the word heim, it renders it Gods. . . . I defy all the

world to refute me. . . . I once asked a learned Jew, “If the Hebrew language compels us to render all words ending in heim in the plural, why not render the first Eloheim plural?” He replied, “That is the rule with few exceptions; but in this case it would ruin the Bible.”

While it is true the Hebrew word Elohim has a masculine plural ending, this does not mean that it should be rendered “Gods” throughout the Bible as Joseph Smith would have us believe. Actually, it can be rendered either “God” or “gods.” How it should be translated depends on the context of the sentence in which it appears. In *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* we find these statements concerning this matter:

Elohim is the usual word for “God” in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. It is actually plural in form, but is used with a verb in the singular. Perhaps the plural is best explained as indicating “plenitude of might” or exceptional dignity and unlimited greatness. In this One are united all the powers of eternity and infinity. (*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Chicago, 1968, p. 2)

Elohim is plural in form. It is usually translated “God.” But it can be translated “gods,” as, for instance, when it refers to the gods of the heathen neighbors of Israel. (*Ibid.*, p. 11)

In the English language we also have words that are exactly the same in the singular and plural. The word “deer,” for instance, can be used to refer to one, two or many deer, and only the context of the sentence reveals exactly what is meant. We could say, “I saw several deer,” and the reader would immediately know that we were referring to more than one deer. But if we say, “I saw a deer,” the context shows that we are speaking of only one deer. The same can be said of the following words: sheep, trout, species, Chinese, Portuguese, moose or fish. A person can only determine whether these words are singular or plural by the context in which they appear.

When Joseph Smith stated that “Elohim” should always be rendered “Gods,” he was making a serious mistake, for this would be ignoring the context in which the word appears. It would be just as unreasonable to say that the English word “deer” always refers to two or more animals.

Below are three Hebrew words which have the masculine plural ending but can be translated as singular or plural as the context requires. Since Hebrew reads from right to left the ending of each word is on the left hand side.

Hebrew Word	Pronounced	Translates
אלהים	Elohim	God, Gods, Angels or Judges
פנים	Panim	Face or Faces
תרפים	Teraphim	Idol, Idols, Image or Images

Now let us consider two verses that contain the word “Elohim.” The first is Exodus 18:11; in this verse Elohim is translated “gods”: “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: . . .” Common sense tells us that we can not render Elohim as “God” in this instance. If we did we would have a translation that would not make sense: “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all God: . . .”

In our second example (Exodus 20:2) we find just the opposite, for in this case Elohim must be rendered “God:” “I am the Lord thy God, . . .” It would be impossible to render Elohim as plural in this instance. If we did it would read: “I am the Lord thy gods, . . .” Obviously, the word “gods” would not be compatible with the word “I” at the first of the verse. The word “I” comes from the Hebrew word *anoki* (אֲנֹכִי), and is translated “I” or “me.” Therefore, it is clear that Elohim must be rendered as singular in this verse.

The word *panim* can be translated as either “face” or “faces” as indicated above. In Genesis 50:1 we read: “And Joseph fell upon his father’s face, . . .” The same word, however, is translated “faces” in Genesis 9:23: “. . . their faces were backward, . . .”

The word *teraphim* is translated as “images” in Genesis



31:19: “. . . Rachel had stolen the images . . .” In 1 Samuel 19:13, however, *teraphim* is rendered “image”: “And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats’ hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.”

When we examine the structure of the Hebrew language we find that Joseph Smith’s statement that Elohim should be translated “Gods” throughout the Bible is incorrect. In fact, Joseph Smith himself sometimes used the word Elohim when speaking only of God the Father: “We believe in the Great Eloheim who sits enthroned in yonder heavens” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 499). The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus makes the following statement about this matter: “. . . Joseph Smith used the exalted name-title ‘Elohim’ to designate the Father. The word ‘Elohim’ is a plural term meaning ‘Gods,’ as the Prophet pointed out while analyzing the meaning of the term in Hebrew, and in this sense he also used it. Either usage is appropriate, and the reader must determine from the context of the statement in which sense it is being applied” (*God, Man and the Universe*, p. 113). Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, admits that “Elohim, plural word though it is, is also used as the exalted name-title of God the Eternal Father, a usage that connotes his supremacy and omnipotence, he being God above all Gods” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 224).

If Joseph Smith’s statement that Elohim should always be translated “Gods” were true we would expect to find the word Elohim rendered as “Gods” throughout his “Inspired Version” of the Bible, but instead we find it rendered “God” just like the King James Version. It is very interesting to compare Genesis 1:3 of the King James Version with Joseph Smith’s “translation.” In the King James Version we read: “And God said, Let there be light: . . .” Joseph Smith changed this to read: “And I, God, said, Let there be light, . . .” (Inspired Revision, Genesis 1:6; also found in *Pearl of Great Price*, Moses 2:3). Notice that Joseph has added the word “I,” thus making it even more apparent that the verse is referring to only one God. In the Book of Abraham, however, Joseph Smith completely reversed his position with regard to this matter, for in Abraham 4:3 we read: “And **they (the gods)** said: Let there be light; . . .”

Louis C. Zucker, Professor Emeritus of English and Lecturer in Hebrew at the University of Utah, has written a very interesting article concerning Joseph Smith’s work in the Hebrew language. He shows that Joseph Smith’s translation of Elohim as “Gods” is incorrect, and concludes his article by stating: “If there has been another artist of religion in modern times who, excepting his blatant imitator ‘Baneemy,’ transformed the Hebrew of the Bible to suit his own purposes as freely as did Joseph Smith, who would he be?” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 55).

## Hands or Wings?

In the chapter on Joseph Smith’s First Vision we showed that the Mormon leaders have used this vision to prove that God the Father has a body. George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency, stated: “Joseph saw that the Father had a form; that He had a head; that He had arms; that He had limbs; that He had feet; that He had a face and a tongue with which to express His thoughts; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 24, p. 372). In the manual used by the Mormon missionaries the following appears:

**Elder:** Mr. Brown, . . . In 1820 Joseph Smith . . . saw, standing above him in the air, two personages in the form of men . . . Mr. Brown, who were these two personages?

**Brown:** God and Jesus Christ.

**Elder:** I know that Joseph Smith did see the Father and the Son. . . . he could see that his own body truly was created in the image and likeness of God. . . . **What do we learn about God from the experience of Joseph Smith?**

**Brown:** That he has a real body.

**Elder:** Yes, he does. The Church also taught that God the Father and Jesus Christ, his Son, were both the same person. But what did Joseph Smith see?

**Brown:** He saw two Personages in the form of **men**. (*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, August 1961, pp. 11-12)

Now that we have Joseph Smith’s first written account, we know that he did not claim to see God the Father in his First Vision and that this element was added to the story after he changed his mind concerning the Godhead. Even Mormon writers have to admit that “the first account appears to make specific reference to **only one personage**” (James B. Allen, *Improvement Era*, April 1970, p. 6).

It would appear, then, that the story of the First Vision can no longer be used to support the idea of a plurality of Gods or that God the Father has a body. (For a more complete treatment of this subject see the preceding chapter of this book.)

When the Mormons first started arguing about whether God had “body, parts or passions,” they were not referring to God the Father, but rather to the question of whether Christ had a resurrected body (see *The Evening and the Morning Star*, April 1834, p. 149). By 1842, however, they were definitely teaching that the Father had a body. The following appeared in the *Millennial Star*:

The Old and New Testament everywhere reveals a God with body, parts, and passions. The following are a few of the many texts which speak of his body and parts:—

Image.—Gen. 1st, 27th.  
Eyes.—Prov. xv. 3rd.  
Mouth.—Isaiah lv. 11th.  
Nose.—Isaiah lxxv. 5th  
Lips and Tongue.—Isaiah xxx. 27th  
Ear.—2d Kings xix. 16th  
Soles of his feet.—Ezekiel xl. 7th.  
Arm.—Jeremiah xxi. 5th  
Finger.—Exod. xxxi. 18th  
Fingers.—Psalms viii. 3rd  
Loins.—Ezek. i. 27th  
Heart.—Gen. vi. 6th  
Nostrils.—Exod. xv. 8th  
Hand, face, and back parts.—Exod. xxxiii. 22nd

The foregoing abundantly show that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had both body and parts, to say nothing of Jesus Christ, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 2, p. 184)

Most of the references which Mormons use to try to prove that God the Father has a body are taken from the Old Testament—all fourteen references cited above are from the Old Testament. Occasionally, however, Mormons will refer to Acts 7:55 as evidence that God has a body: “But he, . . . saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, . . .” In scripture the “right hand” of God is considered to be a position of favor or power. At the judgment described in Matthew 25:33-41 the righteous are found at the “right hand,” whereas the wicked are at the “left hand.” In Isaiah 41:10 we read: “. . . I am thy God: . . . I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” On one occasion Jesus himself said: “. . . ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the **right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Mark 14:62). Now, certainly no one would argue that this verse proves that “power” is a man or literally has a right hand.

Some of the Old Testament verses used by Mormons in an attempt to prove that God has a body were never meant to be taken literally. For instance, Exodus 15:8, cited above as evidence that God has “nostrils,” reads as follows: “And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.” We feel that it would be just as ridiculous to claim that the “heart of the sea” is a literal heart as to claim that the word “nostrils” actually proves that God has a nose.

Another verse cited above is Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” If the word “eyes” were taken literally it would seem to imply that God has many eyes, for how could just



two eyes be “in every place”? In 2 Chronicles 16:9 we read: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, . . .” It would be impossible to interpret the word “eyes” literally in this case; however, if we accept the fact that “God is a **Spirit**” (John 4:24) and that he fills “**heaven and earth**” (Jeremiah 23:24), we can easily understand the meaning of this verse—i.e., that God is able to watch over his entire creation.

To attempt to interpret some of these words literally to prove that God has a body is making a great mistake, for they are sometimes used to describe even inanimate objects (see our *Case*, vol. 3, p. 106).

If a person decided to interpret Psalms 91:4 only according to the literal meaning of the words, he could make a very good case for the idea that God is a bird: “He shall cover thee with his **feathers**, and under his **wings** shalt thou trust: . . .”

Although the early Mormon leaders interpreted statements concerning God which appear in the Old Testament very literally, some of the leaders today realize that this was carried too far. Even President Joseph Fielding Smith has admitted that some of the expressions used in the Old Testament concerning God are figurative:

The statement that men anciently “walked with God” we accept, of course, as a **figure of speech**. It means that they were in perfect harmony and at the same time receiving constant guidance and revelation from the Lord. It does not mean that they were privileged to walk along the streets, for instance, as Jesus walked with the two disciples after his resurrection. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 4)

The scriptural accounts of talking face to face and of walking with God should **not** be interpreted in the sense that the Savior stood before those prophets and revealed his whole person. That he may have done so at later periods in the cases of Abraham and Moses is possible, but he had not done so in that fulness in the antediluvian days. (*Ibid.*, p. 37)

Mormon writers who try to use the Old Testament to prove that God has a body are faced with a very serious problem, for their own theology plainly teaches that Jehovah (the God of the Old Testament) is Jesus Christ. Therefore, any appearance of the God of the Old Testament is only an appearance of the preexistent Christ and does **not** prove that God the Father has a body. Joseph Fielding Smith, the 10th President of the Mormon Church, seems to realize this and has made some comments which are in direct contradiction to those made by earlier leaders of the Mormon Church:

. . . Jesus Christ was Jehovah, who led Israel in the days of Abraham and Moses, and in fact from the days of Adam. Also that Jehovah, or Jesus Christ, as a personage of Spirit appeared to the Brother of Jared, . . . (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 11)

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.” (*Ibid.*, p. 27)

Although the Mormon leaders are beginning to curtail the use of the Old Testament to prove that God the Father has a body, they still maintain that this doctrine is true.

Since the Mormon Church teaches that God is only an exalted man and that there are many Gods, it has led the Mormon people to the conclusion that God is somewhat limited. The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde stated that God needs angels and ministers

to tell him what is going on: “. . . He knows everything. How? When His angels and ministers tell Him of it, **like any other ruler**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 64).

Although the “Lectures on Faith” taught that God is “**omnipresent**,” Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, denied this doctrine: “Some would have us believe that God is present everywhere. **It is not so**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 345).

The idea of a plurality of Gods and the idea that God is limited led Brigham Young to the conclusion that there are many redeemers: “Consequently **every earth has its redeemer**, and every earth has its tempter; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, p. 71). Young also taught that the Mormons themselves will be redeemers: “But I expect, . . . that I shall see the time with yourselves that we shall know how to prepare to organize an earth like this—know how to people that earth, **how to redeem it**, how to sanctify it, and how to glorify it, with those who live upon it who hearken to our counsels” (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, pp. 274-75).

## A Changeable God

The idea of a progressive God was a natural outgrowth of the Mormon teaching of a plurality of Gods. The Apostle Orson Hyde made this comment: “Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a **child**, and **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, p. 123).

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement: “We are now, or may be, as perfect in our sphere as God and Angels are in theirs, but the greatest intelligence in existence **can continually ascend to greater heights of perfection**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 93).

Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement: “**God Himself is increasing and progressing in knowledge, power, and dominion**, and will do so, worlds without end” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 120).

This idea of a progressive and changeable God is very different from the concept of God taught in the Bible and Book of Mormon. In Malachi 3:6 we read: “**For I am the Lord, I change not**; . . .” In the Book of Mormon, Moroni 8:18, we find this statement: “For I know that God is not a partial God, **neither a changeable being**; but he is **unchangeable** from all eternity to all eternity.”

While Brigham Young and other leaders of the Mormon Church openly rejected the Book of Mormon teaching that God is “unchangeable,” the Apostle Orson Pratt had a difficult time accepting these new teachings. Although he accepted the idea of a plurality of Gods, he did not seem to believe that they progressed in knowledge:

The Father and the Son do **not progress in knowledge** and wisdom, because they already know all things past, present, and to come. . . . Now we wish to be distinctly understood that each of these personal Gods has **equal knowledge with all the rest**; there are **none among them that are in advance of the others in knowledge**; though some may have been Gods as many millions of years, as there are particles of dust in all the universe, yet there is not one truth that such are in possession of but what every other God knows. **They are all equal in knowledge, and in wisdom, and in the possession of all truth. None of these Gods are progressing in knowledge**; neither can they **progress** in the acquirement of any truth.

98. Some have gone so far as to say that all the Gods were progressing in truth, and would continue to progress to all eternity, and that some were far in advance of others: but let us examine, for a moment, the **absurdity** of such a conjecture. . . . Have we any right to say that there is a boundless ocean of materials, acting under such Superior laws that none of the Gods to all ages of eternity

can be able to understand them? We should like to know what Law Giver gave such superior laws? . . . This is the great **absurdity**, resulting from the vague conjecture that there will be an endless progression in knowledge among the Gods. Such a conjecture is not only extremely **absurd**, but it is in **direct opposition** to what is revealed.

99. We shall now show from the revelations given through Joseph, the Seer, that God and his son, Jesus Christ, are in possession of all knowledge, and that there is no more truth for them to learn, . . . (*The Seer*, pp. 117-118)

Brigham Young openly differed with Orson Pratt on this issue. In a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle on January 13, 1867, Brigham Young stated:

. . . Brother Orson Pratt, has in theory, bounded the capacity of God. According to his theory, God can progress no further in knowledge and power; but the God that I serve is **progressing eternally**, and so are his children: they will **increase** to all eternity, if they are faithful. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 286)

J. M. Grant, a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, made this statement concerning Orson Pratt's teaching about the Gods: ". . . Orson Pratt lariatied out the Gods in his theory; his circle is as far as the string extends. **My God is not lariatied out**" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 126).

It is very interesting to note that the Mormon Church is still divided over this issue. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, has sided with Orson Pratt, declaring that God does not progress in knowledge:

**False notions about God's progression.** It seems very strange to me that members of the Church will hold to the doctrine, "God increases in knowledge as time goes on." . . . Where has the Lord ever revealed to us that he is lacking in knowledge? That he is still learning new truth; discovering new laws that are unknown to him? I think this kind of doctrine is **very dangerous**. . . .

**Will God destroy himself?** I cannot comprehend God in his perfection having to spend time discovering laws and truth he does not know. Such a thought to me is destructive, not progressive. Should there be truth which God has not discovered, when may he discover it, and, like a chemist who mixes certain elements and blows himself up, when will the Almighty find some hidden truth or law which will shatter all? Is there not a danger that some other personage may discover some greater truth than our Father knows? If such could be the case, what would become of God? (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 7, 8, 10)

Our Father in heaven is infinite; he is perfect; he possesses **all knowledge and wisdom**. (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 34)

## The Holy Ghost

One of the most confusing areas of Mormon theology is that dealing with the Holy Ghost. In the Lectures on Faith, published in the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835, it was declared that there were only two personages in the Godhead—the Father and the Son—and that the Holy Spirit is the mind of the Father and the Son:

2 There are **two** personages . . . the Father and the Son: The Father being a personage of **spirit**, glory and power: possessing all perfection and fullness: The Son, who was in the bosom of the Father a personage of **tabernacle**, . . . called the Son because of the flesh . . . possessing the same mind with the Father, **which mind is the Holy Spirit**, . . .

Q. How many personages are there in the Godhead?

A. **Two**: the Father and the Son.

Q. How do you prove that there are **two** personages in the Godhead?

A. By the Scriptures. . . .

Q. Do the Father and the Son possess the **same mind**?

A. They do. . . .

Q. What is this **mind**?

A. **The Holy Spirit**. . . .

Q. Do the Father, Son and Holy Spirit constitute the Godhead?

A. They do. . . .

Q. Does the foregoing account of the Godhead lay a sure foundation for the exercise of faith in him unto life and salvation?

A. It does. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 Ed., pp. 52, 53, 55, 57, 58; removed from modern editions)

The Mormon leaders now teach that there are three personages in the Godhead—the Father and the Son both being personages of tabernacle and the Holy Ghost being a personage of Spirit. It is interesting to note, however, that in 1855 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt was still not certain whether there was a personal Holy Ghost: "I am inclined to think from some things in the revelations, that there is such a being as personal Holy Ghost, but it is not set forth as a positive fact, and the Lord has never given me any revelation upon the subject, and consequently I **cannot fully make up my mind** one way or the other" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 338). On another occasion Pratt stated: "In the Book of Covenants, page 45, we are informed that there are two personages besides the Holy Spirit, which constitute the Godhead; but we are not there informed whether the third, called the Holy Spirit **is a personage or not**" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 12, p. 308). In a pamphlet, which later fell into disrepute, Orson Pratt argued that the Holy Spirit is a fluid substance: "Heat, light, electricity, and all the varied and grand displays of nature, are but the tremblings, the vibrations, the energetic powers of a living, all-pervading, and most wonderful **fluid**, full of wisdom and knowledge, called the **Holy Spirit**. . . . there are many expressions in Scripture which plainly show that the Holy Ghost exists, not only as a person, but as a diffused **fluid substance**. . . . Let it be remembered that the Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit represent the same Holy Substance or **fluid**, being two different names for the same thing" (*Pamphlets by Orson Pratt*, "The Holy Spirit," p. 50).

The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt—Orson Pratt's brother—also taught that the Holy Spirit is a "substance or fluid," but after his death the Mormon leaders deleted this from his book (see our *Changes in the Key to Theology*).

Today, of course, the Mormons teach that the Holy Ghost is an actual personage. William E. Berrett quoted Joseph F. Smith as saying: "'The Holy Ghost is a **personage** of Spirit, he constitutes the **third person** in the Godhead'" (*The Restored Church*, p. 541).

Since the Mormon leaders teach that God has a wife, some people have speculated that the Holy Ghost might be the wife of God the Father. President Joseph Fielding Smith, however, vigorously opposed such an idea: "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. The Holy Ghost is **not a woman**, as some have declared, and therefore is not the mother of Jesus Christ" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 39). The Apostle LeGrand Richards says that "the Holy Ghost is a **male** personage. . . . He is a male personage of spirit as was Jesus before he was born of the Virgin Mary" (*A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, p. 118). Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, said that "the Holy Ghost is a **man**; he is one of the **sons of our Father** and our God; and he is that man that stood next to Jesus Christ, just as I stand by brother Brigham" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 179).

William E. Berrett gives this information concerning the Holy Ghost: "The Holy Ghost is a person. Unlike the Father and the Son who have bodies of flesh and bone, the Holy Ghost has **no body** of flesh and bone (that is, of the elements as we know them) but is a personage of spirit" (*The Restored Church*, p. 540). While the Mormon Church leaders teach that the Holy Ghost does **not** have

a body of flesh and bones, they also teach that it is **absolutely essential to have one**. In fact, they claim that the devils were denied bodies of flesh and bone as a punishment for their sins. Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

**Devils denied mortal bodies.** The punishment of Satan and the third of the hosts of heaven who followed him, was that they were **denied** the privilege of being born into this world and receiving mortal bodies. They did not keep their first estate and were denied the opportunity of eternal progression. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 65)

There is no greater blessing that can come than the blessing of birth. One third of the hosts of heaven, because of rebellion, were denied that privilege, and hence they have no bodies of flesh and bones, that great gift of God. (*Ibid.*, p. 16)

Brigham Young related that Joseph B. Nobles once told a Methodist Priest that the Devil was “a being without a body, whereas our God has a body, parts, and passions. The Devil was cursed and sent down from heaven. He has no body of his own; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 331)

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 one. Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy, says that the “crowning Gospel ordinance requisite for Godhood is celestial marriage. . . . obedience to this law is absolutely necessary in order to obtain the highest exaltation in the Kingdom of God” (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, pp. 118-119). According to Mormon theology, then, it would have been impossible for the Holy Ghost to have obtained Godhood, since he had no body with which to obey the law of “celestial marriage.” In a revelation given by Joseph Smith we find this statement: “Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:25). Mormon writers explain that these are the ones who have not obeyed the law of “celestial marriage” and who cannot have children in the resurrection. Bruce R. McConkie, of the Council of the Seventy, states: “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*, 1958, p. 220). According to this reasoning, the Holy Ghost seems to be on the path that “leadeth to the deaths.”

Some members of the Mormon Church have been concerned as to whether or not the Holy Ghost will get a body at some future time. Joseph Fielding Smith, however, says that he is not troubled by this matter: “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” (*Doctrine of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 39).

Bruce R. McConkie made this comment about the Holy Ghost: “He is a Personage of Spirit, a Spirit Person, a Spirit Man, . . . In this dispensation, at least, nothing has been revealed as to his origin or destiny; expressions on these matters are both speculative and fruitless” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 329).

## No Real Answers

In his Master’s thesis, “The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy,” Owen Kendall White, Jr., made these interesting observations concerning the Mormon view of the Godhead:

In contrast with the sovereign God of Christian orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy, the Mormon God is finite. This is indicated in the fact that God is not the only reality with necessary existence. That is, He is not the Creator of all that is. (“The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy,” M.A. thesis, University of Utah, June 1967, p. 86)

. . . to the Mormon, God is involved within space and time. He is not the creator of these dimensions. In fact, the possession of a physical body places rather obvious spatial limitations upon God. . . .

The conception of a changing God, a God in the process of “becoming” rather than “being,” which deeply permeates Mormon theology illustrates God’s temporality. . . . time imposes serious restrictions upon God. . . . God did not always exist as he now is. In other words, God was not always God. He has changed. He has progressed. . . . Joseph Smith taught that “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret.” . . . Mormonism is not without some confusion on the changeability of God. The problem may partially stem from Joseph Smith’s earlier teaching when he took a position similar to orthodox Christianity. (*Ibid.*, pp. 91-93)

Thus, Orson F. Whitney, an early Mormon apostle, says that it is God’s “superior intelligence that makes Him God,” and that the gospel is merely a ladder “of light, of intelligence, of principle” by which men become Gods. . . . it should be apparent that the Mormon God is a heretical departure from traditional Christianity, and the traditional Christian terminology of omnipotence and omniscience are not justifiably applied to the Mormon God. (*Ibid.*, pp. 95-96)

. . . Mormonism’s traditional emphasis has been on God’s humanity rather than his transcendence. In other words, Mormon theology is much more concerned with the similarities between God and man than the differences between them.

This emphasis upon the closeness and similarity of God and man is clearly evident in the Mormon doctrine that God is a person with a physical body. For it is the notion that God has a physical body that leads to Mormon claims that man is literally, not figuratively, the offspring of God. Through its entire history, Mormonism has employed its extremely anthropomorphic conception of God to illustrate the similarities rather than the differences between God and man. (*Ibid.*, pp. 121-122)

In this chapter we have seen how the Mormon concept of God has changed from one God to a plurality of Gods. Mormon leaders claim that all Christians are in a state of apostasy and have lost the true knowledge of the Godhead, yet a careful examination of Mormon teachings concerning the Godhead reveals a serious state of confusion. While Mormonism claims to give all the answers about the Godhead, the honest investigator soon finds that these answers do **not** solve the real problems and that many of them are built upon the sandy foundation of change or falsification.

In the next chapter we will deal with Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine, which is certainly one of the low points in Mormon theology.





## Mormon Leaders Hold Fast to Plural God Doctrine

Since the publication of the revised edition of *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* in 1972, the Mormon leaders have continued to cling to the doctrine that God was once in a fallen state and that men can become Gods. In a speech published in *The Ensign*, November 1975, page 80, Church President Spencer W. Kimball declared:

Brethren, 225,000 of you are here tonight. I suppose 225,000 of you may become gods. There seems to be plenty of space out there in the universe. And the Lord has proved that he knows how to do it. I think he could make, or probably have us help make, worlds for all of us, for every one of us 225,000.

On April 3, 1977, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

President Spencer W. Kimball of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints told members of his faith Saturday night that they can attain godhood if they continue to perfect their lives. . . .

President Kimball said that “What man is, God has been and what God is, man seeks to become.”

The church leader said that according to LDS scripture, Abraham has attained godhood in eternal life and that if members of the LDS Church continue to perfect their lives in accordance with God’s teachings, they too can attain godhood in immortality.

On October 7, 1974, the *Tribune* quoted President Kimball as saying:

“In each of us is the potentiality to become a God—pure, holy, true, influential, powerful, independent of earthly forces. . . . we were in the beginning with God.”

On still another occasion President Kimball stressed:

. . . “Man can transform himself, but he has in him the seeds of Godhood that can grow. He can lift himself by his very bootstraps.” (*Ibid.*, September 18, 1974)

Marion G. Romney, second counselor in the First Presidency, maintains that God Himself is only a “saved soul”:

“Man is a soul, that is a dual being, a spirit person clothed in a tangible body of flesh and bones. God is a perfected, saved soul enjoying eternal life. He is both immortal and exalted to the highest glory. He is enjoying that blessed condition which men may attain to, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.” (*Ibid.*, October 6, 1974)

## The Mother in Heaven and Women in Mormon Theology

Mormon leaders have also continued to maintain God has a wife. On April 8, 1973, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Outburst after outburst of delighted laughter filled the Tabernacle Saturday . . .

The speaker was Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of Twelve Apostles, . . . Elder Richards told of speaking to a large gathering of clergymen. . . .

“I explained to them the difference between reformation and restoration,” Elder Richards said. “Then, when I finished my remarks, one of them stood up and said, “Mr. Richards, we’ve been told you believe God had a wife. Would you please explain this.”

“I think he thought he had me,” said Elder Richards. The audience in the Tabernacle began to chuckle. “I retorted that I didn’t see how God could have a Son if He didn’t have a wife.”

Proper Answer?

The Tabernacle audience’s chuckle grew to a full roar of laughter as Elder Richards turned to President Harold B. Lee, seated near the podium, to ask if this was a proper answer.

President Lee nodded.

Writing in *Sunstone*, Linda Wilcox indicates that there has been increased discussion in the church of the concept of a Heavenly Mother:

What seems to be happening currently as far as development of the Mother in Heaven concept is concerned is that there is an increasing awareness of and attention to the idea at the grass-roots level in the Church—particularly among women, and in informal ways. A sampling of the poems submitted to the last Eliza R. Snow Poetry Contest sponsored by the Relief Society illustrates one strain of such thought.

In the memory of one of the judges, this year was the first in which there were several poems submitted dealing with the subject of a Heavenly Mother. . . . There is also speculation about what the Mother in Heaven’s previous earth-life experience was like—and the supposition that it was very much like our own. . . . the poems themselves are indicative of a wider interest in the concept of a Heavenly Mother among mainstream Church members than has been usual in the course of Mormon church history. . . .

Lately there has also been increased discussion and speculation about how we can or do relate to our Heavenly Mother (or possibly mothers?). Orson Pratt taught that we are not to worship the mother of our spirits although we worship the father, . . . Rudger Clawson, however, pointed out that men as well as women and children crave a Mother in Heaven to worship and “yearn to adore her.” He said, “It doesn’t take from our worship of the Eternal Father, to adore our Eternal Mother, any more than it diminishes the love we bear our earthly fathers, to include our earthly mothers in our affections.” Currently there is no encouragement on the part of Mormon church leaders to pray to a Heavenly Mother, and in fact even active discouragement. Whether one can worship or adore her without the mechanism of prayer and/or meditation is an open question.

Still, there has been recently a more evident desire to reach out to Mother in Heaven in some way. A letter to the editor of *Dialogue* about five years ago told of a Mormon woman spending preparatory time in meditation, kneeling privately to pray, and then calling out for the first time, “Mother in Heaven. I believe you may exist. Are you there? We know the Father and the Son, but why have you not revealed yourself?” (*Sunstone*, vol. 5, no. 5, pp. 13-14)

A careful examination of the teaching concerning the Mother God brings to light the fact that women are considered to be spiritually inferior in Mormon theology. Since the excommunication of Sonia Johnson, national attention has been focused on this matter. Mormon leaders have apparently been concerned for some time that this issue would finally come to a head. Just after President Spencer W. Kimball issued the revelation granting blacks the priesthood, he did his best to make sure that women did not get the idea that he would be pressured into another revelation:

HONOLULU (AP)—The President of the Mormon Church said Monday the church will not extend the priesthood to women, now that it has ordained its first black priest. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 13, 1978)

*Time* magazine for August 7, 1978, reported that “Kimball states that unlike blacks, it is ‘impossible’ that women would ever attain priesthood.”

While we feel that the Mormon Church has many good teachings concerning women and the family, there is definitely a belief in the inferiority of women which stems back to the teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Joseph Smith, for instance, established a doctrine of polygamy which held Mormon women in bondage for many years (see chapter 16 of this book). Smith’s revelation concerning the subject is still printed as Section 132 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. After Joseph Smith’s death, Brigham Young led the church. Notwithstanding the fact that he had many wives, Brigham Young admitted that “There are probably but few men in the world who care about the private society of women less than I do” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 99). While Young did

not care much for the “private society of women,” he taught that man’s place in heaven depended to a great extent on the size of his family. His wife, therefore, should bear as many children as possible:

Sisters, do you wish to make yourselves happy? Then what is your duty? It is for you to bear children, in the name of the Lord, . . . bring forth in the name of Israel’s God, that you may have the honour of being the mothers of great and good men . . . are you tormenting yourselves by thinking that your husbands do not love you? I would not care whether they loved a particle or not; but I would cry out, like one of old, in the joy of my heart, “I have got a man from the Lord!” . . . I have borne an image of God! (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 37)

Fanny Stenhouse, who left the church in Brigham Young’s day, made these interesting observations:

In my unhappy condition, I thought that perhaps I might derive some consolation from the sermons in the Tabernacle . . . But instead of obtaining consolation, I heard that which aroused every feeling of my soul to rebellion, . . . I heard that woman was an inferior being, designed by the Lord for the special glory and exaltation of man, that she was a creature that should feel herself honoured if he would only make her the mother of his children—a creature who if very obedient and faithful through all the trials and tribulations in life, might some day be rewarded by becoming one of her husband’s queens, but should even then shine only by virtue of the reflected light derived from the glory of her spouse and lord. He was to be her “saviour,” for he was all in all to her; and it was through him alone and at his will that she could obtain salvation. We were informed that man was the crowning glory of creation, for whom all things—woman included—were brought into being; and that the chief object of woman’s existence was to help man to his great destiny.

Not a sentence—indeed, not a word—did we ever hear as to the possibility of womanly perfection and exaltation in her own right; . . . The great object of marriage, we were told, was the increase of children. . . . if some woman was found objecting to polygamy on account of its crushing and degrading effects upon women generally, then, . . . she was told in the coarse language of Brigham Young himself, that “Such women had no business to complain; it was quite enough honour for them to be permitted to bear children to God’s holy Priesthood.” . . . It was painfully clear to my understanding, then as now, that in Mormonism woman was to lose her personal identity. All that Christianity had done to elevate her was to be ruthlessly set aside and trampled under foot, and she was instantly to return to the position which she occupied in the darkest ages of the world’s existence. (*Tell It All*, 1875, pp. 342-343)

Although the church no longer allows the practice of polygamy, some of the teachings concerning the inferiority of women persist in its theology. Church leaders teach, for instance, that plural marriage will be practiced in heaven. Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently served as the tenth President of the Church, remarried after the death of his first wife. In his book *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, page 67, President Smith remarked: “. . . my wives will be mine in eternity. I don’t know how some other people feel, but that is a glorious thought to me. That helps to keep me sober.”

Every Mormon woman, therefore, faces the possibility of living in a polygamous relationship in heaven if she dies first and her husband decides to be sealed to another woman. A woman, on the other hand, cannot be sealed for eternity to more than one husband. Because a woman is not granted the same privilege as a man a problem has arisen for those doing work for the dead. In a newsletter published by Sandy First Ward we find the following:

. . . Brother Christiansen talked about new rulings concerning sealings for the dead. It is now possible for a woman that was married more than once to be sealed to **all** her husbands, providing that in life she had not been sealed to any of her husbands.

The First Presidency of the Church has ruled that rather than try to decide which husband a deceased woman should be sealed to, she

can be sealed to all of them. However, only one sealing will be valid and accepted before God. God and the woman will decide which one of the sealings will be accepted on Judgment Day. (*Tele-Ward*, Sandy First Ward, Jan. 25, 1976, vol. V, no. 2, p. 5)

In 1976 the First Presidency announced a new rule which discriminates against a woman who wishes to obtain her endowments in the temple after marriage:

A wife whose husband is not endowed should not be given a recommend to receive her endowments. . . . A worthy man whose wife has not received her endowments may be given a recommend to receive his own endowments. (*General Handbook of Instructions*, no. 21, 1976, p. 54)

Christian theology teaches that males and females will be equal in the resurrection:

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. (Luke 20:35-36)

Mormon Church leaders teach that both men and women can attain Godhood. Apostle Bruce R. McConkie says that “Godhood is not for men only; it is for men and women together” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1979, p. 844). While at first glance it appears that this would make men and women equal, a more careful examination of the doctrine reveals just the opposite. According to Mormon theology, church members follow the same plan of eternal progression as God the Father. Now, if the “Eternal Mother” had really gained equality with her husband, we would expect the Mormons to pray to her. The Apostle Orson Pratt, however, made it plain that the Eternal Mother’s Godhood does not really amount to much since she is in “the most perfect obedience” to her “great head”:

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.” The children of Israel were severely reprov’d for making offerings to the “Queen of heaven.” Although she is highly exalted and honored as the beloved bride of the great King, yet the children, so far as we are informed, have never been commanded to pray to her or worship her. Jesus prayed to His Father, and taught His disciples to do likewise; but we are nowhere taught that Jesus prayed to His heavenly Mother: neither did he pray to the Holy Ghost as his Father. (*The Seer*, p. 159)

It would appear, then, that in Mormon theology the claim that a woman can obtain “Godhood” amounts to very little. Like the present “Heavenly Mother,” she will be required to “yield the most perfect obedience” to her “great head”—i.e., her husband, while she continues to give birth to “many millions” of spirit children.

Since the Mormon Church changed the anti-black doctrine, many Mormon women have come to see that they are the ones who will be “second class” citizens in heaven. Mormon leaders used to explain that blacks could not hold the priesthood because they were not valiant in the pre-existence, but no reason has been given for the inferiority of women in Mormon theology.



## 10. The Adam-God Doctrine

The Adam-God doctrine was a natural outgrowth of the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. Although this doctrine was not publicly taught until 1852, Adam was held in high esteem at the very beginning of the Mormon Church.

### Falling Upward

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning Adam and Eve:

In Joseph Smith's philosophy of existence Adam and Eve were raised to a foremost place among the children of men, second only to the Savior. Their act was to be acclaimed. They were the greatest figures of the ages. The so-called "fall" became a **necessary, honorable** act in carrying out the plan of the Almighty. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 160)

The Book of Mormon contains this statement: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy" (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 2:25). In Joseph Smith's production "The Book of Moses," we read the following:

And in that day Adam blessed God...and began to prophesy . . . saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God.

And Eve, . . . was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 5:10-11)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Church in 1970, made these statements:

The fall of man came as a blessing in disguise, . . . I never speak of the part Eve took in this fall as a sin, nor do I accuse Adam of a sin . . . it is not always a sin to transgress a law. . . .

We can hardly look upon anything resulting in such benefits as being a sin, in the sense in which we consider sin. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 114-115)

Sterling W. Sill, who is an Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles, made these statements:

Some time ago I heard a radio speaker discussing the fall of Adam. He seemed to think that Adam should be held responsible for most of the troubles that are presently plaguing our world . . .

This old sectarian doctrine, built around the idea of man's natural depravity and weakness inherited from Adam, is at the root of innumerable problems among us. Adam was one of the greatest men who has ever lived upon the earth. . . .

Under Christ Adam yet stands at our head . . . Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction. He fell toward the goal . . .

Adam fell, but **he fell upward**. Jesus says to us, "Come up higher." Our greatest need is to raise our standards, the standards of our thinking, and the standards of our living. (*Desert News*, Church Section, July 31, 1965, p. 7)

In his thesis, "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Owen Kendall White, Jr., makes these interesting observations:

Mormonism rejects the notion that man's condition is best described by "depravity." Nowhere within Mormon theology is its optimism concerning man's natural condition more clearly apparent than in this denial of the Christian doctrine of original sin. . . . In contrast with the orthodox Christian notion that the fall resulted in a condition of human depravity, the Mormon view asserts that the fall was a necessary condition for man to realize his ultimate potential. . . . Mormons generally avoid using "sin" to describe Adam's disobedience to God since it seems too extreme for them. . . . to the Mormon the fall is a fall upward rather than downward. It is an important step in the eternal quest of man. In a recent article, Sterling Sill, a contemporary Mormon ecclesiastical official, wrote: "Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction." . . .

A second though perhaps not as important evidence of the Mormon rejection of original sin is found in the status accorded Adam within Mormon angelology. Rather than the view of literalistic Christian orthodoxy where Adam is conceived as the cause of human suffering, the scoundrel who got mankind into this mess, Mormonism holds Adam in very high esteem indeed. . . .

Within Mormon angelology Adam is Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days. He assisted in the creation process and will assist in the resurrecting of the dead. He holds positions of importance next to the members of the Godhead. Indeed, Adam was so highly regarded within early Mormonism that Brigham Young elevated him to the status of God. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Master's thesis, by Owen Kendall White, Jr., University of Utah, June 1967, pp. 101-104)

### "Our Father and Our God"

On April 9, 1852, Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, publicly preached the Adam-God doctrine. In this sermon he stated:

Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael, the Arch-angel, the Ancient of Days! about whom holy men have written and spoken—**He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do.** Every man upon the earth, professing Christian or non-professing, must hear it, and will know it sooner or later. . . . the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organizing element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 50-51)

The fact that the Mormon people understood Brigham Young to mean just what he said concerning Adam being God is verified by articles that appeared in the church's publication, *Millennial Star*. On December 10, 1853, an article entitled, "**Adam, the Father and God of the Human Family**" appeared in the *Millennial Star*.



In this article the following statements are found:

The above sentiment appeared in *Star* No. 48, a little to the surprise of some of its readers: and while the sentiment may have appeared **blasphemous to the ignorant**; it has no doubt given rise to some serious reflections with the more candid and comprehensive mind . . . **Adam is really God! And why not?** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 15, p. 801)

On page 825 of the same volume the following appeared:

It has been said that **Adam is God and Father of the human family**, and persons are perhaps in fear and great trouble of mind, lest they have to acknowledge him **as such** in some future day. **For our part we would much rather acknowledge Adam to be our Father, than hunt for another, and take up with the devil.**

In vol. 17, page 195, of the *Millennial Star* this statement was made:

. . . every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is the God of the whole earth. Then will the words of the Prophet Brigham, **when speaking of Adam**, be fully realized—**“He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do.”**

Elder James A. Little made the following statement: “I believe in the principle of obedience; and if I am told that **Adam is our Father and our God, I just believe it**” (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p. 530).

Under the date of June 8, 1868, the following is recorded in the “Minutes of the School of the Prophets,” held in Provo, Utah:

A. F. Mac[Donald] I thought I would speak briefly in relation to Adam being our God—since the year 1853 when the Prest first spoke on this subject. I have frequently endeavored to reconcile what I have read with regard to this matter. I believe what the Pres. says on the subject although it comes in contact with all our tradition—I have not any doubt in my mind but that Adam is our God. . . .

Geo. G. Bywater rose and spoke . . . when I first heard the doctrine of Adam being our Father and God, I was favorably impressed—enjoyed, and hailed it as a new Revelation—it appeared reasonable to me as the father of our spirits, that he should introduce us here . . . (“Minutes of the School of the Prophets,” Provo, Utah, 1868-1871, pp. 38-39 of typed copy at Utah State Historical Society)

Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine met with opposition both within and without the church. In October 1857 he stated:

Some have grumbled because I believe **our God to be so near to us as Father Adam**. There are many who know **that doctrine to be true**. . . . Just wait till you pass Joseph Smith; . . . and after you pass the Apostles . . . and after a while you come to Jesus; and when you at length meet **Father Adam**, how strange it will appear to your present notions. . . . we shall be very glad to see the white locks of **Father Adam**. But those are ideas which do not concern us at present, although it is written in the Bible—“This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 331-332)

That the Adam-God doctrine was causing dissension in the Mormon Church is evident from the articles that appeared in the *Millennial Star*. One article said that some of the officers had not met in council for three years because of the Adam-God doctrine:

. . . some of the officers **have not met in council for three years**. They are lacking faith on **one** principle—the last “cat that was let out of the bag.” Polygamy has been got over pretty well, that cloud has vanished away, but **they are troubled about Adam being our Father and God**. There is a very intelligent person investigating our principles, and who has been a great help to the Saints; he has all the works, and can get along very well with everything else but the last “cat,” and as soon as he can see that clearly, he will become a “Mormon.” I instructed him to write to Liverpool upon it. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p. 482)

An answer to this problem appeared on page 534 of the same volume:

Concerning the item of **doctrine** alluded to by Elder Caffall and others, viz., **that Adam is our Father and God**, I have to say do not trouble yourselves, neither let the Saints be troubled about this matter . . . If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for this **objection** to be removed, tell such, the **Prophet and Apostle Brigham Young has declared it, and that is the word of the Lord**. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p. 534)

In his Master’s thesis, Rodney Turner made these statements: “. . . it is apparent that the doctrine was upsetting the theological equilibrium of some of the membership in England; that it was having a similar effect in America is also true” (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, August 1953, p. 12).

On page 37 of the same thesis Rodney Turner states:

The members were puzzled, even alarmed by this shocking new concept. It was contrary to much that they had accepted as truth all their lives. And it was for that very reason that F. D. Richards had counseled the missionaries to help the membership “roll it aside” until it could be incorporated into their faith “without the sound of hammer of [or?] chisel.”

Joseph Lee Robinson, in his journal and autobiography (the journal the Apostle Richards tried to prevent us from seeing), stated that he feared that the Apostle Orson Pratt would apostatize because of his opposition to the Adam-God doctrine:

Oct. 6th attend Conference, a very interesting Conference, for at this meeting President Brigham Young said thus, that Adam and Eve, were the names of the first man and woman, of every Earth that was ever organized, and that **Adam and Eve were the natural father and mother of every spirit that comes to this planet, or that receives tabernacles on this planet**, consequently **we are brothers and sisters, and that Adam was, God our Eternal Father**, this as Brother Heber remarked was letting the cat out of the Bag, and it came to pass, I believed every word . . . our Beloved Brother **Orson Pratt** told me **he did not believe it He said he would prove by the scripture it was not correct**. I felt very sorry to hear professor, Orson Pratt say that, I **feared lest he should apostetize**. . . .

In his thesis, Rodney Turner gives some very interesting information concerning Orson Pratt’s disagreement with Brigham Young:

. . . according to T.B.H. Stenhouse...there was one man who did publicly oppose Brigham Young in his views. That man was Orson Pratt . . . of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Of him Stenhouse writes: “The mass of the Mormon people do not believe in the Adam-deity, but of them all, one only, Orson Pratt, has dared to make public protest against that doctrine.” (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” p. 38)

Stenhouse claimed that Pratt found himself in serious trouble with Brigham Young over this matter, and tells of a meeting held in “Brigham’s little office.” While Rodney Turner tends to view Stenhouse’s story with suspicion, he admits that Brigham Young and Orson Pratt may have disagreed over the Adam-God doctrine:

The Stenhouse reference to an interview between Orson Pratt and Brigham Young in the latter’s “little office” is apparently based on fact. According to S. W. Richards, . . . such a meeting did take place on at least one occasion. However, the Richard’s statement gives the year as 1856, and not 1863 as Stenhouse indicates. Possibly more than one such meeting took place; in which event there is no real conflict between the two accounts. In the diary of Samuel Whitney Richards we read:

Tues. March 11, 1856

Evening with the Regency in the Upper Room of the President’s Office, . . . A very serious conversation took place between Prest. B. Young and Orson upon doctrine. O. P. was directly opposed to the Prest views and very freely expressed his entire disbelief in

them after being told by the President that things were so and so in the name of the Lord. He was firm in the Position that the Prest's word in the name of the Lord, was not the word of the Lord to him. The Prest did not believe that Orson would ever be Adam, to learn by experience the facts discussed, but every other person in the room would if they lived faithful. . . .

The context of the above entry gives us good reason to believe that doctrine in some way concerning Adam was the cause of the disagreement between President Young and Orson Pratt. The president's remark that he did not believe "that Orson would ever be Adam," obviously "an Adam," would indicate this. ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," pp. 40-41)

According to the "Minutes of the School of the Prophets," held in Provo, Utah, the Apostle Lyman as well as Orson Pratt opposed Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine. Under the date of June 8, 1868, we read:

The doctrine preached by Prest Young for a few years back wherein he says that **Adam is our God—the God we worship**—that most of the people believe this . . . Amasa Lyman stumbled on this he did **not** believe it—he did not believe in the atonement of Jesus—Orson Pratt has also told the Prest that he does **not** believe it—this is not the way to act—we should not suffer ourselves to entertain one doubt—we are not accountable on points of Doctrine if the President makes a statement it is not our prerogative to dispute it. ("Minutes of the School of the Prophets," Provo, Utah, 1868–1871, p. 38 of typed copy at the Utah State Historical Society)

In spite of the opposition, Brigham Young continued to teach the Adam-God doctrine. In 1873, just a few years before his death, Brigham Young declared:

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and **which God revealed to me**—namely that **Adam is our Father and God** . . . Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him . . . He brought one of his wives with him... We say that Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. Who is he? He is Michael, . . . He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He with the help of his brethren brought it into existence. Then he said, "I want **my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here**. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, **in a mortal state**. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. **I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh that their spirits may have a house**, a tabernacle, or a dwelling place as mine has," and where is the mystery? (Sermon by Brigham Young, printed in the *Deseret News*, June 14, 1873)

There are four important points that should be noted concerning the Adam-God doctrine. They are as follows:

**1. Adam not created of the dust of this earth.** In a sermon delivered in 1852, Brigham Young stated:

When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a **celestial body** . . . **He** helped to make and organize this world. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 50)

Brigham Young also stated:

You believe Adam was made of the dust of this earth. **This I do not believe**, though it is supposed that it is so written in the Bible; but it is not to my understanding. You can write that information to the States, if you please—that I have publicly declared that I **do not** believe that portion of the Bible as the Christian world do. I never did, and I never want to. What is the reason I do not? Because I have come to understanding, and banished from my mind all the baby stories my mother taught me when I was a child. (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 6)

Though we have it in history that our father Adam was made of the dust of this earth, and that he knew nothing about God previous

to being made here, yet it is not so; and when we learn the truth we shall see and understand that he helped to make this world, and was the chief manager in that operation.

He was the person who brought the animals and the seeds from other planets to this world, and brought a wife with him and stayed here. You may read and believe what you please as to what is found written in the Bible. Adam was made from the dust of **an** earth, but not from the dust of **this** earth. He was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made upon any other principle. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 319)

Rodney Turner makes this comment concerning this matter:

Apparently President Young means that Adam was provided with a physical body through the normal pattern of conception, embryonic development, and birth, since that is [the] method by which "you and I are made." ("The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," p. 20)

**2. Adam is the only God with whom we have to do.** Brigham Young stated: "He is our Father and **our God**, and the **only God** with whom we have to do" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 50).

On February 3, 1861, John D. Lee recorded the following in his journal: "Eving I attendd Prayer meeting & instruct the Saints on the points of Doctrine refered to by the true *Latterday Saints Herald* & their Bombarding Pres. B. Young for Saying that Adam is **all the God** that we have to do with & to those that know no better, it is quite a stumbling Block . . ." (*A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee*, vol. 1, p. 293). In the book, *Women of Mormondom*, p. 196, we read: "When Brigham Young proclaimed to the nations that **Adam is our Father and God**, and Eve, his partner, the Mother of a world—**both in a mortal and celestial sense—he made the most important revelation ever oracled to the race since the days of Adam himself.**" The reader will also remember that we quoted this statement from the "Minutes of the School of the Prophets": ". . . Prest Young . . . says that **Adam is our God—the God we worship**—that most of the people believe this . . ."

**3. Adam is the Father of our Spirits.** Brigham Young also taught that Adam was the Father of our spirits. In 1873 he stated:

. . . Father Adam came here and helped to make the earth. . . . Then he said, "I want **my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here**. . . . I want My children **that were born to me in the spirit world** to come here and take tabernacles of flesh . . ." (*Deseret News*, June 14, 1873)

Joseph Lee Robinson stated that Brigham Young taught that Adam was the father of our spirits. The following appears in his journal and autobiography: "Brigham Young said . . . that **Adam and Eve were the natural father and mother of every spirit that comes to this planet, or that received, tabernacles on this planet, . . . and that Adam was God, our Eternal Father, . . .** On page 180 of *Women of Mormondom* we read the following: "**Adam** and Eve are the names of the fathers and mothers of worlds . . . These were father and mother of a world of **spirits who had been born to them in heaven.**"

**4. Adam, the Father of Jesus Christ.** Since Brigham Young was teaching that Adam was the father of our spirits, it was very easy to teach that Adam was also the father of Jesus. In a discourse delivered April 9, 1852, Brigham Young declared:

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? **He is the first of the human family;** . . . I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the



DISCOURSE

By PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, June 8th, 1873.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

I WILL read the text that my brother Joseph has been talking about—"If the foundation be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" I will read the second verse—"For lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privately shoot at the upright in heart." I shall make a few remarks to the Latter-day Saints and make the application of this scripture as liberal as I feel to. First, I will inquire of my brethren and sisters how far they would like to be righteous and upright in heart,—how far they would like to be Saints. I frequently use the sayings of our natives here and make the application to the Saints. You ask the native if he is a captain. He will sometimes say, "Yes, a little."

"How much?" "I am a captain, so much." "How I do love Babylon." Says one, "How I do love this fashionable coat, this beautiful hat, this pretty frock, that lovely ribbon?" "Oh, see the hat on that lady," and I say, see the five-bushed basket sticking out behind her. How beautiful it is! And she on it, sitting the spine of her back. How beautiful! It is lovely in the extreme. It is right from Babylon. What do you say, Saints? I must say that when I talk about these things I am like the young man who lost his apples. He was in the act of swearing a good deal, and one day while driving a load of apples up hill the hind gate of his wagon came out, and before he noticed it he had lost his apples. When he saw the situation said he, "I will not say a word, any swearing that I can do will fail to do justice to the occasion." So with my language that I know anything about would utterly fail in conveying a correct idea of the ridiculous nature of the conduct of many who profess to be Latter-day Saints.

"For lo, now read this text again—"For lo, the wicked bend their bow, do you know anybody who does this? Do you, Latter-day Saints, know of any such persons in this city?"—"For lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privately shoot at the upright in heart." Take the people of this city as they were and take them as they are, and make the application for yourselves. The next verse says—"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" I shall apply this in my own way. If I can not suit myself thoroughly I will suit myself as well as I can; if I can not suit you, you must try and suit yourselves. I ask all the Latter-day Saints, do you like the condition here at the present time? Do you like to walk here in the evening or in the day time, and see and hear? Do you like to pass these grogshops, or to enter these gambling halls and other mischievous places and see what their inmates are doing? I am going to make my wishes known to you without regard to the feelings of any who may blame me for making these remarks, and I would that I had all the Latter-day Saints who live in this city before me this afternoon. But as they are not here I shall probably ask the bishops and teachers to learn what I want to find out. My brother has been speaking of Philadelphia, and that the civilized nations are governed by law. This nation is governed by law. There are just as good and wholesome laws in this city, Territory and Government as can be found anywhere. We have just as good laws in these United States and in the different States as can be found, probably, in any country on the face of the whole earth. In carrying out these laws it is our privilege, to magnify ourselves as individual citizens, as a community of men and women dwelling together in a town or city, to sign a petition to

hard to take their measurement as Saints. I carry in my pocket a rule on which the inches are divided into a hundred parts. Such a rule would be necessary, in my opinion, to measure the standing of those who profess to be Saints, who refuse to sign a petition to stop drunkenness. You may differ from me in your opinion, and you have a perfect right to, and I have the same right to differ from you; but it is my opinion that the man or woman whose name is upon our records as a Latter-day Saint, who would fellowship what we see and have to endure here all the time, is a very poor Saint. I have some notion to ask you whether you like these things, and who among you will sign a petition to the City Council to stop them. I must explain here that the evils in our city are the result of the acts of men who, though administrators of the law in various capacities, instead of sustaining the laws, say, "Sell liquor as much as you please, pay no attention to the City Council, disregard the laws of this city and Territory, ride over and trample them under your feet, and break whatever law the City Council may make." This is what our administrators of the law say, and to this cause only can be attributed whatever of crime and defiance of law we see manifested here.

I have been said that Brother Brigham has professed his services to help stop the liquor traffic in this city. I will say, that is true, and I do it upon the principle of justice and truth, and within the bounds of our local laws, and in no other way; and if the inhabitants of this city are disposed to raise their voices and influence against the conduct we see here, and the City Council passes a law to stop the drunkenness and gambling, they will find us—the citizens—ready to sustain them by our faith and works. "For lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privately shoot at the upright in heart."

I leave it to the people of the United States, to all good citizens from the Atlantic to the Pacific, if it is not better to live without gambling and drunkenness than to have them in our midst? What would they say if they were to express an opinion on the subject? The leading portion of them would say, "Let us have sober, civil communities," and they would rejoice to see the time when our Presidents, law-makers, and executors of the law would live civilly with sober hearts and brains, able to judge between right and wrong, and with willing hearts and steady hands administer the laws to this great nation in righteousness. Will we Latter-day Saints sign a petition to the Mayor and City Council to stop these evils entirely? (Congregation said, "Yes.") I will invite all, whether citizens or strangers, who are in favor of a people living a sober, steady life, to vote on this question, if they desire to do so. (The congregation voted unanimously in favor, by showing their right hands.) Does anybody want to vote against it? (A man who wanted to lift his hand against seeing a sober, civil, industrious community, a community that will work for what they need, instead of gambling, robbing and plundering for it? If there is a man, either in the church or out, present this afternoon, he is at liberty to make it manifest by the same sign. (No dissentient). No, we Latter-day Saints go together, and one fault found with us is that we will hang together. I recollect, not over a hundred years ago, there was a certain man in Philadelphia who said—"We are accused of hanging together; we might just as well hang together as hang separate, and if we do not hang together, we shall certainly hang separate." He was a rebel and traitor, so said the English government, and he was talking to his companions, and they had agreed to hang by hanging together they saved their necks and gained the freedom of their country. That is the way with the Latter-day Saints, they hang together just enough to save themselves.

Now that I have your minds, ing honestly. I want the bishops to go to and find out how many in their wards will sign a paper to the City Council, asking its members to pass a law for the suppression of liquor selling and enforce the present law against gambling. I am thankful that I have the privilege and am willing to put my name at the head of such a paper, for I am opposed to these things. At the present time it seems to be impossible for the City Council to license people to keep bars for the accommodation of strangers. They would be glad to do so, and would be reasonable with those who wanted them, but owing to circumstances it does seem that our citizens will be bound to stop the whole of it, or else let a few ride over every law enacted for the preservation of the people and receive our teachings in good and honest hearts and profit by them. I have been found fault with a great many times for casting reflections upon men of science, and especially upon theologians, because of the little knowledge they possess about man being on the earth, about the earth itself, about our Father in heaven, his Son Jesus Christ, the order of heavenly things, the laws by which angels exist, by which the worlds were created and are held in existence, &c. How pleased we would be to place these things before the people if they would receive them! How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely, that Adam is our father and God—I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it. Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him, and after it was made he and his companions came here. He brought one of his wives with him, and she was called Eve, because she was the first woman upon the earth. Our Father Adam is the man who stands the gate and holds the keys of everlasting life and salvation to all his children who have or who ever will come upon the earth. I have been found fault with by the ministers of religion because I have said that they were ignorant. But I could help find any man on the earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith. Is it a great mystery that the earth exists? Is it a great mystery, that the world can not solve that man is in the earth? Yes, it is; but to whom? To the ignorant—those who know nothing about it. It is no mystery to those who understand. Is it a mystery to the Christian world that Jesus is the Son of God, and still the son of man? Yes, it is, it is hidden from them, and this fulfills the Scripture that says he hid it, it hid to them that are lost," who have no faith, and who pay no attention to the Spirit of God. These things are called mysteries by the people because they know nothing about them, just like laying hands on the sick. Is it a mystery that fever should be rebuked and the sick healed by the laying on of the hands of a man who is endowed with authority from God and has been ordained to that gift? "Oh yes," say the ignorant, "we know nothing about it." That is true, but where is the mystery? Will the ignorant receive the truth when they hear it? No, they will not, and this is their condemnation, that light has come into the world, and they choose darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. That is the fact in the case. What is the mystery about it? They do not understand invisible things. Ask the wicked, "Do you know anything about the laying on of hands?" "Oh yes, such a man"—a man who is wicked in his whole life—"has the art of laying on of hands for curing the tooth-ache, fevers, wounds," &c.; and now, in ful-

priests and people—would follow after. Where did I declare this? In the cities of New York, Albany, Boston, throughout the United States and in England. Have I seen this fulfilled? I have. I told the people that as true as God lived, if they would not believe in what they would have error sent unto them, and they would believe it. What is the mystery of it?

The Christian world read of, and think much about, St. Paul, also St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles. These men were faithful to and magnified the priesthood on the earth. Now, where will be the mystery, after they have passed through all the ordeals, and have been crowned and exalted, and received their inheritances in the eternal worlds of glory, for them to be sent forth, as the Gods have been for ever and ever, to be a first man?—"Make yourselves an earth, and people it with your own children?" Do you think the starry heavens are going to fall? Do the Christian world or the heathen world think that all things are going to be wrapped up, consumed, and annihilated in eternal flames? Oh fools, and slow of heart to believe the great things that God has purposed in his own mind!

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A photograph of the Deseret Weekly News, June 18, 1873. Brigham Young defends his Adam-God doctrine. He states that God revealed the doctrine to him. He also claimed that Adam is the father of the spirits that come to this earth to take mortal bodies. This sermon was also printed in the Deseret Evening News, June 14, 1873.

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whole truth, **blasphemy** would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and over righteous of mankind. However, **I have told you that truth as far as I have gone.** . . . Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh **by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden**, and who is our Father in Heaven. Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for **they will prove their salvation or damnation.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 50-51)

John A. Widtsoe, who was a recent Apostle in the Mormon Church, denied that Brigham Young taught that Adam was the Father of Christ:

Brigham Young's much-discussed sermon says that "Jesus was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven." Enemies of the Church, or **stupid people**, reading also that Adam is "our father and our God," have heralded far and wide that the Mormons believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of Adam. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 vols. in 1, p. 56)

It is easy to show that Apostle Widtsoe's statement is false for many good Mormons in Utah held to this view. For instance, Hosea Stout, who was a prominent Mormon, recorded the following in his diary under the date of April 9, 1852:

Another meeting this evening. President B. Young taught that **Adam** was the **father of Jesus and the only God to us**. That he came to this world in a resurrected [sic] body &c more hereafter. (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, University of Utah Press, 1964, vol. 2, p. 435)

In the *Women of Mormondom* we read:

**Adam is our father and God.** He is the God of the earth. So says **Brigham Young** . . . He is **the father of our elder brother, Jesus Christ**—the father of him who shall also come as Messiah to reign. He is the father of the **spirits** as well as the tabernacles of the sons and daughters of man. Adam! (*Women of Mormondom*, p. 179)

Heber C. Kimball, the first councilor to Brigham Young, stated:

I have learned by experience that there is but one God that pertains to this people, and he is the God that pertains to this earth—the **first man. That first man sent his own son to redeem the world,** . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 1)

In 1856 the Mormons published a hymnal which contained a hymn entitled, "We Believe In Our God." This hymn plainly taught that Adam was the father of Christ:

We believe in our God the great Prince of His race, The Archangel Michael, the Ancient of Days, Our own Father **Adam**, earth's Lord, as is plain, Who'll counsel and fight for his children again.

We believe in **His Son**, Jesus Christ, who, in love To his brethren and sisters, came down from above To die to redeem them from death, and to teach To mortals and spirits the Gospel we preach. (*Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Liverpool, 1856, p. 375, as quoted in "The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology," p. 16)

Rodney Turner states that this hymn "was not included in later editions of the hymnal in England. Nor was the writer able to find it in any hymnal published by the Church in America. Franklin D. Richards must have approved it for publication, since he edited the particular edition in which it is found" (*Ibid.*, p. 16).

George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, seemed to believe that Adam was the father of Christ. His son recorded the following in his journal:

. . . Father [George Q. Cannon] . . . asked me what I understood concerning Mary conceiving the Savior; and as I found no answer, he asked what was to prevent Father Adam from visiting and overshadowing the mother of Jesus. "Then," said I, "He must have

been a resurrected Being." "Yes," said he, "and though Christ is said to have been the first fruits of them that slept, yet the Savior said he did nothing but what He had seen His Father do, for He had power to lay down His life and take it up again. Adam, though made of dust, was made, as Pres. Young said, of the dust of another planet than this." I was very much instructed by the conversation and this day's services. ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," March 10, 1888, vol. 10, pp. 178-179; original at Brigham Young University)

Under the date of June 23, 1889, Abraham Cannon recorded that George Q. Cannon taught that "Jesus Christ is Jehovah" and that "Adam is His Father and our God" ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," vol. 11, p. 39).

Below is a photograph from Abraham H. Cannon's journal:

*Sunday, June 23d, 1889:— Very hot day. — I spent the forenoon in conversing on the Gospel principles and reading. Father proved to my entire satisfaction this morning by passage from the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants that all men, even the sons of perdition, will be resurrected and stand before God to be judged. He believes that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and that Adam is His Father and our God; that under certain unknown conditions the benefits of the Savior's atonement extend to our entire solar system. Jesus, in speaking of Him*

The information given above certainly shows that Brigham Young did teach that Jesus was the son of Adam, and that it was not just "Enemies of the Church, or stupid people" who felt that he taught this doctrine. The most devastating evidence, however, comes from the "Journal of L. John Nuttall." On Wednesday, February 7, 1877, L. John Nuttall recorded in his journal that Brigham Young taught that Jesus was the son of Adam:

Wed 7 . . . **Prest Young** was filled with the spirit of God & revelation & said, when we got our washings and anointings under the hands of the Prophet Joseph at Nauvoo we had only one room to work in . . . he gave the Key words, tokens (sic) and penalties . . . these things of which I have been speaking are what are termed the mysteries of godliness but they enable you to understand the expression of Jesus made while in Jerusalem. This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent . . . **Adam** was an immortal being when he came on this earth . . . and had begotten **all the spirit** that was to come to this earth and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world . . .

Father **Adam's oldest son (Jesus the Savior)** who is the heir of the family is **Father Adams first begotten in the spirit World, who according to the flesh is the only begotten** as it is written. (In his divinity he having gone back into the spirit world, and come in **the spirit to Mary and she conceived** . . .) (Journal of L. John Nuttall, vol. 1, pp. 18-21, taken from a typed copy at the Brigham Young University)

The Mormon writer Rodney Turner seems to be willing to concede that the Nuttall journal probably contains a reliable account of Brigham Young's comments:

There is no legit[i]mate reason to question the general accuracy of this account of Brigham Young's remarks as it appears in the Nuttall journal. . . . He acted as private secretary to President John Taylor (1879-1887) and President Wilford Woodruff (1887-1892). . . . He occasionally acted as a clerk in the general conferences of the Church; and in taking of formal notes was considered "extremely reliable." In fact, he was acting as a special secretary to President Young at the time the journal entry in question was made. . . .

There is one thought expressed in the Nuttall journal

which merits analysis. It is the explanation of how Adam, who in a state of morality had many direct offspring, could still be the Father of Christ, who is spoken of as the “Only Begotten” Son of God. Brigham Young implies that Christ is the “only begotten” of Adam “in his divinity.” In other words, when Adam begat physical offspring, he did so in a fallen state of mortality which precluded the transfer of “divinity” or immortality to that offspring. But in the case of the Savior, such a transfer of divinity could take place because Adam and Eve, without actually suffering a physical death, had “returned to the spirit world from whence they came” and reassumed their former glory and divinity. Thus, Adam, having regained his divinity and immortality, could, in begetting Christ, declare him to be the “Only Begotten Son” . . . (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, August 1953, pp. 33-35)

When the Mormon Church was accused of teaching that “Adam is God . . . and that Jesus is his son,” the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts replied:

As a matter of fact, the “Mormon” Church does not teach that doctrine. A few men in the “Mormon” Church have held such views: and several of them **quite prominent in the councils of the church, . . . Brigham Young and others may have taught that doctrine, . . .** (*Deseret News*, July 23, 1921)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Church, is not as willing to admit that “Brigham Young and others may have taught that doctrine.” In his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*, he makes this statement:

The statement by President Brigham Young that the Father is the first of the human family is easily explained. But the expression that he was the same character that was in the Garden of Eden has led to misunderstanding because of the implication which our enemies place upon it that it has reference to Adam. **Unfortunately President Brigham Young is not here to make his meaning in this regard perfectly clear.** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 102)

## Confusion and Strife

Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine has brought much confusion into the Mormon Church. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Church, once stated:

Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven’s sake, let these things alone...God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know... I say this because we are troubled every little while with inquiries from Elders anxious to know who God is, who Christ is, and **who Adam is. I say to the elders of Israel, stop this.** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 57, pp. 355-356)

In all fairness to the Mormon Church it should be stated that they no longer teach the Adam-God doctrine, even though some members of the church still believe it. Anyone who is caught teaching this doctrine is liable to be excommunicated. This, however, shows the inconsistency of the Mormon Church, for they say that Brigham Young was a prophet, and at the same time they will excommunicate a person for believing in his teachings.

Even before the turn of the century the Mormon leaders seemed to be ashamed of the Adam-God doctrine. On November 28, 1898, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, stated that Brigham Young had taught some things concerning Adam and Jesus, but they felt it was not “wise to advocate these matters”:

I was stopped yesterday afternoon by a young man, who wanted to know whether Adam was the Father of our Lord and Savior—whether he was the being we worshipped, etc. Now, we can get ourselves very easily puzzled, if we choose to do so, by speculating upon doctrines

and principles of this character. The Lord has said through His Prophet that there are two personages in the Godhead. That ought to be sufficient for us at the present time. . . . Concerning the doctrine in regard to **Adam and the Savior**, the Prophet Brigham Young taught some things concerning that; but the First Presidency and the twelve **do not think it wise to advocate these matters.** It is sufficient to know we have a Father—God the Eternal Father, who reveals Himself by His Holy Spirit unto those who seek Him; and that Jesus Christ is His Son, our Redeemer, the Savior of the world. (*Proceedings of the First Sunday School Convention of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City, 1899, as quoted in “The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scriptures and Theology,” pp. 69-70)

Even though the Mormon leaders were trying to put down Brigham Young’s Adam-God doctrine, many Mormons continued to believe it. Rodney Turner cites Charles W. Penrose, a member of the First Presidency, as making this statement in 1916: “There still remains, I can tell by the letters I have alluded to, an idea among some of the people that Adam was and is the Almighty and Eternal God” (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” p. 81). On the same page of his thesis, Rodney Turner cites Penrose as saying: “. . . the notion has taken hold of some of our brethren that Adam is the being that we should worship.”

In a letter, dated May 11, 1966, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards wrote: “Your third question: ‘Is the Adam God Doctrine, as taught in the *Journal of Discourses*, true?’ Answer: No.” In our *Case*, vol. 3, page 122, we show that some of the Mormon leaders now claim that Brigham Young was misquoted. This claim is completely untrue. Rodney Turner, who now teaches religion at the Brigham Young University, feels that it is impossible to maintain such a position:

### Was Brigham Young Misquoted?

It is the writer’s opinion that the answer to this question is a categorical no. There is not the slightest evidence from Brigham Young, or any other source, that either his original remarks on April 9, 1852, or any of his subsequent statements were ever misquoted in the official publications of the Church. . . .

In the light of Brigham Young’s attitude toward the errors of others, and in view of the division created by his remarks concerning Adam, it would be stretching one’s credulity to the breaking point to believe that he would have remained silent had he been misquoted. To the contrary, we could expect him to be rather watchful of the manner in which his addresses were published in the official organs of the Church. . . . President Young did not hesitate to cite what he considered to be the false ideas of Orson Pratt by chapter and verse; had erroneous teachings concerning Adam been advanced due to the misquoting of his addresses, Brigham Young would surely have referred to those misquotations at sometime or other—he never did. . . . The complete absence of any real evidence to the contrary obliges the writer to conclude that Brigham Young has not been misquoted in the official publications of the Church. (“The Position of Adam in Latter-day Saint Scripture and Theology,” M. A. thesis, Brigham Young University, August, 1953, pp. 45-47)

On page 58 of the same thesis, Rodney Turner states: “A careful, detached study of his available statements, as found in the official publications of the Church, will admit of no other conclusion than that the identification of Adam with God the Father by President Brigham Young is an irrefutable fact.”

We must agree with Rodney Turner; the evidence that Brigham Young taught the Adam-God doctrine is “irrefutable.”



## Apostle Petersen Fails to Show Brigham Young Misquoted

As we have shown in this chapter, after Brigham Young's death, his Adam-God doctrine fell into disrepute. In 1976 the Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen wrote a book in which he attacked this doctrine as unscriptural:

To say that Adam is God is, of course, opposed utterly and completely to the scriptures as well as to our Articles of Faith, . . . to say that we have nothing to do with "any God but Adam," . . . violates all the teachings of the gospel of Christ, who taught us to pray to the Father in the name of Christ, . . . (*Adam: Who Is He?* p. 14)

Apostle Petersen claimed that Brigham Young was misquoted on April 9, 1852, and brought forth some new information which he maintained would establish his case:

Elder Charles C. Rich, of the Council of the Twelve, was present on a day when President Young gave an address that was wrongly reported as saying Adam was Deity. In the copy of the *Journal of Discourses* that he had, Elder Rich referred to the misquotation as it appears in the *Journal of Discourses*, and in his own hand he wrote the following as the correct statement made by President Young: "Jesus our elder Brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character who talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Heavenly Father." (This signed statement is in the hands of the Church Historian.) . . .

On the face of it the mistake is obvious and was quickly noted by Elder Rich, who was present and heard the sermon. Hence the correction that he made. (*Adam: Who Is He?* pp. 16-17)

After *Adam: Who Is He?* appeared in print, Bob Witte marshaled evidence to show that Apostle Petersen was inaccurate in his statement about Apostle Rich correcting Brigham Young's statement (see the enlarged edition of *Where Does It Say That?*). Chris Vlachos later wrote an article which completely smashes Apostle Petersen's whole thesis:

What seems to be a good case made by Mr. Petersen crumbles, however upon cross-examination. C. C. Rich, who Petersen claims "was present and heard the sermon," was in reality not even in Salt Lake City on that day! Rich left San Bernardino, California, on March 24, 1852, for the Great Salt Lake. He did not reach his destination until April 21. Under this date, the LDS Journal History records:

April 21, 1852:

Elder Chas. C. Rich and thirteen others arrived today in G.S.L. from California.

In the May 1, 1852 issue of the Mormon *Deseret Weekly* the following announcement was made:

Elder C. C. Rich arrived on Wednesday, the 21 of April, in company with 13 others...direct from San Bernardino.

Hosea Stout, in his journal, also noted the event:

Wednesday 21st April 1852 . . . Gen. Rich and some 15 others arrived today from California by the South rout all well.

Furthermore, not only was C. C. Rich absent on the ninth, but the reference Petersen claims was written by C. C. Rich "in his own hand" was in reality written and signed by his son, Ben E. Rich, many years after the sermon was delivered!

Whether Mr. Petersen was deliberately seeking to suppress the facts or not, the truth is that there is no evidence whatsoever that Brigham Young was misquoted. As we shall see, Young came under much criticism from outside and from within the Mormon Church for teaching that Adam was God the Father. If he had merely been misquoted, Brigham simply could have corrected his hearers and

accusers. Instead, however, Young continued to affirm and preach this doctrine against all opposition. (*The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1979, pp. 99-100)

Although Apostle Petersen does not acknowledge making a mistake with regard to this important matter, he has made some very revealing changes in the 1979 printing of his book. He admits, in fact, that Charles Rich was not present and that the statement was in reality written by his son, Ben E. Rich:

Elder Charles C. Rich was not present on the day when President Young gave an address that was wrongly reported as saying Adam was our Father in heaven. (See *JD* 1:51.) The sermon was delivered April 9, 1852, and Elder Rich returned April 21. In a copy of the *Journal of Discourses* Elder Ben E. Rich, son of Elder Charles C. Rich, referred to the misquotation as it appears in the *Journal of Discourses*, and in his own hand corrected the statement to read as follows: "Jesus our Elder Brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character who talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven." In this same statement Ben E. Rich wrote "As corrected above is what Prest. Young said, as testified to me by my father, C. C. Rich." (This signed statement is in the hands of the Church Historical Department.) . . .

On the face of it the mistake is obvious. We find in Genesis 2:15-16 and 3:8-9 that God walked and talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden. (*Adam: Who Is He?* 1979 printing, pp. 16-17)

The reader will notice that in the 1976 printing, Apostle Petersen asserted: "Elder Charles C. Rich, of the Council of the Twelve, was present on a day when President Young gave an address that was wrongly reported . . ." In the 1979 printing this was changed to read: "Elder Charles C. Rich was not present on the day when President Young gave an address that was wrongly reported . . ." The 1976 printing assured us that "Elder Rich referred to the misquotation as it appears in the *Journal of Discourses*, and in his own hand he wrote the following . . ." This was changed to read that "Elder Ben E. Rich, son of Elder Charles C. Rich, referred to the misquotation as it appears in the *Journal of Discourses*, and in his own hand corrected the statement . . ." Apostle Petersen originally stated: "On the face of it the mistake is obvious and was quickly noted by Elder Rich, who was present and heard the sermon. Hence the correction that he made." In the 1979 printing this was altered to read: "On the face of it the mistake is obvious. We find in Genesis 2:15-16 and 3:8-9 that God walked and talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden."

It is very difficult to understand how Apostle Petersen could make such a serious mistake. We wonder, too, why he continues to use this material when it is of no real value. Since Charles C. Rich was not present, and since his son, Ben E. Rich, who recorded the material, had not even been born at the time, we cannot see that it provides any substantial help to Apostle Petersen's thesis. The fact that he would even use such material shows that he is totally unprepared to deal with the issue of the Adam-God doctrine.

## More on Brigham Young's Fight Over the Adam-God Doctrine

Chris Vlachos has gleaned a great deal of new evidence from manuscript sources to prove that Brigham Young vigorously defended his Adam-God doctrine and that President Young and Apostle Pratt contended over this matter as indicated on page 174-75 of this book:

During a discourse given on Sunday night, February 19,



1854, Brigham Young again addressed the question of who begot Jesus Christ in the flesh. Speaking of Christ, he asked:

Who did beget him? His Father, and his father is our God, and the Father of our spirits, and he is the framer of the body, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is he. He is Father Adam; Michael; the Ancient of day. . . .

While Brigham in his discourse of 1852 may have been unclear, in this 1854 address there is no question about his meaning. Here Brigham distinctly names Adam as God the Father. Wilford Woodruff, Mormon Apostle and later Church President, had no doubt about what Brigham meant. Referring to this discourse under the date of February 19, 1854, in his journal, Woodruff recorded:

He [Brigham Young] said that our God was Father Adam He was the Father of the Saviour Jesus Christ—Our God was no more or less than Adam, Michael the Arkangel.

It should be noted that Brigham identifies Adam as the “Father of our spirits.” . . . By referring to Adam as the Father of our spirits, Brigham was clearly identifying him as the being whom Mormons address as “Heavenly Father.” . . .

Though Richards and most of the other Church authorities accepted their prophet’s declaration as the word of God, there was one member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles who openly opposed Brigham Young in his views. That man was Orson Pratt. Under the date of September 17, 1854, LDS Apostle Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal the details of a confrontation between Young and Pratt. . . . When Young declared some of Orson’s doctrines to be false, Pratt retaliated against the prophet by voicing his disbelief in the Adam-God doctrine:

Brother Pratt also thought that Adam was made of the dust of the Earth Could not believe that Adam was our God or the Father of Jesus Christ President Young said that He was that He came from another world . . . He told Brother Pratt to lay aside his Philosophical reasoning & get revelation from God to govern him & enlighten his mind more. . . .

This dispute between the Mormon Prophet and his Apostle continued for several years. Because of his disbelief in the Adam-God teaching and in other doctrines of Young, Pratt was for years upon the point of being severed from the Church. (*The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, vol. III, no. 2, 1979, pp. 101-104)

Gary James Bergera has prepared an excellent study of the conflict between Brigham Young and Orson Pratt (see *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1980, pp. 14–58). In this article Bergera has quoted a great deal of unpublished material from the LDS Church Archives. This material shows that the dissension between Young and Pratt lasted for years and became rather heated on some occasions. For instance, on January 27, 1860, Orson Pratt asserted:

. . . When Joseph teaches any thing & Brigham seems to teach another contrary to Joseph . . . I believe them as Joseph has spoken them . . . I have spoken plainly I would rather not have spoken so plainly but I have no excuses to make President Young said I ought to make a confession But Orson Pratt is not a man to make a confession of what I do not believe. I am not going to crawl to Brigham and act the Hypocrite and confess what I do not Believe. I will be a free man President Young condemns my doctrines to be fals I do not believe them to be fals . . . I will not act the Hypocrite it may cost me my

fellowship But I will stick to it if I die tonight I would say O Lord God Almighty[y] I believe what I say. (“Minutes of a Meeting of the Presidency & Twelve Presidents of Seventies and Others assembled in President Youngs Council Room,” WWJ, 27 January 1860, as cited in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1980, p. 19)

In his reply to Pratt, Brigham Young countered: “ ‘You have been like a stubborn mule,’ . . . and have taken a fals position in order to accuse me . . . Orson Pratt puts down a lie to argue upon he has had fals ground all the time tonight . . .” (*Ibid.*)

On page 26 of the same article, Bergera cites an interesting exchange between Young and Pratt which is taken from “Minutes of Meeting at Historian’s Office, April 4, 1860”:

“There are certain points,” he said, “taught by Bro. Y as being true that there does seem to be disputed between those & the Revel[at]ions]

& when I reflect that there is—item upon item, doctrine upon doctrine—I would be a hypocrite if I came out & said that these [are] views on which I have strong faith [I] would be acting too much a hypocrite. . . . I would like to ennumerate [those] items. first preached & publish[ed] that Adam is the fa[ther] of our spirits, & father of Spirit & father of our bodies. When I read the Rev[elations] given to Joseph I read directly the opposite.

“Your statements to night,” Young retorted, “you came out to night and place them as charges, & have as many against me as I have [against] you. One thing I have thought I might still have ommited,” he said. “It was Joseph’s doctrine that Adam was God when in Luke Johnson’s . . . Joseph could not reveal what was revealed to him, if Joseph had it revealed, he was told not to reveal it. . . .”

President Young threatened that if Apostle Pratt did not back down he would be “voted as a false teacher, & your false doctrines discarded. I love your integrity, but your ignorance is as great as any philosophers ought to be.”

The next day the church leaders met again and Pratt maintained:

. . . in regard to Adam being our Father and our God, I have not published it, altho I frankly say, I have no confidence in it, altho advanced by bro. Kimball in the stand, and afterwards approved by bro. Brigham . . . I have never intended to advance new ideas, but to keep within revelation. It is said the revelations given to Joseph Smith, answered them, and if Joseph would translate now, it would be so very different, if that was so, I should never know when I was right, in fourteen years hence, all the revelations of Brigham may be done away, but I do not admit it, The Lord deals with us on consistent principles, . . . (*Ibid*, p. 30)

On pages 31-32 of the same article, we find the following:

“It was the Father of Jesus Christ that was talking to Adam in the garden,” Pratt pressed on. “B. Young says that Adam was the Father of Jesus Christ, both of his spirit and Body, in his teachings from the stand. . . .”

Despite Hyde’s attempted reconciliation, Pratt remained uncompromising. “I have heard Brigham say,” he remarked, “that Adam is the Father of our Spirits, and he came here with his resurrected body, to fall for his children, and I said to him, it leads to an endless number of falls, . . . that is revolting to my feelings, . . . [A]nother item, I heard brother Young say that Jesus had a body, flesh and bones, before he came, he was born of the Virgin Mary, it was so contrary to every revelation given.”

Under a great deal of pressure from Brigham Young and other church leaders, Orson Pratt was finally forced to back down. Bergera says that “Throughout the ensuing years until Young’s death in 1877, conflict between the Apostle and his President submerged markedly, . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 39). Nevertheless, “On 10 April 1875, some two years before Brigham Young’s death, the church President rearranged the order of seniority in the Quorum of the Twelve, placing three others before Pratt, though the latter chronologically preceded them based on date of original ordination to the quorum, Pratt did not succeed to the presidency as would have otherwise occurred if the order not been realigned. While Young maintained that such action was necessary because of Pratt’s 1842 excommunication, it would not be entirely incorrect to assume that Young was motivated by his unwillingness to permit Pratt’s eventual succession as Church President” (*Ibid.*, p. 40).

### Evidence on the Adam-God Doctrine Mounting

As time goes on, more and more evidence that Brigham Young taught the Adam-God doctrine is coming to light. In the face of this material, an increasing number of Mormon scholars are now willing to concede that the doctrine was taught. Even Apostle Bruce R. McConkie appears to be weakening. In a letter to “Honest Truth Seekers,” Apostle McConkie declared:

Some prophets—I say it respectfully—know more and have greater inspiration than others. Thus, if Brigham Young, who was one of the greatest of the prophets, said something about Adam which is out of harmony with what is in the Book of Moses and in Section 78, it is the scripture that prevails.

In a talk given at the BYU Marriott Center on June 1, 1980, Apostle McConkie severely attacked the Adam-God doctrine. If McConkie’s words were applied to Brigham Young, they would make him a false prophet who was in danger of losing his soul:

HERESY NO. 6 — There are those who believe, or say they believe, that Adam is our father and our God, that he is the father of our spirits and our bodies, and that he is the one we worship. The devil keeps this heresy alive as a means of obtaining converts to cultism. It is contrary to the whole plan of salvation set forth in the scriptures. Anyone who has read the Book of Moses and anyone who has received the temple endowment and who yet believes the Adam-God theory does not deserve to be saved.

In his article published in *The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1979, Chris Vlachos not only presents a great deal of evidence to prove that Brigham Young taught the Adam-God doctrine, but he shows clearly that this was a serious violation of the commandment. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). He points out the grave implications for present-day Mormons:

While throughout the flow of Bible history we see God proclaiming that He alone is to be worshiped, at the same time we find prophets who were not of God taught the contrary. True prophets would never be found teaching the people to worship another god— whether it was a stone idol, an imaginary god dwelling in heaven, or a deified man. . . . when these living oracles of God spoke as prophets, they were moved to proclaim, “Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” . . .

Holding fast to these truths let us turn now to Brigham Young, a man who claimed for himself the station and office of prophet of God. Recent history records the lives of few men who have possessed the leadership qualities that Young exhibited. For thirty years he presided as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator over the Mormon Church, a people claiming to be led by prophets of God as in the days of ancient Israel. . . . Their priesthood claims sole possession of the authority or power needed to act on behalf of God, and they consider all other “Christian churches” to be in a state of apostasy, who at best teach a partial truth about the gospel of Christ. Now if Brigham Young, Mormon prophet from 1847 to 1877, were a false prophet all along, then the claims of those who have sought to derive their priesthood authority through him are empty and void. If Brigham taught false doctrine, that cuts the ground from under Mormonism’s claim of latter-day prophetic revelation and the Mormon Church is not divinely led. . . .

The Mormon Church must base the truth of her claims on the authenticity of Brigham’s calling. Yet, we shall see that Brigham Young, who presided over the Mormon Church longer than any other man, did indeed advance false doctrine that focused worship on a god other than the Lord God of Israel. . . .

An examination of the evidence, however, will admit to no other conclusion than that Brigham Young did teach that Adam was Heavenly Father, the Father of men’s spirits as well as the Father of Jesus Christ in the flesh. . . . The doctrine that he taught for over 25 years was false doctrine and the LDS Church admits this today. It has, in effect, sided with Orson Pratt and has adopted his arguments and views as being right. However, in doing this it has unknowingly admitted that Brigham was not an inspired prophet of God. . . .

The implications certainly are obvious. The claims of the Utah LDS Church utterly collapse when they claim to be the only true church and the sole possessor of God’s authority.

The Mormon, furthermore, faces the dilemma of being unable to be certain that his present prophet is advancing true doctrine. Perhaps the present teachings of the living prophet will be tomorrow’s false teachings of a dead prophet. Perhaps the present revelations which the modern President claims to have received will be swept under the carpet as was the revelation concerning Adam that Brigham Young claimed to have received from God.

Today’s Mormon cannot hide behind a testimony that the living prophet is advancing correct doctrine. His testimony holds no more weight than the strong testimonies which past members had concerning the truth of Brigham’s Adam-God teaching. . . .

This frightening dilemma in which the Mormon finds himself is not peculiar to him or to his people, but is the snare in which all men find themselves when they put their trust in men. To trust in the arm of flesh is really to have no hope at all. . . .

God invites all men today to place their trust in Him directly through His Son, Jesus Christ. Unlike a false prophet who teaches the people to follow a strange god, Jesus can be fully trusted to lead us to His Father. By His death, Christ has secured a place in the presence of God for all who place their trust in him. Those who trust Him can be absolutely sure that He will never fail. (pp. 94-96, 118, 119)



February  
 He had received the Presidency and the  
 keys thereof and had been faithful in all  
 things and gained his resurrection and his  
 exaltation and was crowned with glory  
 immortality and eternal lives and was  
 numbered with the gods for such he became  
 through his faithfulness, and had begotten all  
 the spirits that was to come to this earth, and  
 Eve our common mother who is the mother  
 of all living mortal spirits in the celestial  
 world, and when this earth was organized by  
 Elohim: Jehonah & Michael who is Adam our  
 common father, Adam & Eve had the privilege  
 to continue the work of progression, consequently  
 came to this earth and commenced the great  
 work of forming tabernacles for these spirits &  
 dwell in, and when Adam and those that  
 assisted him had completed this Kingdom  
 our earth he came to it, and slept and forgot  
 all and became like an infant child, it  
 is said by Moses the historian that the Lord  
 caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and took  
 from his side a rib and formed the woman  
 that Adam called Eve - this should be inter-  
 preted that the man Adam like all other men  
 had the seed within him to propagate his  
 species, but not the woman, she conceives  
 the seed but she does not produce it, conse-  
 quently she was taken from the side of Adam  
 of her father, this explains the mystery of Moses  
 & all things in regard to Adam and Eve.  
 Adam & Eve when they were placed on this  
 earth were immortal beings with flesh, bones  
 and sinews, but upon partaking of the fruit of

the earth while in the garden and cultivating  
 the ground their bodies became changed from  
 immortal to mortal beings with the blood coming  
 through their veins as the action of life -  
 Adam was not under transgression  
 until after he partook of the forbidden fruit  
 this was necessary that they might be fathers  
 that man might be, the woman was formed  
 in transgression not the man - now in  
 the law of sacrifice we have the promise  
 of a savior, and man had the privilege and  
 showed forth his obedience by offering of  
 the first fruits of the earth and the fruiting of  
 the fields, this as a showing that Jesus would  
 come and shed his blood.

February  
 Father Adam's oldest son (Jesus the savior  
 who is the heir of the family) is Father Adam's  
 first begotten in the spirit world, who accord-  
 ing to the flesh is the only begotten as it  
 is written. (in his divinity he having  
 gone back into the spirit world, and  
 come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived  
 for when Adam and Eve got through  
 with their work on this earth they did not



A photograph from the "Journal of L. John Nuttall," Feb. 7, 1877. Notice that Brigham Young's "special secretary" recorded that Young taught Jesus was the son of Adam.



# 11. The Priesthood

The Mormon leaders claim that those who hold the Priesthood in the Mormon Church are the only ones who have the authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel. This concept leads members of the church to believe that the work of other churches is in vain. In the *Mormon Missionary Handbook* we read the following:

Elder: **Why is the priesthood so important?**

Brown: Because a man must have it to do those things.

Elder: He certainly must. Suppose a priest or minister baptizes without the priesthood, what does that mean in the sight of the Lord?

Brown: It doesn't mean anything.

Elder: Why is that?

Brown: Because he would lack the necessary authority.

Elder: Right. **So even though a minister might be sincere, unless he has the priesthood, will the Lord recognize a baptism performed by him?**

Brown: No.

(*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, 1961, p. 15)

In the Bible we read that John at one time held a belief similar to this, for which Jesus rebuked him:

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad 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. (Luke 9:49-50)

## Added Later

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, said the following concerning the Priesthood.

This matter of "Priesthood," since the days of Sydney Rigdon, has been the great hobby and stumbling-block of the Latter Day Saints. Priesthood means authority; and authority is the word we should use. I do not think the word priesthood is mentioned in the New Covenant of the Book of Mormon. Authority is the word we used for the first two years in the church—until Sydney Rigdon's days in Ohio. This matter of the two orders of priesthood in the Church of Christ, and lineal priesthood of the old law being in the church, all originated in the mind of Sydney Rigdon. He explained these things to Brother Joseph in his way, out of the old Scriptures, and got Joseph to inquire, etc. He would inquire, and as mouthpiece speak out the revelations just as they had it fixed up in their hearts. . . . according to the desires of the heart, the inspiration comes, but it may be the spirit of man that gives it. . . . This is the way the High Priests and the "priesthood" as you have it, was introduced into the Church of Christ almost two years after its beginning—and after we had baptized and confirmed about two thousand souls into the church. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, by David Whitmer p. 64)

The question might well be asked, "If what David Whitmer says is true, how can section 27 and other sections of the *Doctrine and Covenants* be accounted for?" It does seem like there is a contradiction here. Section 27 tells of the bestowal of the lesser

priesthood and the visitation of Peter, James, and John, and is dated August 1830, whereas David Whitmer stated that the idea of two orders of priesthood, lineal priesthood, etc., did not come into the church until Sidney Rigdon's days in Ohio. Actually, these revelations have been changed from the way they originally read when they were first printed in the *Book of Commandments*. David Whitmer stated:

You have **changed the revelations** from the way they were first given and as they are today in the *Book of Commandments*, to support the error of Brother Joseph in taking upon himself the office of Seer to the church. You have changed the revelations to support the error of high priests. You have changed the revelations to support the error of a President of the high priesthood, high counselors, etc. You have altered the revelations to support you in going beyond the plain teachings of Christ in the new covenant part of the Book of Mormon. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 49)

In his book, *Problems in Mormon Text*, La Mar Petersen gives this interesting information about the changes concerning Priesthood which have been made in Joseph Smith's revelations:

The important details that are missing from the "full history" of 1834 are likewise missing from the *Book of Commandments* in 1833. The student would expect to find all the particulars of the Restoration in this first treasured set of 65 revelations, the dates of which encompassed the bestowals of the two Priesthoods, but they are conspicuously absent . . . The notable revelations on Priesthood in the *Doctrine and Covenants* before referred to, Sections 2 and 13, are missing, and Chapter 28 gives no hint of the Restoration which, if actual, had been known for four years. **More than four hundred words were added** to this revelation of August, 1829 in Section 27 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the additions made to include the names of heavenly visitors and two separate ordinations. The *Book of Commandments* gives the duties of Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons and refers to Joseph's apostolic calling but **there is no mention of Melchizedek Priesthood, High Priesthood, Seventies, High Priests, nor High Councilors. These words were later inserted into the revelation on church organization and government of April, 1830, making it appear that they were known at that date, but they do not appear in the original, Chapter 24 of the Book of Commandments three years later. Similar interpolations were made in the revelations known as Sections 42 and 68.** (*Problems in Mormon Text*, by La Mar Petersen, pp. 7-8)

At this point the reader may be interested in taking a closer look at the photographs showing the changes made in Joseph Smith's revelations which we presented earlier—see CHANGES E (page 19), I (page 22), K (page 23), M (page 23), N (page 23), O (page 24), P (page 24) and Q (page 25).

## Aaronic Priesthood

The Mormon Church claims to have the Aaronic Priesthood; the Bible, however, makes it clear that it was fulfilled at the death of Christ. In Hebrews 7:11-14 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 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 out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

Members of the early Christian Church were not ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood, neither is there any mention of the Aaronic Priesthood in the Book of Mormon. The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt admitted that the Nephites did not have the Aaronic Priesthood: “. . . the Aaronic Priesthood is **no where pretended to** in the Book of Mormon” (*Writings of Parley Parker Pratt*, p. 209).

The Mormon Church claims that on May 15, 1829, John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Section 13 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* is cited as evidence that the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. We must remember, however, that this section did **not** appear in the revelations as they were originally printed in the *Book of Commandments*. It was published in the *Times and Seasons* on August 1, 1842, but it was not added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* until 1876.

Section 27 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* might lead one to believe that in 1830 the ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist was common knowledge in the church. In verse 8 we read:

Which John I have sent unto you, my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, to ordain you unto the first priesthood which you have received, that you might be called and ordained even as Aaron;

Since the introduction to this revelation states that it was given in 1830, Mormon writers use it in their attempt to prove the Restoration of the Priesthood. A careful examination of this revelation, however, reveals that it has been falsified. Verse 8 was **not** in the revelation as it was originally published in the *Book of Commandments*. It was added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835 (see Change K, p. 23).

## Melchizedek Priesthood

It is claimed by the Mormon leaders that **before** the church was organized Peter, James and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards admitted that the exact date of this ordination is not known:

While we are a record-keeping people, as the Lord commanded, nevertheless our records are not complete. . . . we do **not** have the date that Peter, James and John conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood upon them. (Letter from LeGrand Richards, dated Sept. 26, 1960)

The *Doctrine and Covenants* 27:12 is cited as proof that the Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred at a very early date:

And also with Peter, and James, and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles, . . .

This verse, however, did **not** appear in the revelation when it was published in the *Book of Commandments* in 1833. It was added into the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and therefore it cannot be cited as proof that the Melchizedek Priesthood was in the church at the time the revelation was given (see Change K, p. 23).

It is claimed that an Elder is an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood, although neither the Bible nor the Book of Mormon teach this. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 107:7 we read: “The office of an **elder** comes under the priesthood of Melchizedek.” There is evidence, however, that in the beginning the Elders of the

Mormon Church did **not** have the Melchizedek Priesthood. Joseph Smith himself made this statement concerning a conference held in June, 1831:

. . . the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood was manifested and conferred **for the first time** upon several of the **Elders**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 175-176)

John Whitmer, who was Church Historian, confirmed the fact that the Elders were ordained to the High Priesthood on June 3, 1831:

June 3, 1831. A general conference was called . . . the Lord made manifest to Joseph that it was necessary that such of the **Elders** as were considered worthy, should be ordained to the high priesthood. . . . these were ordained to the high priesthood, namely: Lyman Wight, Sidney Rigdon, John Murdock, Reynolds Cahoon, Harvey Whitlock, and Hyrum Smith were ordained by Joseph Smith, Junior, except Sidney Rigdon. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 7)

John Corrill also stated that the Melchizedek Priesthood was first introduced in the church at that conference: “About fifty **Elders** met, which was about all the **Elders** that then belonged to the church. . . . The Malchisedic priesthood was then for the **first time introduced**, and conferred on several of the **Elders**” (*A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 1839, p. 18). George A. Smith, speaking in the Tabernacle in 1864, also mentioned this conference: “He [Ezra Booth] was present in June, 1831, . . . the manifestation of the power of God being on Joseph, he set apart some of the **Elders** to the High Priesthood” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 4).

If the Melchizedek Priesthood is really necessary it is certainly odd that the elders were able to function from the organization of the church until June, 1831, without it. All evidence points to the fact that the Melchizedek Priesthood did not come from the hands of Peter, James and John in 1829, but **rather from the mind of Sidney Rigdon** in Ohio in 1831. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made the following admission concerning the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood: “. . . there is **no definite account** of the event in the history of the Prophet Joseph, or, for matter of that, **in any of our annals**, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 40, footnote). In trying to prove that there was a restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, Roberts cites two statements by Oliver Cowdery. These statements are of little value, however, since they were not made until the late 1840's and were not published until some time later.

## High Priests

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made the following statements concerning the ordination of High Priests in the Mormon Church:

The next grievous error which crept into the church was in ordaining high priests in June, 1831. This error was introduced at the instigation of Sydney Rigdon. The office of high priests was **never spoken of**, and never thought of being established in the church until Rigdon came in. Remember that we had been preaching from August 1829, until June, 1831—almost two years—and had baptized about 2,000 members into the Church of Christ, and had not one high priest. During 1829, several times we were told by Brother Joseph that an elder was the highest office in the church. . . . In Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831, Rigdon would expound the Old Testament scriptures of the Bible and Book of Mormon (in his way) to Joseph, concerning the priesthood, high priests, etc., and would persuade Brother Joseph to inquire of the Lord about this doctrine, and of course a revelation would always come just as they desired it. Rigdon finally persuaded Brother Joseph to believe that the high priests which had such great power in ancient times, should be in the Church of Christ to-day. He had Brother Joseph inquire of the Lord about it, and they received an answer according to their erring desires. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 35)

High Priests were only in the church before Christ; and to have this office in the “Church of Christ” is not according to the teachings of Christ in either of the sacred books: Christ himself is our great and last High Priest. Brethren—I will tell you one thing which alone should settle this matter in your minds; it is this: you cannot find in the New Testament part of the Bible or Book of Mormon where one single high priest was ever in the Church of Christ. It is a grievous sin to have such an office in the church. As well might you add to the teachings of Christ—circumcision—offering up the sacrifice of animals—or break the ordinances of Christ in any other way by going back to the old law of Moses. (*Ibid.*, pp. 62-63)

In Kirtland, Ohio, in June, 1831, . . . the first High Priests were ordained. . . . When they were ordained, right there at the time, the devil caught and bound Harvey Whitlock so he could not speak, his face twisted into demon-like shape. Also John Murdock and others were caught by the devil in a similar manner. Now brethren, do you not see that the displeasure of the Lord was upon their proceedings in ordaining High Priests? Of course it was. These facts are recorded in the *History of the Church*—written by my brother, John Whitmer, who was the regularly appointed church historian . . . Brother John was himself ordained a High Priest at that time, so he was in error and could not see it; but he saw it very clearly in 1848, when the Lord opened our eyes to see and understand it. . . . Brother John gives an account of a prophecy uttered by Lyman Wight just after Brother Joseph ordained him a High Priest, which prophecy will prove to be a false prophecy. Brother John’s history of the church says as follows:

He (Joseph) laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him to the high priesthood after the holy order of God. And the spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in this congregation that should live until the Savior should descend from Heaven with a shout, with all the holy angels with him, etc.

The early future will determine as to whether this prophecy was true or false. (*Ibid.*, pp. 64-65)

Hiram Page, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, also repudiated the idea of High Priests in the church after the time of Christ. He stated: “. . . the office of High Priest does **not** belong to the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, . . .” (*The Olive Branch*, Springfield, Ill., August, 1849, p. 28).

### First Presidency

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie states that the Mormon Church “conforms, for instance, to the New Testament pattern of the Lord’s Church. In it is found the same authority, the same organization, the same ordinances, the same teachings and doctrines that were found in the primitive Church” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 129). If we carefully examine this claim, we find that it cannot be supported by the Bible. For instance, the Mormon Church is led by a First Presidency, yet the Bible says nothing about a First Presidency. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards admits that the Bible does not mention a First Presidency, but he suggests that it may have been composed of Peter, James and John:

We find **no direct statement in the Bible** to the effect that a **Presidency** of the Church was appointed by the Savior to stand at the head of the Church after his departure. However, the fact that he sent Peter, James, and John back to the earth in this dispensation to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood, . . . would indicate that they held a position of preference over the other Apostles, which, by virtue of their administration in this dispensation, would indicate that they were the presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the Church in the meridian of time, following the ascension of Jesus. (*A Marvelous Work and A Wonder*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 140)

Even if a person were to accept Peter, James and John as the First Presidency of the primitive church, this would still present a serious problem. The Bible states that Jesus chose twelve Apostles

and that Peter, James and John were included among these men, whereas the Mormon Church has a First Presidency composed of three men in addition to the “Council of the Twelve.” Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, admits that there is a difference:

He also appointed three of these Twelve to take the keys of presidency. Peter, James, and John, acted as the First Presidency . . . 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, 1956, p. 152)

The Mormon Church has another problem with regard to the First Presidency: “Of the Melchizedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, . . . form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 107:22). Under the leadership of David O. McKay, however, the First Presidency was expanded to six members. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for January 19, 1970, reported:

In October, 1965, because of the “increasing work load on church leadership and rapid growth of the Church,” President McKay appointed two new counselors to the First Presidency. They are Joseph Fielding Smith and Thorpe B. Isaacson.

During General Conference in April, 1968, Alvin R. Dyer also was elevated to the First Presidency, raising the total membership to **six**.

In his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*, written before David O. McKay enlarged the First Presidency, Joseph Fielding Smith stated that the Lord had never called more than the Twelve and a Presidency of three: “. . . at **no place** has the Lord said that others **more than** the Twelve and a Presidency of **three** should be called” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 153). In spite of this statement, Joseph Fielding Smith accepted a position in McKay’s enlarged First Presidency. At McKay’s death, however, Joseph Fielding Smith became the tenth President of the Mormon Church and immediately cut down the number in the First Presidency to **three**—his counselors are Harold B. Lee and Nathan Eldon Tanner. This move seems to show that Smith feels that McKay made a mistake in enlarging the First Presidency to **six**.

The reader will notice that McKay added extra counselors because of “increased work load on church leadership and rapid growth of the Church.” How can Joseph Fielding Smith justify the elimination of these counselors when the church is supposed to be larger today than it was in 1965?

As we indicated earlier, the Bible does **not** support the idea of a First Presidency. While this presents a problem for Mormon apologists, the problem becomes even more serious when we learn that the Book of Mormon does **not have a word to say about a First Presidency**. Even worse than this, however, is the fact that Joseph Smith’s revelations were changed to support the idea of a First Presidency. For instance, in a revelation given March, 1831, we read: “And then ye shall begin to be gathered. . . every man according to his family, . . . as is appointed to him by the bishop and elders of the church, . . .” (*Book of Commandments*, chapter 51, verse 6). In the *Doctrine and Covenants* this has been changed to include the Presidency: “. . . and then shall ye begin to be gathered. . . every man according to his family, . . . as is appointed to him by the **Presidency and the bishop** of the church, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 48:6). In a revelation given November, 1831, the word “**presidency**” was not included, but when this revelation was reprinted in the *Doctrine and Covenants* it was added in several places (see Change Q, p. 25).



## Age of Ordination

In the Mormon Church twelve-year-old boys are ordained deacons. This is the first step in the Priesthood. This seems to be in direct contradiction to the Bible, for in 1 Timothy 3:12 we read: “Let the deacons be the **husbands** of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.” Joseph Fielding Smith tries to explain this contradiction by stating:

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, pp. 109-110)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

It is the practice of the Church in this dispensation . . . to confer the Aaronic Priesthood upon worthy young men who are 12 years of age and to ordain them to the office of a deacon in that priesthood. . . . In the meridian of time the needs of the ministry were such that adult brethren were ordained deacons. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 170)

Joseph Smith’s own revelations, however, seem to show that he had mature men in mind when he spoke of deacons. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 84:111 we read: “. . . the **deacons** and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be **standing ministers** unto the church.” On Oct. 6, 1854, Brigham Young taught that deacons were to be married:

It is **not** the business of an ignorant young man, of no experience in family matters, to inquire into the circumstances of families, and know the wants of every person. . . . it is **not the business of boys to do this**; but select a man who has got a family to be a **deacon**, whose wife can go with him, and assist him in administering to the needy in the ward. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 89)

Although Brigham Young publicly taught that deacons should be married, he ordained his own sons to be Apostles when they were still young men—one son was eighteen but the other was only eleven. In the book, *Church Chronology*, we find the following:

**Young**, Brigham, jun.; born Dec. 18, 1836; baptized in 1845, by his father, Brigham Young; ordained a Seventy; **ordained an Apostle** Nov. 22, 1855, by Brigham Young, and admitted into the Council of Twelve Apostles Oct. 9, 1868, being set apart by Brigham Young.

**Young**, John W.; born Oct. 1, 1844; ordained an **Apostle** Nov. 22, 1855, by Pres. Brigham Young, but has never been admitted into the Council of Twelve Apostles. (*Church Chronology*, Compiled by Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, Salt Lake City, 1899, p. xxvii)

Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor to Brigham Young, ordained his boy a **high priest** when he was only about six years old. This boy died when he was fourteen, and Heber C. Kimball made this statement at his funeral:

Joseph was a kind-hearted, obedient, good boy. He was fourteen years of age the third day of last April, . . . Joseph was never cross, he was always pleasant to all persons. **Eight years ago** he came near dying; I was impressed to **ordain him a high priest**. I ordained him, and I do know that that had a saving effect upon the boy, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, pp. 370-372)

In the autobiography and journal of Joseph Lee Robinson we find that Robinson ordained his **infant** son, and when he asked the Patriarch John Smith about it he told him that he had done the same thing on several occasions.

In this chapter we have covered some of the problems one encounters when studying the Mormon Priesthood. There are many other problems and inconsistencies which we cannot cover due to the lack of space.



## 12. The Arm of Flesh

In Jeremiah 17:5 we read: “Thus saith the Lord; **cursed be the man that trusteth in man**, and maketh flesh his arm, . . .” This scripture means that we are not to put our trust in any man, but that we are to rely only upon God and put our trust in Him. Men can lead us into error, but God leads us only into truth and righteousness.

The Mormon Church condemns the Catholic Church for teaching that the Pope is infallible. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., made this statement concerning the Catholic teaching of infallibility:

This dogma sets forth the belief that the “Vicar of Christ” cannot teach error because he is promised divine protection from error . . . infallibility is a fabrication devised by **the powers of darkness** to act as a counterfeit for revelation. (*Religious Truths Defined*, 1962, p. 183)

While the Mormon Church leaders condemn the Catholics for teaching the doctrine of infallibility, they teach essentially the same thing. Brigham Young stated:

The Lord Almighty leads this Church, and he will **never** suffer you to be led astray if you are found doing your duty. You may go home and **sleep as sweetly as a babe in its mother’s arms, as to any danger of your leaders leading you astray**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 289)

Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Church, stated: “The Lord will **never permit** me or any other man who stands as the President of this Church to lead you astray. **It is not in the program**” (*Essentials in Church History*, 1922, p. 609). Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, once stated:

The time will never come when we will not be able to put confidence and exercise faith in the teachings and in the instruction of those who lead us . . . Therefore it behooves us, as Latter-day Saints, **to put our trust in the presiding authorities of the Church**, . . .

**Saints Safe in Following Church Authorities.** No man ever went astray by following the counsel of the authorities of the Church. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 243)

### Thinking a Sin?

Carl Gustav Jung, one of the world’s greatest psychiatrists, made these very interesting observations:

All mass movements, as one might expect, slip with the greatest ease down an inclined plane represented by large numbers. Where the many are, there is security; what the many believe must of course be true; what the many want must be worth striving for, and necessary, and therefore good. In the clamor of the many there lies the power to snatch wish-fulfillments by force; sweetest of all, however, is that gentle and painless slipping back into the kingdom of childhood, into the paradise of parental care, into happy-go-luckiness and irresponsibility. **All the thinking and looking after are done from the top**; to all questions there is an answer; and for all needs the necessary provision is made. The infantile dream state of the mass man is so unrealistic that he never thinks to ask who is paying for this paradise. The balancing of accounts is left to a higher political

or social authority, which welcomes the task, for its power is thereby increased; and the more power it has, the weaker and more helpless the individual becomes. (*The Undiscovered Self*, pp. 70-71)

Very few organizations would want to admit that “All the thinking and looking after are done from the top.” The Mormon Church, however, is an exception. In fact, the ward teacher’s message for June 1945 contained these statements:

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

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

Heber C. Kimball, First Councilor to Brigham Young, made these statements:

When brother Joseph Smith lived, he was our Prophet, our Seer, and Revelator; **he was our dictator** in the things of God, and it was for us to listen to him, and do just as he told us. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 106)

. . . learn to do as you are told, . . . if you are told by your leader to do a thing, do it, **none of your business whether it is right or wrong.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 32)

If you do things according to counsel and **they are wrong, the consequences will fall on the heads of those who counseled you, so don’t be troubled.** (*William Clayton’s Journal*, p. 334)

On September 6, 1857, Thomas B. Marsh declared that the president of the Mormon Church is in reality a Pope:

I have now got a better understanding of the Presidency of the Church than I formerly had. I used to ask myself, What is the difference between the President of our Church and a Pope? True, he is not called a Pope, but names do not alter realities, and therefore **he is a Pope.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 208)

Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the Mormons were told to “give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you . . . his word ye shall receive, **as if from mine own mouth**, in all patience and faith” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 21:4-5).

In 1860 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

Have we not a right to make up our minds in relation to the things recorded in the word of God, and speak about them, whether the living oracles believe our views or not? **We have not the right.** . . .

God placed Joseph Smith at the head of this Church; God has likewise placed Brigham Young at the head of this Church; . . . We are commanded to give heed to their words in **all things, and receive their words as from the mouth of God**, in all patience and faith. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 374-375)

Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the

Church, stated:

Now, whatever I might have obtained in the shape of learning, by searching and study respecting the arts and sciences of men—whatever principles I may have imbibed during my scientific researches, yet, if the Prophet of God should tell me that a certain principle or theory which I might have learned was not true, I do not care what my ideas might have been, I should consider it my duty, **at the suggestion of my file leader, to abandon that principle or theory.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 83)

Joseph Smith himself once said:

God made Aaron to be the mouthpiece for the children of Israel, and He will make **me to be God to you in His stead**, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and **if you don't like it, you must lump it.** (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 363; also found in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 319-320)

## No Revelation

Although the Mormon Church claims to be led by revelation, Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, testified as follows in the Reed Smoot Investigation:

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 revelation 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.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 483-484)

On page 99 of the same volume Joseph F. Smith stated: “I have **never pretended to nor do I profess to have received revelations.**” From this it is plain to see that just because a man is ordained a “Prophet, Seer, and Revelator,” it does not necessarily mean that he is. If Joseph F. Smith was only as susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of the Lord as “any good Methodist,” then why should his word be trusted above that of a good Methodist?

Although the Mormon Church is supposed to be led by revelation, the evidence of this revelation is very hard to find. The Manifesto of 1890 is the last revelation, if it can be termed a revelation, that has been added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. So we see that the last revelation that was added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* is eighty years old. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, admits that there is not much written revelation in the church today, but he still maintains that the church leaders are receiving “daily revelation”:

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 in the administration of the affairs of the Church. . . .

President Wilford Woodruff said:

Where are the revelations of President Young? Do you find them on record? Only a few; but the Holy Ghost and the revelations of God were with Brigham Young . . . There was **no** necessity particularly for Brigham Young to give written revelation, only in a few instances. So with John Taylor. So with Wilford Woodruff. And so in a great measure probably with all who may follow us, until the coming of the Son of Man. . . . (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 55-56.)

The presence of revelation in the Church is positive proof that it is the kingdom of God on earth. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 650)

The Reorganized LDS Church has continued to add new revelations to their *Doctrine and Covenants*, but the Utah Mormon Church has not added a new revelation since they added the Manifesto of 1890. It is interesting to note that during the last century, when new revelations were being added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the Mormon leaders were condemning the Catholics for not adding new revelations to their “sacred canon.” The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

That the Romanists have continued in their apostacy until the present day is demonstrated from the fact that they have not added one single book to their canon since they first formed it. Now, if there had been any prophet or apostle among them, during the last seventeen centuries, they certainly would have canonized his epistles, revelations, and prophecies, as being equally sacred with those of the first century. As they have not done this, it shows most clearly, that even they, themselves, do not consider that they have had apostles, prophets, and revelators among them, during that long period of time. . . . in no single instance have they confirmed any other books as the word of God, so that their canon stands now as when the council of Carthage left it, without an addition of one revelation. . . . Upwards of 250 Popes pretend to have successively filled the chair of St. Peter. All these Popes, we are told, have possessed the same authority and power as St. Peter, whom they designate as the first Pope; if this really be the case, then each of these Popes must have been inspired of God, and the writings of each must be equally as sacred as the writings of Pope St. Peter. Why then has the church showed such great partiality? Why has she placed Pope St. Peter's writings in the sacred canon, and left all the writings of the other Popes out?

26.—Bishop Milner . . . says, “That bishops in general succeed to the rank and functions of the apostles; . . .” If this be true, . . . then each bishop, as well as the Pope, must be a **revelator**; for apostles were Revelators, and one of the “functions” of their office was to receive revelations; . . . According to this, since the first century, the Catholics must have had many tens of thousands of revelators, and yet, strange to say, none of their revelations are permitted to enter the sacred canon . . . Here, indeed, is a strange inconsistency! Even the Catholic church herself, evidently places no confidence in the popes and bishops, the pretended successors of St. Peter and the rest of the apostles; if she did, she would have canonized their revelations along with the rest of the revelations of the New Testament. What must we conclude then, as to her bishops holding “the rank and functions of apostles?” We can but conclude that it is all an imposition—a wicked soul-destroying imposition, practiced upon the nations by a corrupt apostate church . . . Well might the revelator John, . . . call her “**the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth!**” (*Orson Pratt's Works*, “The Bible Alone An Insufficient Guide,” pp. 38-39)

The very words used by Orson Pratt concerning the Catholics could now be applied to the Mormon Church, for “if there had been any prophet or apostle among them,” during the past eighty years, “they certainly would have canonized his epistles, revelations, and prophecies, . . .” The church “evidently places no confidence” in the last six Presidents; “if she did, she would have canonized their revelations along with the rest of the revelations” in the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

We are told that revelation is found in the conferences of the church when the leaders of the church speak under



the inspiration of the Lord, but how can we know when they are speaking under the Spirit of the Lord? Obviously, much of what has been said at the conferences of the church down through the years was not spoken under the inspiration of the Lord. If a leader of the church were to stand up in conference today and say the same things that Brigham Young said, he would stand the chance of being excommunicated from the church; yet it was Brigham Young himself who stated: “I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that **they may not call scripture**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 95).

In a letter to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 16, 1966, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made the following statement:

Your next question: “Can the *Journal of Discourses* be used as doctrine if the man speaking says, “Thus saith the Lord?”

I cannot answer that question because I don’t know what part of the *Journal of Discourses* you have in mind. I would have to know just what you were referring to.

The search for revelation, that is, present-day revelation, in Mormonism is really in vain. As we have pointed out, no new revelations have been added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The last revelation added is 80 years old. The sermons given in conference may be considered as scripture today, but 50 years from now they may be rejected as many of Brigham Young’s sermons are today.

Even though the leaders of the church are supposed to be led by revelation, it is evident that they are not always in harmony as to which doctrines are from the Lord. Brigham Young once stated that there were Apostles in the Mormon Church who taught that there was no personage called God, that Jesus was not the Savior and that the spirits of some who lived formerly have been reincarnated:

. . . and yet right here in the **Quorum of the Twelve**, if you ask one of its members what he believes with regard to Deity, he will tell you that he believes in those great and holy principles which seem to be exhibited to man for his perfection and enjoyment in time and in eternity. But do you believe in the existence of a personage called **God**? “**No, I do not,**” says this **Apostle**. So you see there are **schisms** in our day. . . .

We have another one in the Quorum of the Twelve who believes that infants actually **have the spirits of some who have formerly lived on the earth**, and that this is their resurrection. . . . This is not all, we have another one of these **Apostles, right in the Quorum of the Twelve**, who, I understand, for **fifteen years**, has been preaching on the sly in the chimney corner to the brethren and sisters with whom he has had influence, that the Savior was **nothing more** than a good man, and **that his death had nothing to do with your salvation or mine**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 66)

It has been admitted that even Joseph Smith did not always speak under the inspiration of the Lord. He once stated that children would not grow after the resurrection:

But as the child dies, so shall it rise from the dead. . . . It will **never grow**: it will still be the child, in the same precise form as it appeared before it died. . . . Children dwell in the mansions of glory and exercise power, but appear in the same form as when on earth. Eternity is full of thrones, upon which dwell thousands of **children** reigning on thrones of glory, with **not one cubit added to their stature**. (A Discourse, by Joseph Smith, delivered at the Conference held near the Temple, Nauvoo, April 6, 1844, reported in *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 10)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt suggested that Joseph Smith had not been instructed by revelation when he spoke on this subject:

There is a sermon of the Prophet Joseph Smith, reported by long-hand reporters, in which it is stated that resurrected infants will **for ever remain infants**. But I doubt very much in my own mind, if those who reported that sermon got the full idea on this subject; and if they

did, I very much **doubt whether the prophet Joseph**, at the time he preached that sermon, had been **fully instructed by revelation** on that point. . . . So in regard to the resurrection, there may have been many things revealed to him that were true, and others upon which, without having revelation, he would draw **his own conclusions**, until it should please the Lord to give further revelation. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, p. 335)

In a lecture read in the Logan Temple on June 2, 1888, Joseph E. Taylor disagreed with the Apostle Orson Pratt. After quoting Joseph Smith’s statement that children will never grow in heaven, he stated:

These sentiments have never to my knowledge been flatly contradicted; but they have been most severely criticised at times in private circles. To all the criticisms that I have heard I have one reply to make, which is, that if ever Joseph was inspired by God, he certainly was at that time. . . .

A few minutes previous to his speaking upon the condition of children after the resurrection he said concerning Brother Follett: “I am authorized to say by the **authority of the Holy Ghost** that you have no occasion to fear, for he is gone to the Home of the just, etc.” Did Joseph at this particular moment have the Holy Ghost; and the next moment lose it, insomuch that his next utterance was an error? **I dare not assume such a position** . . .

Four brethren reported this sermon. . . . In comparing notes so serious, an error—had it been one—would certainly have been discovered. . . . several persons who were present on that occasion have testified to me that **Joseph did** utter the sentiment I have quoted upon that particular occasion; and I am certainly not in the wrong in endeavoring to sustain God’s prophet. (*Deseret Weekly News*, December 29, 1888, p. 25)

Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the LDS Church, seems to reject Joseph Smith’s teaching with regard to this matter. He stated:

When a child is raised in the resurrection, the spirit will enter the body and the body will be the same size as it was when the child died. It will then **grow** after the resurrection to full maturity to conform to the size of the spirit. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 56)

Thus we see that even the Mormons have a hard time determining when Joseph Smith was speaking as a mere man and when he was speaking as a Prophet of the Lord.

During the past few years the Mormon leaders have been faced with some serious problems. Their response to these problems plainly shows that they are not led by revelation. Some of these problems appear to be complicated by the fact that some of the Mormon leaders are very old. Wallace Turner made these statements:

In 1966, I attended the April conference . . . President David O. McKay was then greatly enfeebled by age and a stroke. He sat in the top row of the tiers of seats for the General Authorities while his first counselor, Hugh B. Brown, spoke, explaining that President McKay was “presiding” while Brown was “conducting” the meeting. Then the ninety-two-year-old man slowly moved two or three steps to the rostrum, so aged and frail that one’s anxiety was increased lest he fall. He spoke slowly and indistinctly and with great effort. Since his stroke at age ninety his once-powerful voice had faded. But he was still handsome and straight as he stood erect at the rostrum. . . . (*The Mormon Establishment*, 1966, pp. 52-53)

David O. McKay lived to be 96 years old, but he was in very poor health toward the end of his life and was hardly in any condition to function as Prophet, Seer and Revelator for the church.

Instead of appointing a younger man to lead the church after McKay’s death, they chose Joseph Fielding Smith who will be 96 years old on July 19, 1972. He is the son of Joseph F. Smith—the man who testified that although he was Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the church, he had never received a revelation.

## Still No New Revelation

As we have already shown in the updated material for chapter 3, on April 3, 1976, the Church Section of the *Deseret News* reported:

Two revelations received by former Presidents of the Church, were accepted as scripture Saturday afternoon, April 3, by vote of Church membership. . . .

The new scriptures, which will be arranged in verses as part of the *Pearl of Great Price*, include the account of the Prophet Joseph Smith's vision of the Celestial Kingdom received Jan. 21, 1836. . . .

This was certainly a surprising move for the Mormon leaders to make, and it is difficult to resist the idea that they decided to canonize the “new” revelations to offset the criticism found in this book. It is especially interesting to note that they would chose a revelation given to Joseph F. Smith. This purported revelation was given less than two months before Joseph F. Smith's death in 1918 at a time when he “was very ill.” He had served as “Prophet, Seer and Revelator” for some seventeen years before receiving this revelation. The reader will remember that Joseph F. Smith had previously admitted he had served as “Prophet, Seer and Revelator” for some time without receiving any revelation: “I have never pretended to nor do I profess to have received revelations.”

The other revelation which the Mormons canonized was given to Joseph Smith on January 21, 1836. As we have shown in the updated material for chapter 3, this revelation was falsified when printed by the church to avoid a major contradiction.

In our book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, page 435, we criticised the Mormon authorities for adding the “new” revelations to the *Pearl of Great Price* instead of the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

Joseph F. Smith once stated that any new revelations would be added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*, but Mormon leaders have decided that these two revelations should be added to the *Pearl of Great Price* instead. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, April 3, 1976)

President Smith's statement appears as follows in *The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, page 489:

. . . if the Lord should reveal His mind to His people and it should be accepted by His people in the way that He has appointed, it would then become a matter to be added to the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*.

The Mormon leaders now seem to realize that they made a mistake when they added the revelations into the *Pearl of Great Price*. The Church Section of the *Deseret News* for June 2, 1979, reported that these revelations will be transferred to the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

Joseph Smith's Vision of the Celestial Kingdom and Joseph F. Smith's Vision of the Redemption of the Dead have been transferred from the *Pearl of Great Price* to become Sections 137 and 138, respectively, in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. . . .

The decision to place these revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* has been made by the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve.

The fumbling around with these “new” revelations only tends to emphasize that the Mormon Church is led by fallible men rather than by direct revelation from God.

Even though the leaders of the Mormon Church have decided to make these additions to the *Doctrine and Covenants*, our criticism that the church does not fulfill its claim to present-day revelation still stands. To begin with, the revelations which are to appear as Sections 137 and 138 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* can hardly be considered as “new” revelations. The one given to Joseph F. Smith is sixty-three years old, and the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith is 145 years old.

Besides adding these old revelations by Joseph Smith and Joseph F. Smith to the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the Mormon leaders decided to go a step further; the Church Section of the *Deseret News* for June 2, 1979, reported:

The statement of the First Presidency telling of the revelation extending the priesthood to “all worthy male members of the Church” released June 9, 1978, will also be added to the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

Although we will deal more extensively with this purported revelation in the updated material for chapter 21, we will make a few comments here. To begin with, the announcement that the First Presidency's statements is to be added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* is apparently another attempt to offset criticism that the church does not have any present-day revelation. As in the case of the other two revelations, the fact that this statement is to be added to the *Doctrine and Covenants* fails to show the church is led by revelation. The June 1978 declaration on blacks is **not** a revelation, but only a statement that a revelation has been received. Furthermore, President Kimball himself made a statement that gives the impression that it was only a feeling or assurance that he received. The reader will remember that President Joseph F. Smith admitted that “any good Methodist or any other church member” is susceptible to “impressions of the Spirit of the Lord.” Now, if the Mormon leaders really believe they are led by revelation, why don't they canonize a revelation by the current President which begins with the words, “Thus Saith the Lord your God . . .”

That the General Authorities do not give the declaration on blacks the same status as the “visions” of Joseph Smith and Joseph F. Smith is obvious from the fact that they are not going to give it a section number in the new *Doctrine and Covenants*. The church's magazine, *The Ensign*, for August 1979, page 75, explained:

. . . yet-to-be printed copies of the *Doctrine and Covenants* will contain three new additions. . . .

The two visions to be transferred from the *Pearl of Great Price* to the *Doctrine and Covenants* are Joseph Smith's Vision of the Celestial Kingdom and Joseph F. Smith's Vision of the Redemption of the Dead. These two additions will become sections 137 and 138 in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. . . .

The third addition . . . will be the proclamation of 9 June 1978 . . . Declaration—I will be the title of the announcements discontinuing plural marriage that are already part of the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

The church has now had twelve Prophets. Excluding the Manifesto and the statement on blacks, only three of these Presidents received revelations which were added to the “four standard works.” None of the last six presidents have given revelations that have been canonized.

## Old Age Continues to Plague Mormon Leadership

On page 185 of this book we pointed out that some of the church's problems appear to be complicated by the fact that some of the Mormon leaders are very old. We mentioned that President David O. McKay lived to be ninety-six years old and that Joseph Fielding Smith succeeded McKay. Since the publication of this book, President Smith passed away. Smith lived to be ninety-five, and the leadership of the church passed to Harold B. Lee who was seventy-three years old. Lee lived less than two years and Spencer W. Kimball became president. President Kimball became eighty-six years old on March 28, 1981. The way the Mormon hierarchy is structured there seems to be little hope of a younger leader, and apparently less hope for any new

revelation. The claim of being led by a “living Prophet” has for a long time appeared to be just an idle boast.

### Living Prophets or Standard Works?

Although most people do not realize it, there is a great conflict among Mormons over the importance of the four standard works. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, was adamant in proclaiming that the standard works should be the final authority for settling doctrinal controversies. In a letter to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 9, 1966, Smith wrote:

In the study of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, kindly confine your study to the Standard Works of the Church. They are The Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Pearl of Great Price and The Doctrine and Covenants . . . leave individual discourses alone and the statements of individuals . . . Keep both of your feet on the solid ground. By that I mean keep within the teachings of the **Standard Works** . . . then you will not be led astray.

Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve and next in line to lead the church, has taken an entirely different stand. He dogmatically asserts that the “Living Prophet” is more important than the scriptures—i.e., the four standard works—and that the most important reading material is found in the current church magazines and the *Deseret News*. On February 26, 1980, President Benson made these comments at Brigham Young University:

Soon we will be honoring our Prophet on his 85th birthday. As a Church we sing the song, “We Thank Thee, Oh God, For A Prophet.” Here then is the grand key—Follow the Prophet—and here now are Fourteen Fundamentals In Following the Prophet, the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

FIRST: The Prophet is the Only Man Who Speaks For The Lord in Everything. . . .

SECOND: **The Living Prophet is More Vital to Us Than The Standard Works.** . . .

THIRD: The Living Prophet is More Important to Us Than a Dead Prophet....the most important prophet so far as you and I are concerned is the one living in our day and age to whom the Lord is currently revealing His will for us. Therefore the most important reading we can do is in any of the words of the Prophet contained each week in

the Church Section of the *Deseret News*, and any words of the Prophet contained each month in our Church magazines. Our marching orders for each six months are found in the General Conference addresses which are printed in the *Ensign* magazine. . . .

Beware of those who would pit the dead prophets against the living prophets, for the living prophets always take precedence. (“Fourteen Fundamentals In Following The Prophets,” by President Ezra Taft Benson, BYU Devotional Assembly, February 26, 1980, pp. 1-5)

The Apostle Bruce R. McConkie’s opinion of the value of the four standard works appears to be diametrically opposed to Benson’s view:

The Standard Works are scripture. They are binding upon us. They are the mind and will and voice of the Lord. He never has, he does not now, and he never will reveal anything which is contrary to what is in them. No person, speaking by the spirit of inspiration, will ever teach doctrine that is out of harmony with the truths God has already revealed.

These words of President Joseph Fielding Smith should guide all of us in our gospel study:

It makes no difference what is written or what anyone has said, if what has been said is in conflict with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it aside. My words and the teachings of any other member of the Church, high or low, if they do not square with the revelations, we need not accept them. Let us have this matter clear. We have accepted the **four standard works** as the measuring yardsticks, or balances by which we measure every man’s doctrine.

You cannot accept the books written by the authorities of the Church as standards of doctrine, only in so far as they accord with the revealed word in the standard works.

Every man who writes is responsible, not the Church, for what he writes. If Joseph Fielding Smith writes something which is out of harmony with the revelations, then every member of the Church is duty bound to reject it. If he writes that which is in perfect harmony with the revealed word of the Lord, then it should be accepted.

(A letter to “Honest Truth Seekers,” by Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, 1980, pp. 2-3)

It would appear that the views of Apostles McConkie and Benson are irreconcilable.





## 13. False Prophecy

Mormon writers state that Joseph Smith's claim to be a prophet is established by the fulfillment of his prophecies. Actually, the evidence seems to prove just the opposite.

### The Canadian Revelation

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, tells of a false revelation that Joseph Smith gave when the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer:

In June 1829, the translation of the Book of Mormon was finished. God gave it to us as his Holy Word, and left us to work out our own salvation and set in order the Church of Christ . . .

When the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, more money was needed to finish the printing of it. We were waiting on Martin Harris who was doing his best to sell a part of his farm, in order to raise the necessary funds. After a time Hyrum Smith and others began to get impatient, thinking that Martin Harris was too slow and under transgression for not selling his land at once, even if at a great sacrifice. Brother Hyrum thought they should not wait any longer on Martin Harris, and that the money should be raised in some other way. Brother Hyrum was vexed with Brother Martin, and thought they should get the money by some means outside of him, and not let him have anything to do with the publication of the Book, **or receiving any of the profits** thereof . . . He was wrong in thus judging Bro. Martin, because he was doing all he could toward selling his land. Brother Hyrum said it had been suggested to him that some of the brethren might go to Toronto Canada, and **sell the copy-right** of the Book of Mormon for considerable money: and he persuaded Joseph to inquire of the Lord about it. Joseph concluded to do so. He had not yet given up the stone. Joseph looked into the hat in which he placed the stone, and received a **revelation** that some of the brethren should go to Toronto, Canada, and that they would **sell the copy-right to the Book of Mormon**. Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but **they failed entirely** to sell the copy-right, returning without any money. Joseph was at my father's house when they returned. I was there also, and am an eye witness to these facts. Jacob Whitmer and John Whitmer were also present when Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery returned from Canada. Well, we were all in great trouble; and we asked Joseph how it was that he had received a **revelation** from the Lord for some brethren to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right, and the brethren **had utterly failed** in their undertaking. Joseph did not know how it was, so he enquired of the Lord about it, and behold the following revelation came through the stone: "*Some revelations are of God: some revelations are of man: and some revelations are of the devil.*" So we see that the revelation to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right was not of God, but was of the devil or the heart of man. (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, pp. 30-31)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became President of the Church, was apparently referring to this episode in a press

conference in Salt Lake City: "President Smith said he believed, as did LDS Church founder Joseph Smith, that there are three kinds of revelations [sic]: 'revelations from God, from man and from the devil'" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 25, 1970).

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

. . . our knowledge of the "Toronto Journey Incident" rests chiefly upon the testimony of David Whitmer, and the possibility is suggested of his misapprehending some detail of the matter, which might, if accurately known, put the incident in an entirely new light. That, however, is but conjecture; and while the possibility and even probability of misapprehension by Whitmer is great, still the incident must be considered as it is presented by him, since his testimony may not be set aside.

In that view of the case we have here an alleged revelation received by the Prophet, through the "Seer Stone," directing or allowing men to go on a mission to Canada, which fails of its purpose; namely, the sale of the copyright of the Book of Mormon in Canada. Then in explanation of the failure of that revelation, the Prophet's announcement that all revelations are not of God; some are of men and some even from evil sources. The question presented by this state of facts is: May this Toronto incident and the Prophet's explanation be accepted and faith still be maintained in him as an inspired man, a Prophet of God? I answer unhesitatingly in the affirmative. The revelation respecting the Toronto journey was **not of God**, surely; else it would not have failed; but the Prophet, overwrought in his deep anxiety for the progress of the work, saw reflected in the "Seer Stone" **his own thought**, or that suggested to him by his brother Hyrum, rather than the thought of God. . . . in this instance of the Toronto journey, Joseph was evidently **not** directed by the inspiration of the Lord. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 164-165)

In his book, *Mormon Portraits*, Dr. Wyl prints a letter from "Mr. Traugher." We take the following statements from this letter:

Early in 1830, . . . Joe delivered a whooping big revelation directing Oliver Cowdery and Hiram Page to go over into Kingston, Canada, and sell a copyright under that Dominion, and thus get money to pay the printer and let Martin go—be independent of him . . . the boys . . . came back nearly starved, completely wearied, with no money nor copyright sold either. In 1831, when Joe and Sidney were talking about having the revelations published, David Whitmer got up in the council and said all he could against the measure. But Joe raved and declared that the Revelations should be published. David said, "Brother Joseph, are you going to publish all of them?" Joe replied, "yes, all, in the order of their dates." Then David asked, "are you going to publish that revelation for Oliver and Hiram to go to Kingston and get out a copyright for the Book of Mormon?" Joe hung his head a while, then answered, "No." "Why not, Brother Joseph?" asked honest David. "Because," replied Joe, "**It was not true.**" I have this from both

Dr. W. E. McLellan [apostle and apostate] and David Whitmer, both of whom have read the revelation. (*Mormon Portraits*, 1886, p. 311)

David Whitmer states that there were other revelations given by Joseph Smith which were not printed:

I will say here, that I could tell you **other false revelations** that came through Brother Joseph as mouthpiece, (not through the stone) but this will suffice. **Many of Brother Joseph's revelations were never printed. The revelation to go to Canada was written down on paper, but was never printed.** (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 31)

Brigham Young confirmed the fact that some of Joseph Smith's revelations were not published:

Brother Hyde spoke of a revelation which he tried to find in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. That revelation was reserved at the time the compilation for that book was made by Oliver Cowdery and others, in Kirtland. It was not wisdom to publish it to the world, and it remained in the private escritoire. Brother Joseph had that revelation concerning this nation at a time when the brethren were reflecting and reasoning with regard to African slavery on this continent, and the slavery of the children of men throughout the world. There are *other revelations*, besides this one, not yet published to the world. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 58)

Joseph Fielding Smith admits that some of the revelations are still withheld from the world:

**Not all the revelations given to Joseph the Seer were place in the Doctrine and Covenants in his day;** . . . Some of them were for the Church and not for the world, and therefore are given only to the saints. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 280)

It would certainly be interesting to see the revelations that are withheld from the "world," but this is next to impossible. The Mormon Church leaders complain that the Catholics withheld the scriptures from the common people, and yet they keep some of Joseph Smith's revelations hid from their own people.

## The Lord's Coming

In 1835 Joseph Smith prophesied that the coming of the Lord was near and that 56 years should wind up the scene. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 182, we read:

President Smith then stated . . . it was the will of God that those who went to Zion, with a determination to lay down their lives, if necessary, should be ordained to the ministry, and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or **the coming of the Lord**, which was nigh—even **fifty-six years should wind up the scene**.

Klaus J. Hansen gives this interesting information concerning this matter:

. . . in **1890** there was a widespread belief among church members that Joseph Smith's prediction of 1835, that fifty-six years would "wind up the scene," would be fulfilled. But such enthusiasm was shortlived. In 1903, Patriarch Benjamin F. Johnson, . . . could not conceal his disappointment when he remarked that "we were over seventy years ago taught by our leaders to believe that the coming of Christ and the millennial reign was much nearer than we believe it to be now." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 76)

Oliver Boardman Huntington felt that the Lord might return in 1881 instead of 1891:

The Lord had said in one of the revelations to Joseph Smith that there should, out of them that were driven from Jackson Co. Missouri, "a few remain to receive their inheritances" there again. I frequently heard them counted, that were of that number, and only 12 or 14 did I hear of left, and felt sure that the time was not very far off when Zion would be redeemed. The signs of the times made the hearts of them that were looking for Christ is coming rejoice with an assurance that it was not far off even to the natural view of time with man.

On the 14th of Feb. 1835, Joseph Smith uaid [said?] that God had revealed to him that the coming of Christ would be within 56 years, which being added to 1835 **shows that before 1891** and the 14th of Feb. the **Savior of the world would make his appearance** again upon the earth and the winding up scene take place. In connection with this event, was related by my brother Dimick Huntington, the fact that when Joseph and Hyrum Smith submitted in their feelings to consent to give themselves up to the state mob at Nauvoo Illinois, after they had passed the Mississippi River. Joseph said "if they shed my blood it shall shorten this work 10 years." That taken from 1891 would reduce the time to 1881 which if the true time within which the Savior should come much must be crowded into 6 years. (*Journal of Oliver Boardman Huntington*, vol. 2, pp. 128-129)

On October 14, 1886, Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

Thursday, Oct. 14th: —The following are words spoken by Apostel Moses Thatcher, at Lewiston, . . . our entire trust will be in the Lord, then shall that man like unto Moses be raised up, and shall lead us out of bondage back to Jackson county in the state of Missouri. There will be no hesitation; everything will be decisive and prompt. The mountains shall tremble before him and if there be a tree or anything else in the way of their progress, it shall be plucked up by the Power of God. Then is the time the Scriptures will be fulfilled that says: "One shall chase a thousand and two shall put ten thousand to flight."

It is my belief, that the time of our deliverance will be within five years; the time indicated being February 14th, 1891. (See *Mill. Star*, Vol. XV, Page 205). And that the man raised up will be no other than the Prophet Joseph Smith in his resurrected body . . . no other man can perform this mission but the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . I do not say all the people of the nation will be destroyed within the time mentioned, but I do say that in consequence of the wickedness and corruption of the officers of the nation, the government will pass into the hands of the Saints, and that within **five years**. There will not be a city in the Union that will not be in danger of disruption by the Knights of Labor, who are becoming a formidable power in the land. You people in quiet Lewiston need not be surprised if within the next four years the rails are torn up from Ogden to the Missouri River and to San Francisco and into Montana in the North, leaving us as isolated as we were when we first came to this Territory. There is a power to do this, and a disposition to—meaning the Knights of Labor.

(A servant of God, holding the power and keys of the **holy apostleship does not speak in this manner for mere pastime**. There is more in these utterances than we are apt to attach to them, unless we are aided by the Spirit of God.) ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," October 14, 1886)

As the year 1891 drew near the Mormon people seemed to lose confidence in Joseph Smith's prophecy. On February 16, 1890, the Apostle Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

In the evening Ward meeting Bro. Palmer occupied the time in a good discourse on the coming of the Savior. He believes He will come twice in this dispensation—**once to his temple in 1891** when He will clothe his servants with power to go among the House of Israel with the gospel, and leave the Gentiles in their iniquity, and the second time at some later day when he will place his foot on Mt. Olivet . . . At this latter time His glory and power will be manifested in the eyes of all men, but at His first coming **perhaps very few will be aware of it**. (*Ibid.*, February 16, 1890)

The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin gives this information concerning the early Mormons:

During the visit of the missionaries in the Reserve, the *Ohio Star* stated that while they were preaching in the Methodist Chapel in Painesville they "predicted the end of the world in 15 years." According to an article appearing in the *Painesville Telegraph*, when Martin Harris arrived in Kirtland March 12, 1831, he immediately proceeded to the barroom of the hotel and enthusiastically prophesied

to the patrons that “all who believed the new bible would see Christ within fifteen years, and all who did not would absolutely be destroyed and dam’d.” . . . In June, 1831, Levi Hancock reported,

Joseph Smith began to speak, he said, “that the kingdom that Christ spoke of . . . would some day come. . . . Some of you shall live to see it come with glory.”

To what extent these early members taught and believed in the imminence of the end of the world may not clearly be established; however, there was at least one case where an afflicted Saint refused to call a physician because of his belief that he would never die. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, Salt Lake City, 1966, pp. 53-55)

Under the date of January 23, 1833, Joseph Smith recorded the following in his *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 323:

Among the number, my father presented himself, but before I washed his feet, I asked of him a father’s blessing, which he granted by laying his hands upon my head, in the name of Jesus Christ, and declaring that I should continue in the Priest’s office **until Christ comes**.

As we have already shown in the chapter on Priesthood, John Whitmer states that at the time the High Priesthood was introduced into the church the following occurred:

The Spirit of the Lord fell upon Joseph in an unusual manner, and he prophesied that John the Revelator was then among the Ten Tribes of Israel. . . . After he had prophesied he laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him. . . . And the Spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in the congregation that **should live until the Savior should descend from heaven** with a shout, with all the holy angels with Him. (*John Whitmer’s History*, chapter 5; also found in *History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 176)

When the Twelve Apostles were first ordained in the Mormon Church some of them received the promise that they would live until Christ came. The following appeared in the blessing of Apostle Lyman E. Johnson:

The blessing of Lyman E. Johnson was, . . . that holy angels shall administer to him occasionally; . . . and that he shall live until the gathering is accomplished, . . . and he **shall see the Savior come** and stand upon the earth with power and great glory. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 188)

The following appeared in Heber C. Kimball’s blessing:

Heber C. Kimball’s blessing was, . . . that many millions may be converted by his instrumentality; that angels may waft him from place to place, and that **he may stand unto the coming of our Lord**, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 189)

William Smith’s blessing stated: “He shall be preserved and **remain on the earth, until Christ shall come** to take vengeance on the wicked” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 191).

The Apostle Orson Hyde’s blessing originally stated that “he shall stand on earth” till the coming of Christ; however, when this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* it was changed to “he **may** stand on earth.” In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 15, page 206, this read as follows:

. . . he **shall** stand on the earth and bring souls till Christ comes . . . he **shall** have power to smite the earth with pestilence; to divide waters, and lead through the Saints; he **shall** go from land to land, and from sea to sea; he **shall** be like one of the three Nephites.

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 189, it was changed to read:

. . . he **may** stand on the earth and bring souls till Christ comes . . . **may** he have power to smite the earth with pestilence; to divide waters, and lead through the Saints; **may** he go from land to land and from sea to sea, and **may** he be like one of the three Nephites.

Of course, none of the Mormon Apostles lived to see the Lord come, and Joseph Smith’s statement that “fifty-six years should wind up the scene” did not come to pass. Writing in 1838, the Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt prophesied that in 50 years there would not be an unbelieving Gentile on this continent, and if the inhabitants were not greatly scourged within 5 or 10 years the Book of Mormon would be proven untrue. His statement appears as follows in the tract, *Mormonism Unveiled—Truth Vindicated*:

Now, Mr. Sunderland, you have something definite and tangible, the time, the manner, the means, the names, the dates; and I will state **as a prophesy**, that there **will not be an unbelieving Gentile** upon this continent **50 years hence**; and if they are not **greatly scourged**, and in a great measure **overthrown**, within **five or ten years** from this date, then the **Book of Mormon will have proved itself false**. (*Mormonism Unveiled—Truth Vindicated*, by Parley P. Pratt, p. 15; copied from a microfilm of the original tract at the Mormon Church Historian’s Library)

When Parker Pratt Robinson reprinted the tract *Mormonism Unveiled* in the book, *Writings of Parley P. Pratt*, he was apparently embarrassed by Parley P. Pratt’s unfulfilled prophecy. He reprinted the statement “Now, Mr. Sunderland, you have something definite and tangible, the time, the manner, the means, the names, the dates” but instead of putting a semicolon after the word “dates” (as Parley P. Pratt did), he put a period and **deleted** the entire prophecy **without any indication** (see the *Writings of Parley Parker Pratt*, 1952, p. 205).

## A Temple in Zion

In a revelation given by Joseph Smith September 22 and 23, 1832, the following statements appear:

Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.

Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased.

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, **which temple shall be reared in this generation**.

For verily **this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord**, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house. . . . Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses—for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord **in this generation**, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed—(*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 84:2-5 & 31)

Notice that this revelation, given in 1832, plainly states that a temple would be built in the western boundaries of the state of Missouri (that is, in Independence, Missouri) before all of those that were then living passed away. The leaders of the Mormon Church understood this revelation to mean exactly what it said. Although the Mormons were driven from Independence (Jackson County, Missouri), they expected to return and fulfill the prophecy. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

And when the Saints were driven out from Jackson County, almost all in the Church expected that they would speedily be restored; and a person was considered almost an apostate that would say, they would not come back in five years, or ten at the furthest; . . . The people think of almost



everything else but the redemption of Zion, and speak to individuals about it, and they put it off a great distance ahead. But I do not feel to go to this extreme. I will give you my opinion; so far as the revelations go, in speaking of this subject, I think that this event is nearer than this people are aware of. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 17)

On April 6, 1845, Brigham Young stated: “. . . as the Lord lives we will build up Jackson county in **this generation** (cries of amen) . . . and we will be far better off with regard to temporal things, . . .” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 956).

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made the following statements in discourses he gave between 1857 and 1861:

. . . but if you cannot learn to keep the commandments of God in Great Salt Lake City, . . . how do you expect them in Jackson County?—for **we are as sure to go back there as we exist**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 134)

They are holy places, and they will be held sacred even as **Jackson County**; . . . Joseph the Prophet dedicated that land, . . . I shall yet see the day that **I will go back there, with Brother Brigham** and with thousands and millions of others, and we will go precisely according to the dedication of the Prophet of the living God. Talk to me about my having any dubiety on my mind about these things being fulfilled!—I am just as confident of it as I am that I am called to be a saviour of men, and no power can hinder it. (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 190)

Brethren, **I shall go to Jackson County** with thousands of this people who will be faithful to their integrity; but we cannot go back until we have built some good houses. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 350)

Elias Smith stated that he expected “to live to be an old man, and to go back with the Saints to the land of Jackson County” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 221). On March 10, 1861, the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated:

Who is there that is prepared for this move back to the centre stake of Zion, and where the architects amongst us that are qualified to erect this temple and the city that will surround it? . . . And let me remind you that it is predicted that **this generation shall not pass away till a temple shall be built**, and the glory of the Lord rest upon it, according to the promises. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 71)

George Q. Cannon made this statement on October 23, 1864:

The day is near when a Temple shall be reared in the Center Stake of Zion, and the Lord has said his glory shall rest on that House in this generation **in which the revelation was given**, which is upwards of thirty years ago. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 344)

In the 1870’s the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt still maintained that the temple would be built in his generation. The following statements are taken from his discourses:

We have . . . confidence in returning to Jackson County and the building of a great central city . . . There are many of the old stock, who passed through all those tribulations I have named, **still living**, whose faith in returning to Jackson county, and the things that are coming, is as firm and fixed as the throne of the Almighty. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 138)

. . . God promised in the year 1832 that we should, before the generation **then living** had passed away, return and build up the City of Zion in Jackson County; that we should return and build up the temple of the Most High where we formerly laid the corner stone . . .

We believe in these promises as much as we believe in any promise ever uttered by the mouth of Jehovah. The Latter-day Saints just as much expect to receive a fulfillment of that promise during the generation that was in existence in 1832 as they expect that the sun will rise and set tomorrow. Why? Because **God cannot lie**. He will fulfil all His promises. He has spoken, **it must come to pass**. This is our faith. (*Ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 362)

We just as much expect that a city will be built, called Zion, in the place and on the land which has been appointed by the Lord our God, and that a temple will be reared on the spot that has been selected, and the corner-stone of which has been laid, in the **generation when this revelation was given**; we just as much expect this as we expect the sun to rise in the morning and set in the evening; or as much as we expect to see the fulfillment of any of the purposes of the Lord our God, pertaining to the works of his hands. But says the objector, “thirty-nine years have passed away.” What of that? The generation has not passed away; all the people that were living thirty-nine years ago have not passed away; but **before they do pass away this will be fulfilled**. (*Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 275)

God said, in the year 1832, before we were driven out of Jackson County, in a revelation which you will find here in this book, that before that generation should all pass away, a house of the Lord should be built in that county, . . .

This was given forty-two years ago. The generation then living was not only to commence a house of God in Jackson County, Missouri, but was actually **to complete the same**, and when it is completed the glory of God should rest upon it.

Now, do you Latter-day Saints believe that? I do, and if you believe in these revelations you just as much expect the fulfillment of the revelation as of any one that God has ever given in these latter times, or in former ages . . . we Latter-day Saints expect to return to Jackson County and to build a Temple there before the generation that was living forty-two years ago has all passed away. Well, then, the time **must be pretty near** when we shall begin the work. (*Ibid.*, vol. 17, p. 111)

By February 7, 1875, Orson Pratt was teaching that only a few of those who were driven from Jackson County would return to receive their inheritances:

We need not expect, from what God has revealed, that a very great number of those who were then in the Church and who were driven, will have the privilege of returning to that land. . . . There will be **some** that will live to behold that day, and will return and receive their inheritances, they and their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, according to the promise. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, pp. 291-292)

Joseph Lee Robinson claimed that Jesus appeared to him and told him that the temple would be built in that generation:

On a Sunday evening, . . . A light, a beautiful light, was present before my eyes.... Then as quick as thought, a very large building was present before my eyes . . . Presently the voice of the Good Shepherd said to me: “This house you see is the temple of the Living God that **shall be built in this generation** by the hands of the Latter-day Saints, upon the consecrated spot in Jackson County, Missouri.” . . . I know and have testified many times that I know that whatever might befall the Saints, the Temple of the living God will be built by the Saints—the Latter-day Saints—in this generation. (“Diary of Joseph Lee Robinson,” as published in *Temples of the Most High*, pp. 240-241)

Klaus J. Hansen shows that as late as 1900 Lorenzo Snow, the fifth President of the Church, was still hoping that the prophecy would be fulfilled:

In 1900, Woodruff’s successor, Lorenzo Snow, affirmed at a special priesthood meeting in the Salt Lake Temple that “there are **many here now** under the sound of my voice, probably a majority, who will live to go back to Jackson County and assist in building that temple.” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 74)

In 1923 Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjordahl still held to the hope that the revelation would be fulfilled. In the book, *Temples of the Most High*, N. B. Lundwall quotes them as saying the following:

“This generation shall not pass away, etc. This is a promise that some living at the time when it was made, in 1832, would still be on earth in the flesh, when the house of the Lord would

begin to lift its spires toward the sky on that consecrated ground. A generation does not pass away in one hundred years, and every generation has a few who live over a hundred year.”—*Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, 1923 Edition, by Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl. (Quoted in *Temples of the Most High*, p. 234)

The 1890 Edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* carried a footnote which read: “a generation does not all pass away in one hundred years” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Salt Lake City, 1890 ed., section 84, p. 289). This footnote has been deleted in more recent editions.

As late as 1935 Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, maintained that the revelation would be fulfilled:

I firmly believe that there will be **some of that generation** who were living when this revelation was given who shall be living when this temple is reared. And I do not believe that the Lord has bound himself to accomplish the matter within one hundred years from 1832, . . . I have full confidence in the word of the Lord and that it shall not fail. (*The Way To Perfection*, Salt Lake City, 1935, p. 270)

In a more recent book, however, Joseph Fielding Smith stated: “It is also reasonable to believe that **no soul** living in 1832, is **still living** in mortality on the earth” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 4, p. 112). It has now been 140 years since Joseph Smith gave the prophecy that the temple would be built in that generation. Since the Mormons have not even begun work on this temple, it appears that there is no way possible for Joseph Smith’s prophecy to be fulfilled.

## The Civil War

On December 25, 1832, Joseph Smith gave his famous revelation concerning the Civil War. It is printed as follows in Section 87 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

1. Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, **beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina**, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls;
2. And the time will come that war will be poured out **upon all nations, beginning at this place**.
3. For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon **other nations**, in order to defend themselves against **other nations**; and then war shall be poured out upon **all nations**.
4. And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.
5. And it shall come to pass also that the **remnants** who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the **Gentiles with a sore vexation**.
6. And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;
7. That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.
8. Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord, Amen. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 87)

The Mormon people believe that this revelation proves that Joseph Smith was a prophet. Larry Jonas, on the other hand, shows that Joseph Smith may have received the idea for this revelation from the views of his time:

“On July 14, 1832, Congress passed a tariff act which South Carolina thought was so bad, she declared the tariff null and void. President Andrew Jackson alerted the nation’s troops. At the time

Smith made his prophecy, the nation expected a war between North and South to begin at the rebellion of South Carolina. This can be confirmed in a U.S. history book. Better yet, let me confirm it from a Latter-day Saints Church publications, *Evening and Morning Star*, published monthly from Kirtland. Example 28 is page 122 of the issue which came out for January 1833. The news of South Carolina’s rebellion was known before January 1833. It was known before December 25, 1832 but it was not available in time for the December issue. It takes quite a while for news to be set up even today in our dailies. We would expect it to wait for a month to come out in a monthly. The example contains the information available to the church before the paper hit the street. The example and the prophecy are strangely similar . . . Both consider the pending war a sign of the end—**which it is not**. In fact, the war expected in 1832 did not come to pass . . .

Far from being evidences of Smith’s divine calling, the most famous prophecies which he made are evidences that he can copy views of his time. (*Mormon Claims Examined*, by Larry S. Jonas, p. 52)

One interesting fact that would seem to support the argument that Joseph Smith borrowed from the “views of his time” is that there is another article printed in the January 1833 issue of the original paper, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, which has the title, “REBELLION IN SOUTH CAROLINA.” Interestingly enough, Joseph Smith’s revelation has the words “beginning at the rebellion in South Carolina” in the first verse. In this article we read as follows:

In addition to the above tribulations, South Carolina has rebelled against the laws of the United States; held a state convention, and passed ordinances, the same as declaring herself an independent nation, . . .

And Gen. Jackson has ordered several companies of Artillery to Charleston, and issued a Proclamation, urging submission and declaring such moves as that of S. Carolina Treason. (*The Evening and the Morning Star*, vol. 1, no. 8)

Joseph Smith was probably familiar with the fact that South Carolina had rebelled at the time he gave the revelation. Just before the revelation concerning the Civil War is recorded in Joseph Smith’s *History*, the following statement is attributed to him:

. . . the United States, amid all her pomp and greatness, was threatened with dissolution. The people of South Carolina, in convention assembled (in November), passed ordinances, declaring their state a free and independent nation; . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 301)

Julius Petrofsky has pointed out an interesting fact with regard to this matter. On December 10, 1832, the *Boston Daily Advertiser & Patriot* printed “Extracts from the Message of the Governor of South Carolina at the opening of the Legislature, November 27, 1832.” His message warned that South Carolina was prepared to resist the U.S. Government by force if necessary. The same day that this was printed (Dec. 10, 1832), Orson Hyde “left Boston.” On December 22, 1832, he “arrived at Kirtland, Ohio, . . .” (Journal of Orson Hyde, typed copy, pp. 56-57). We cannot, of course, prove that Orson Hyde brought a copy of the *Boston Daily Advertiser & Patriot* with him, but it is interesting to note that just three days after his arrival (December 25, 1832), Joseph Smith gave his revelation on “the rebellion of South Carolina.”

Thus we see that the statement in Joseph Smith’s revelation that the wars would begin at the rebellion of South Carolina was probably inspired by the fact that South Carolina had **already** rebelled before the revelation was given. This rebellion did not end in war, but the Civil War did start some years later over trouble in South Carolina.

The fact that Joseph Smith predicted a civil war is not too remarkable. Many people believed there would be



a civil war before it actually took place. The December 1840 issue of the *Millennial Star* quoted an article from the *New York Herald*. In this article a civil war was predicted:

“We begin to fear that this unhappy country is on the eve of a bloody **Civil War**, a final dismemberment of the Union . . .” (*Millennial Star*, vol. 1, p. 216)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart makes these comments regarding Joseph Smith’s revelation:

Many Mormons, better versed in prophecy than history, have supposed that Joseph made this prediction long before there was any thought of Civil War or any evidence to indicate that it would begin in South Carolina . . . the Prophet himself prefaced the revelation by an account of the South Carolina affair, and the *Evening and Morning Star* treated it in some detail. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 88)

Alice Smith McKay did a great deal of research with regard to Joseph Smith’s revelation concerning the Civil War and came to the conclusion that it was only “the natural result of the stirring conditions of that particular period of history.” In her thesis she made these interesting observations:

In 1831, a French Scholar and publicist, Alexis de Tocqueville, came to the United States. He became interested in the study of the machinery of the government and as a result wrote his famous treatise on “Democracy in America.” He predicted the “inevitable separation” of the North and the South after his study of existing conditions. (“A Psychological Examination of a Few Prophecies of the Early Founders of Mormonism,” unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Utah, 1930, p. 15)

In the *Annual Register of the History of Europe*, published in London, 1832 (p. 406) is the following prediction of the conditions of the United States:

Civil war and a dissolution of the union seems thus to be approaching.

This statement was given at the same time that Joseph Smith gave his prophecy. The conditions at South Carolina pointed directly to war. Joseph Smith a man of foresight and wisdom, accurately interpreted the facts and information known. . . . The prediction was given at a period of actual preparation for war in South Carolina. (*Ibid.*, p. 19)

In view of the historical evidence, as presented, the most reasonable conclusion is that this Civil War prediction was the natural result of the stirring conditions of that particular period of history. The data in this short discussion indicates very forcibly that this utterance was not “Beyond the power of human sagacity to discern or to calculate.” (*Ibid.*, p. 20A)

Joseph Smith’s revelation concerning the Civil War was never published during his lifetime, and although it is included in the handwritten manuscript of the *History of the Church*, it was suppressed the first two times that Joseph Smith’s *History* was printed (see *Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 688; also *Millennial Star*, vol. 14, pp. 296, 305). It is obvious that this was a deliberate falsification on the part of the Mormon historians, for over 300 words were deleted without any indication!

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts informs us that the revelation was not printed until 1851 (seven years after Joseph Smith’s death):

In Vol. 13 of the *Millennial Star*, published in 1851, pp. 216 and 217, is an advertisement of a new church publication to be called the *Pearl of Great Price*. In the announced contents is named this revelation of December, 1832, with a statement that it had “**never before** appeared in print.” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 294)

It is interesting to note that verse 3 of Joseph Smith’s revelation concerning the Civil War did **not** come to pass. In verse 3 we

read: “. . . the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations **in order to defend themselves against other nations**; and then **war shall be poured out upon all nations.**” War was certainly **not** poured out on **all** nations at that time as Joseph Smith predicted.

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, in a sermon delivered April 14, 1861, predicted that the Civil War would destroy the nation:

In this country the North and the South will exert themselves against each other, and ere long the whole face of the United States will be in commotion, fighting one against another, and they will **destroy their nationality.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 55)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, prophesied that the Civil War would continue until the land was emptied so that the Mormons could return to Missouri:

Do they know what they are doing? No; but they have begun to empty the earth, to cleanse the land, and prepare the way for the **return** of the Latter-day Saints to the centre Stake of Zion.

Have we inheritances there? When I left the State of Missouri, I had a deed for five pieces of as good land as any in the State, and I expect to go back to it. . . . Many of the Saints will return to Missouri, and there receive an inheritance . . . The earth will also be emptied upon natural principles: . . . Will it be over in six months or in three years? No; it will take years and years, and will never cease until the work is accomplished. There may be seasons that the fire will appear to be extinguished, and the first you know it will break out in another portion, and all is on fire again, and it will spread and continue **until the land is emptied.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, pp. 142-143)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt prophesied:

This great war is only a small degree of chastisement, just the beginning; . . . For instance the great, powerful and populous city of **New York**, that may be considered one of the greatest cities of the world, will **in a few years become a mass of ruins.** The people will wonder while gazing on the ruins that cost hundreds of millions to build, what has become of its inhabitants. Their houses will be there, but they will be left desolate. So saith the Lord God. That will be only a sample of numerous other towns and cities on the face of this continent . . . But there are some in this congregation who will **live**, to behold the fulfillment of these other things, and will visit **the ruins of mighty towns and cities scattered over the face of this land** destitute and desolate of inhabitants. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 344)

Orson Pratt delivered this discourse in 1868, therefore, it has been over a hundred years since these prophecies were given.

Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the Church, made these statements:

I copied a revelation more than twenty-five years ago, in which it is stated that war should be in the south and in the north, and that nation after nation **would become embroiled in the tumult** and excitement, until **war should be poured out upon the whole earth**, and that this war would **commence at the rebellion of South Carolina**, and that times should be such that every man who did not flee to Zion would have to take up the sword against his neighbor or against his brother. . . . Who can stay this war that is devastating the whole nation both North and South? No human hand; . . . Will there ever be any more peace among them? No, not until the earth is drenched with the blood of the inhabitants thereof. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, pp. 13, 15)

The following questions and answers appeared in the February 1854 issue of *The Seer*, edited by Orson Pratt:

Q. What will be the consequence if they do not embrace the Book of Mormon as a divine revelation?

A. They will be **destroyed from the land and sent down to hell**, like all other generations who have rejected a divine message.

Q. In what way will the Lord destroy this nation if



they reject the Book of Mormon?

A. By a succession of the most terrible judgments . . . The bonds of the Union which now hold together the States of this Republic, will be severed, and a fearful, desolating, civil war will rage between the South and the North. . . . thus will the whole nation mourn and waste away and perish, unless they will hearken unto the great message which God has in mercy sent to them. There is no other alternative; they must **either embrace the Book of Mormon** as a divine revelation, or be **cut off by judgments** from the land, for it is the sure and certain decree of heaven. (*The Seer*, p. 215)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, prophesied that the Civil War could not free the slaves:

Ham will continue to be the servant of servants, as the Lord decreed, until the curse is removed. **Will the present struggle free the slave? No;** . . . Can you destroy the **decrees** of the Almighty? **You cannot.** Yet our Christian brethren think that they are going to overthrow the **sentence** of the Almighty upon the seed of Ham. **They cannot do that.** . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 25, p. 787; also published in *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 250)

Verse 5 of Joseph Smith's prophecy concerning the Civil War is rather unclear: "And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation." The Apostle Orson Pratt explained that the "remnants" mentioned are the Indians:

To add to the sufferings and great calamities of the nation, they will be greatly distressed by the **Aborigines** who "will marshal themselves and become exceeding angry" and vex them "with a sore vexation." We are inclined to believe that this will not take place until millions of the nation have already perished in their own revolutionary battles. To what extent the **Indians** will have power over the nation is not stated in this revelation; . . . (*The Seer*, p. 242)

The fact that Joseph Smith believed the wicked of his generation would be completely destroyed is obvious from a letter he wrote N. E. Seaton, on January 4, 1833. In this letter he stated:

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of **bloodshed** as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake **will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land**, to open and prepare the way for the **return of the lost tribes of Israel** from the north country. . . . flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for **there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things**, which I have spoken, fulfilled. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 315-316)

On October 15, 1843, Joseph Smith stated:

I **prophesy**, in the name of the Lord God of Israel, anguish and wrath and tribulation and the withdrawing of the Spirit of God from the earth await **this generation**, until they are visited with utter desolation. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 58)

On December 16, 1843, Joseph Smith prophesied:

While discussing the petition to Congress, I **prophesied**, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, **they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them, and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot.** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 22, p. 455)

When this prophecy was reprinted in the *History of the Church* the Mormon Church historians tried to tame it down by putting a period after the word "government" and omitting the clause "and God shall damn them, and there shall nothing be left of them—not even a grease spot" (see the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 116).

Brigham Young also predicted that the Government of the United States would be destroyed. On August 17, 1867, he stated:

I told General Kane that the Government of the United States would be **shivered to pieces**. Will this Government ever be restored to its former peace and tranquility, and the institutions thereof ever be maintained and honored? If they are, it will be by this people. Everything they are doing at present in Congress is only calculated to widen the breach, and alienate and destroy every vestige of love and affection that may yet be existing; and this they will continue to do until they have severed the last tie and worked out the **entire destruction of the government.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, pp. 119-120)

## The Gathering

The same revelation that stated that the Mormons were to build a temple at Independence, Missouri, also stated that they were to gather to Independence and build the New Jerusalem. This was to be the land of Zion. In the revelation we read:

Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, . . . for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem.

Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, . . .

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the Saints, beginning at this place, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 84, verses 2-4)

In 1833 the Mormons who were attempting to build up the city of Zion according to Joseph Smith's revelation were driven out of Jackson County, Missouri, by the Gentiles. This was a great disappointment to Joseph Smith, and since his reputation as a prophet was at stake, he decided to try to reinstate the Mormons in Jackson County. Klaus J. Hansen states that he "resolved to meet force with force." On December 16, 1833, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have said the following:

And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion.

A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; . . .

And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees. . . .

And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my **warriors**, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and **redeem** my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; **break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.**

And inasmuch as they gather together against you, **avenge me of mine enemies**, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 101, verses 43, 44, 51, 55-58)

On February 24, 1834, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the following appears:

Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come **by power;**

Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm. . . .

Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

Therefore let my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, . . .

And my presence shall be with you even in **avenging me of mine enemies**, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. . . . Therefore, if you cannot obtain five hundred, seek diligently that peradventure you may obtain three hundred.

And if ye cannot obtain three hundred, seek diligently that peradventure ye may obtain one hundred.

But verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall not go up unto the land of Zion until you have obtained a hundred of the strength of my house, to go up with you unto the land of Zion.

Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, . . .

All victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness, and prayers of faith. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 103, vs. 15-17, 21, 22, 26, 32-36)

Notice that Joseph Smith's name appears in brackets in the 1963 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* quoted above. A footnote in the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 255, explains:

It was not always desirable that the individuals whom the Lord addressed in revelations should at the time be known by the world, and hence in this and in some subsequent revelations the brethren were addressed by other than their own names. The temporary necessity having passed for keeping the names of the individuals addressed unknown, their real names were subsequently given in brackets.

Joseph Smith did raise an army as commanded, but he was unable to drive the enemy out of Jackson County. Reed Peck made this statement in a manuscript written in 1839:

In accordance with the interpretation of this parable Joseph Smith called for volunteers collected about 210 "Warriors" and marched to Clay County under arms, but the cholera on the second day after their arrival dispersed them and all hopes were destroyed of "redeem[in]g Zion" for the present, but to console the Mormons under this disappointment, Joseph Smith, before he returned from the campaign prophesied publicly to them, that "within three years they should march to Jackson County and there should not be a dog to open his mouth against them" . . . (*The Reed Peck Manuscript*, p. 3)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin stated: "The Camp, however, failed to accomplish its objective of reinstating the distressed Saints and it further aided in festering the sore of unpopular public opinion the Mormons already had in Ohio" (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 129).

After the trouble in Missouri, the Mormons tried to build up Kirtland, Ohio. On April 6, 1837, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning Kirtland:

He [Joseph Smith] then closed at about 4 P.M. by uttering a **prophecy** saying this place must be built up, and would be built up, and that every brother that would take hold and help secure and discharge those contracts that had been made, should be rich. (*Messenger and Advocate*, April 1837, vol. 3, p. 488)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 479, the first twelve words were deleted. This was apparently done to cover up the fact that the Mormon people considered Joseph Smith's statement "a **prophecy**."

However this may be, Kirtland was not built by the Mormons as Joseph Smith predicted. Just nine months later this statement appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

January, 1838.—A new year dawned upon the Church in Kirtland in all the bitterness of the spirit of apostate Mobocracy; . . . Elder Rigdon and myself were obliged to flee . . . On the evening of the 12th of January, about ten o'clock, we left Kirtland, on horseback, to escape mob violence, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 1)

After the trouble in Kirtland, the Mormons tried to build up Far West, Missouri. On April 26, 1838, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which contains the following statements:

Let the city, **Far West**, be a holy and consecrated land unto me; and it shall be called most holy, for the ground upon which thou standest is holy.

Therefore, I command you to **build a house unto me**, for the gathering together of my saints, that they may worship me . . .

And let the beginning be made on the fourth day of July next; and from that time forth let my people labor diligently to build a house unto my name;

And in one year from this day let them re-commence laying the foundation of my house.

Thus let them from that time forth labor diligently **until it shall be finished**, from the corner stone thereof **unto the top thereof**, until there shall **not anything remain that is not finished**. . . .

And again, verily I say unto you, it is my will that the city of Far West should be built up speedily by the gathering of my saints; . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 115, verses 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 17)

Just a few months later the Mormons were driven from Far West, and although they managed to lay the corner stone for the temple, the building itself was never completed.

After this the Mormons tried to build up a city in Illinois which Joseph Smith called Nauvoo. On January 5, 1843, this statement appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

Esquire Butterfield asked me "to prophesy how many inhabitants would come to Nauvoo." I said, I will not tell how many inhabitants will come to Nauvoo; . . . we have now about 12,000 inhabitants. I will **prophesy** that we will build up a great city; for we have only to fill up the interstices. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 232)

As we have already shown, Joseph Smith claimed that Nauvoo would be "the place" where the work for the dead would be performed (*Millennial Star*, vol. 23, p. 280). Brigham Young, however, brought the Mormons to Utah, and Joseph Smith's statement was changed so that it could be applied to Utah (see *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 319). We have also presented evidence which seems to show that the prophecy attributed to Joseph Smith concerning the Mormons being established in the Rocky Mountains (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 85) was written after his death.

In her thesis, Alice Smith McKay makes this interesting observation concerning Joseph Smith's idea about the location of "Zion":

Enlargement of the term Zion was due to the continued movement of the Saints from one locality to another. Prophecies show that in 1833 **Zion** meant **Independence**, Missouri. But after the Saints were driven from Independence, the meaning Zion broadened . . . ("A Psychological Examination of a Few Prophecies of the Early Founders of Mormonism," p. 71)

It is interesting to compare a statement made by Joseph Smith on January 4, 1833, with one he made just before his death in 1844. In the earlier statement Smith warned that the people of the United States must gather to Zion "in the state of Missouri" to escape from "the overflowing scourge":

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not parallel in the history of our nation; . . . The people of the Lord, . . . have already commenced gathering

together to **Zion**, which is in the **state of Missouri**; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, . . . **flee to Zion**, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 315-316)

On April 8, 1844, however, Joseph Smith declared that **all of America is Zion**:

You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. . . . The **whole** of America is **Zion** itself from north to south, and is described by the Prophets, who declare that it is the Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land. . . .

I have received instructions from the Lord that from henceforth wherever the Elders of Israel shall build up churches and branches unto the Lord throughout the States, there shall be a stake of Zion. In the great cities, as Boston, New York, &c., there shall be stakes. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 318-319)

There are a number of statements which Joseph Smith made in the 1830's which show that he believed that the Mormon people would build Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. On December 5, 1833, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated:

I would inform you, that it is **not** the will of the Lord for you to sell your lands in Zion, if means can possibly be procured for your sustenance without . . . the spot of ground upon which you are located, is the place appointed of the Lord for your inheritance, and it is right in the sight of God that you contend for it **to the last**.

You will recollect that the Lord has said, that **Zion should not be removed out of her place**; therefore the land should not be sold, but be held by the Saints, until the Lord in His wisdom shall open a way for your return; and until that time, if you can purchase a tract of land in Clay county for present emergencies, it is right you should do so, if you can do it, and not sell your land in Jackson county. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 450-451)

Five days later Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated:

. . . it is better in the eyes of God that you should die, than that you should give up the land of Zion, the inheritances which you have purchased with your moneys; . . .

Now hear the prayer of your unworthy brother . . . O My God! Thou who hast called and chosen a few, . . . and sent them to Missouri [sic], a place which Thou didst call Zion, . . . and as Thou hast said that no other place should be appointed like unto this, therefore, I ask Thee in the name of Jesus Christ to return Thy people unto their houses and their inheritances, to enjoy the fruit of their labors; that all the waste places may be built up; that all the enemies of Thy people, who will not repent and turn unto Thee may be destroyed from off the face of the land; . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 455-456)

On December 16, 1833, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which plainly stated that Zion could not be moved:

Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered . . .

And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 101:17, 20, 21)

The reader will remember that although Joseph Smith gathered an army and marched toward Jackson County, he was not successful in his attempt to restore the Mormon people to their

lands. In July, 1834, the Mormons wrote “An Appeal” in which they stated: “. . . the propositions of the Jackson county committee could not be accepted on our part, because they proposed to ‘buy or sell,’ and to sell our land would amount to a **denial of our faith**, as that land is **the place** where the **Zion** of God shall stand, according to our faith and belief in the revelations of God, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 127).

The Mormon people felt so strongly with regard to this matter that it was considered a real offense for a person to sell the land he had acquired in Jackson County. On February 5, 1838, the Far West Presidency were tried for a number of offenses. In the minutes of the proceedings we find the following:

Elder Lyman Wight stated that he considered all other accusations of minor importance compared to Brothers Phelps and Whitmer **selling their lands in Jackson County**; that they had set an example which all the Saints were liable to follow. He said that it was a hellish principle on which they had acted, and that they had **flatly denied the faith in so doing**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 4)

It is interesting to note that only about a year later (March 8, 1839) Joseph Smith himself “counseled to sell all the land in Jackson county”:

Alanson Ripley made a report of his journey to Liberty, and said that President Joseph Smith, Jun., counseled to **sell all the land in Jackson County**, and all other lands in the state whatsoever. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 274)

The Mormon writer Leland Gentry makes this comment about Joseph Smith's decision: “The decision to sell the lands in Jackson County was revolutionary indeed, but the exigency of the situation appears to have made it necessary” (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839*, by Leland H. Gentry, B.Y.U., 1965, pp. 160-161).

As the Mormon leaders changed their ideas concerning Zion, they gradually gave up the idea of “the gathering.” This had been one of the most important teachings in Joseph Smith's early theology. In a revelation given in 1830 we find the following:

Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be **gathered in unto one place** upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 29, verse 8)

In the minutes of a conference held in Norton, Ohio, April 21, 1834, we find the following:

President Joseph Smith, Jun., . . . addressed the conference as follows:

. . . The time is near when desolation is to cover the earth, and then God will have a place of deliverance in His remnant, and in Zion . . .

Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none; for without **Zion**, and a **place of deliverance**, we must fall; . . . for God will gather out His Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered . . . President Joseph Smith, Jun., **prophesied**.

If Zion is not delivered, the time is near when all of this Church, wherever they may be found, will be pe[r]secuted and destroyed in like manner.

(*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 52-53)

On February 1, 1846, this statement was printed in the Mormon publication, *Millennial Star*:

There is no characteristic by which the Saints are distinguished in the present days so peculiar as that of **the gathering**, and so long as we continue in connexion with the kingdom of



God, the doctrine of the gathering will be of **vital importance**, indeed everything hinges upon this point, the **Saints must be gathered out from Babylon**, in order that they may become a kingdom and a people prepared for the Lord at his coming. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 7, pp. 47-48)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt wrote:

Hence, there is connected with the great message of the Book of Mormon, “a voice from heaven,” commanding the Saints to come out from all nations as fast as they obey the gospel message; this they have been doing for these many years, and this they will continue to do, until the **work of gathering** is fully accomplished. And after the saints, who are the salt of the earth, are gathered out, those who are left will quickly perish, as did Sodom and Gomorra. (*Orson Pratt’s Works*, “Prophetic Evidence in Favour of the Book of Mormon,” p. 85)

Klaus J. Hansen gives this interesting information:

Mormon missionaries, fanning out to the far corners of the earth, instructed their converts that **gathering to Zion** was one of the basic tests of orthodoxy. “None of the Saints,” admonished Orson Pratt, “can be dilatory upon this subject, and still retain the spirit of God. To neglect or be indifferent about gathering, is just as displeasing in the sight of God as to neglect or be indifferent about baptism for the remission of sins.” (*Quest for Empire*, p. 47)

The idea of the gathering, which was so important to the early Mormon leaders, has now been abandoned. Richard L. Bushman, a Mormon author, made this statement in a letter published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, p. 11: “But the doctrine of gathering has been **suspended** and our job now is to live in the world.” The Mormon writer James L. Clayton stated: “In our early history, for example, the doctrine of the gathering was assumed to be a permanent part of the Gospel. Today just **the reverse** is taught, and a general gathering of the faithful would be disastrous” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 73). The Mormon writer John J. Stewart gives this information:

This program of gathering continued to be a prominent one for the first hundred years of the Church. More recently, having firmly established itself in western America, the Church has undertaken to build up wards and stakes, temples and chapels throughout all parts of the world receptive to its message. Rather than emigrating to Zion, converts are now encouraged to remain in their native lands and help build up the Church there. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 60)

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith’s doctrine concerning the gathering has failed, and therefore the church has abandoned this teaching. With this thought in mind it is interesting to read some comments concerning the gathering made by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt over a hundred years ago:

Joseph Smith . . . professes to have received, through **revelation** and commandment from God, a dispensation for the gathering of the Saints from all nations. Now the doctrine of the gathering of the Saints in the last days must either be false or true; if **false**, then **J. Smith** must be an **imposter**. It matters not how correct he may have been in all other points of his system, if this one point—the **doctrine of the gathering** be false, he must be a **deceiver**. Why? Because he professes to have received this doctrine by direct revelation and commandment. On the other hand, if the doctrine of the gathering of the Saints be a true doctrine and scriptural, this will be another presumptive evidence that Mr. Smith was sent of God. (*Orson Pratt’s Works*, “Divine Authority,” p. 5)

## Joseph’s Boys

After Joseph Smith’s death it was expected that his son would someday lead the church, although he was too young at the time. John D. Lee stated:

It was then understood among the Saints that **young Joseph was to succeed his father**, . . . Joseph, the Prophet, had bestowed that

right upon him by ordination, **but he was too young** at that time to fill the office . . . Brigham Young arose and roared like a young lion, imitating the style and voice of Joseph, the Prophet. Many of the brethren declared that they saw the mantle of Joseph fall upon him. I myself, at the time, imagined that I saw and heard a strong resemblance to the Prophet in him, and felt that he was the man to lead us until Joseph’s **legal successor** should grow up to manhood, when he should surrender the Presidency to the man who held the **birthright**. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, p. 155)

On June 29, 1856, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, stated:

At present the Prophet Joseph’s boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and bye God will wake them up, and **they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 6)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement on June 3, 1860:

What of Joseph Smith’s family? What of his boys? . . . They are in the hands of God, and when they make their appearance before this people, full of his power, there are none but what will say—“Amen! we are ready to receive you.”

The brethren testify that brother Brigham is brother Joseph’s legal successor. **You never heard me say so**. . . I do not think anything about being Joseph’s successor. That is nothing that concerns me. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 69)

As it ended up the Mormon people did **not** receive Joseph Smith’s sons as Brigham Young prophesied. One of Joseph Smith’s sons became the president of the Reorganized L.D.S. Church—this is the church which actively fought against some of the doctrines of the Utah L.D.S. Church.

## Other Prophecies

On August 31, 1856, Brigham Young stated: “In the days of Joseph it was considered a great privilege to be permitted to speak to a member of Congress, but **twenty-six** years will **not** pass away before the Elders of this Church will be **as much** thought of as **the kings** on their thrones” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 40).

To those who have studied Mormon history, it is obvious that this prophecy did not come to pass. In 1882—twenty-six years after the prophecy was uttered—the Elders of the Mormon Church were held in derision because they taught polygamy.

On September 6, 1856, Heber C. Kimball made these statements:

The Church and kingdom to which we belong will become the kingdom of our God and his Christ, and brother **Brigham Young** will become **President of the United States**.

(Voices responded. “Amen.”)

And I tell you he will be something more; but we do not now want to give him the name: but he is called and ordained to a far greater station than that, and he is fore-ordained to take that station, and he has got it; and **I am Vice-President**, and brother Wells is the **Secretary of the Interior**—yes, and of all the armies in the flesh.

You don’t believe that; but I can tell you it is one of the smallest things that I can think of. You may think that I am joking; but I am perfectly willing that brother Long should write every word of it; for I can see it just as naturally as I see the earth and the productions thereof. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 219)

Harold Schindler tells of a prophecy uttered by Brigham Young:

The church leader then added a prophecy which brought hurrahs from his audience. “In twelve years,” he said, “I will either be President of the United States or will dictate who shall be!” On this enthusiastic note the Mormon cavalcade began retracing its steps down the steep canyon road to the city. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, University of Utah Press, 1966, p. 250)

For other false prophecies and extravagant boasts see the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, pp. 228, 253, 262; vol. 5, pp. 10, 93, 94, 164, 173, 174, 274, 275.

## More on Forgeries and Their Effect on the Mormon Church

One of the chief differences between the Mormon Church and the Reorganized LDS Church centers around the question of who was the successor to Joseph Smith (see page 195 of this book). While the Utah Mormons steadfastly maintain that Brigham Young was the true successor, the RLDS claim that Joseph Smith had bestowed this right on his son Joseph Smith III. On March 19, 1981, the Mormon newspaper, *The Deseret News*, made the startling announcement that an extremely important document which dealt with the issue of the succession of the presidency had been found:

A handwritten document thought to be a father's blessing given by Joseph Smith Jr., first president and prophet of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to his son Joseph Smith III, has been acquired by the Church Historical Department. . . .

[Earl E.] Olson and other LDS officials said **they are convinced the blessing is authentic**. Handwriting and the paper were examined and compared with other documents. . . .

The blessing document, dated Jan. 17, 1844, is thought to have been written by Thomas Bullock, one of several men who served as clerk to Joseph Smith Jr. . . .

Church officials obtained the document from Mark William Hofmann, a collector of historical documents and antiques. He said he received it from a descendant of Thomas Bullock. . . .

The document outlines a blessing given by Joseph Smith Jr. to his son, then age 11, and includes the possibility of the son succeeding his father "to the Presidency of the High Priesthood: A Seer, and a Revelator, and a Prophet, unto the Church."

This document, which the Mormon leaders purchased from Mark Hofmann, clearly supported the claims of the Reorganized Church. The following words are found in the text of the blessing:

A blessing, given to Joseph Smith, 3rd, by his father, Joseph Smith, Jun., on Jan. 17, 1844.

Blessed of the Lord is my son Joseph, who is called the third, . . . For **he shall be my successor to the Presidency of the High Priesthood: a Seer, and a Revelator, and a Prophet, unto the Church;** which appointment belongeth to him by blessing, and also by right.

Since the blessing appeared to be in agreement with the material we presented on page 195 of this book, we included it in the 1982 edition. As we have indicated in the updated material on the Anthon Transcript (see pages 125-A to 125-F), we began to have reservations concerning some of Mark Hofmann's discoveries in 1984. One document which we became rather suspicious of was the Joseph Smith III

Blessing. The church's *Deseret News*, March 19, 1981, had claimed that Hofmann had "received it from a descendant of Thomas Bullock." We decided that it would be wise to talk to the individual who was supposed to have had the document before it came into Mr. Hofmann's hands. We reasoned that if we could trace it back beyond Hofmann to the Bullock family, we would be sure of its authenticity. We soon learned that it was virtually impossible to find out the name of the descendant of Thomas Bullock from whom the blessing was supposed to have been obtained, which caused us to become even more suspicious. On August 22, 1984, we published the following:

In his public statement about the Joseph Smith III Blessing document Hofmann has said he a[c]quired it from a descendant of Thomas Bullock. An official from the Reorganized Church [RLDS Church Historian Richard P. Howard] told us that when he asked Hofmann the specific source of this document, he would not reveal it. The same man [Howard] asked us the question, "Would you want to buy a used car from someone who wouldn't tell you who the last owner was." At any rate, he was given a name by the Mormon Church historians, but never followed up on the matter because he was told it could prove embarrassing for the Mormon Church. The reason why it would prove embarrassing was not explained. (*The Money-Digging Letters*, pp. 8-9)

The day following the publication of *The Money-Digging Letters* (August 23, 1984), Mark Hofmann came to our home and had a long talk with Sandra. He seemed very distressed and hurt that we, of all people, would question his discoveries. He had expected that opposition might come from those in the church, but he was amazed that Utah Lighthouse Ministry had taken a position which was critical of him. Mr. Hofmann tried to explain that he could not reveal the source of the Salamander letter because he had sold it to Steven Christensen. With regard to the Joseph Smith III Blessing, Hofmann indicated that he had given the Mormon Church an affidavit which stated where he had obtained it. He could not reveal the source to the public, however, because the member of the Bullock family from whom he had purchased the document also had important papers concerning Brigham Young's finances that would be embarrassing to the church. Mark Hofmann was almost to the point of tears as he pled his case as to why we should trust him.

Testimony given by former Mormon Church Archivist Donald Schmidt at Hofmann's preliminary hearing [Salt Lake City, Utah, April 1986] confirms that he actually gave the church a notarized statement with the name of a

man he was supposed to have obtained the blessing from:

A— . . . He furnished me with a notarized . . . statement.

Q—Does that statement state where or whom he received the Joseph Smith III Blessing from?

A—The statement was signed by an Allen Bullock.

Q—That being the person he obtained it from?

A—Yes.

Q—Were you able to receive any more information about an Allen Bullock?

A—Yes. In a conversation on [the] telephone with Mark Hofmann, he told me his full name was Allen Lee Bullock. Donald Schmidt claimed that Hofmann even told him when “Allen Lee Bullock” was born. In his testimony Mr. Schmidt went on to reveal that the church failed to verify whether there was such an individual:

Q—As a result of those investigations, what did [you] have in your . . . files verifying the provenance of this document?

A—We were unable to do so.

Q—Did you have any personal contact with this Allen Lee Bullock?

A—I did not.

Q—Did anyone in your department have contact with him.

A—No, sir.

Mark Hofmann told one scholar that the descendant of Thomas Bullock from whom he obtained the blessing document had a collection of 37 items. Hofmann also indicated that this individual lived in Coalville, Utah. Jeffery O. Johnson, who used to work for the Church Historical Department, also indicated that Hofmann claimed that he obtained the blessing in Coalville:

LDS historian Jeffery O. Johnson, . . . said that, since the document controversy following the bombings, he has questioned the source of the Joseph Smith III blessing.

“The Smith family logically would have had such an important blessing,” Johnson said. “It’s never been clear where it came from. Hofmann said it came from the Bullock family in Coalville. But why did the clerk keep it through all those generations? Thomas Bullock worked in the church history department. This is more like a historical document than something he would keep in his family.” (*Deseret News*, December 22, 1985)

Even with all the information that Hofmann gave concerning “Allen Lee Bullock” (his name, city and when he was born), no one seems to be able to locate him. One would think that if Mr. Bullock actually existed, his name would be found in genealogical records of the Bullock family or that

someone in Coalville would have heard of him. To date, all efforts to confirm his existence have failed.

Forensic document expert George Throckmorton testified that the Joseph Smith III Blessing was not authentic because he found the “characteristic cracking effect” in the ink. William Flynn also observed this phenomenon: “This is another one of the documents where the surface of [the] ink is extensively cracked throughout the document.” As we indicated in the updated material on the Anthon Transcript, the fact that the ink was cracked led the experts to believe that it had been artificially aged with chemicals. Mr. Flynn commented that he also saw “one-directional ink running on that document.” When asked if he believed the blessing was authentic, Flynn responded: “I don’t believe that’s genuine either.”

While some people originally subscribed to the theory that “the bombs [which killed two people and set off the investigation into the document scandal] were planted by people radically opposed to the teachings of the Mormon Church,” the facts completely discredit such an idea. At this point it appears that the entire Salamandergate scandal grew out of an internal problem which took root within the Mormon Church itself. Almost all of those who played a role in the transactions which brought international attention to Salt Lake City were members of the Mormon Church. Mark Hofmann himself was at one time a missionary for the church. According to the Church Section of the *Deseret News*, October 20, 1985, “Hofmann . . . served in the England Southwest Mission, 1974-76.” On February 4, 1986, the same newspaper said that on “one mission report of average proselyting hours, Hofmann’s name ranks 49th out of 208 missionaries. Part of the time, Hofmann served in the mission office in Bristol.” *Utah Holiday*, January 1986, page 53, reported that Hofmann married “in the Salt Lake LDS temple.” In an interview published in *Sunstone Review*, September 1982, page 19, Mr. Hofmann described himself as “an eighth-generation Mormon, and my mother is a stake Relief Society president right now.” Some of Hofmann’s closest associates (Lyn Jacobs, Shannon Flynn and Brent Metcalfe) were returned Mormon missionaries. Like Hofmann, Brent Metcalfe had served his mission in England. Lyn Jacobs was a missionary in Canada, and Shannon Flynn served in Brazil. One of the persons that Hofmann defrauded was Wilford Cardon. Mr. Cardon testified: “Mr. Flynn



served a mission in Brazil and I was his mission president from July 1978 until the end of his mission.” Shannon Flynn introduced Mark Hofmann to Wilford Cardon, and Hofmann proceeded to talk Cardon into investing heavily in his schemes. Another faithful Mormon who lost a great deal of money by investing in Hofmann’s forgeries is Brent Ashworth. The Church Section of the *Deseret News*, June 23, 1985, said that Mr. Ashworth was “bishop of the BYU 82nd Ward.” On July 23, 1986, Brent Ashworth filed a lawsuit against Mark Hofmann in which he claimed that Hofmann had sold him many forgeries and that he had paid \$225,100 for the documents. Alvin Rust, who invested in the McLellin collection and a number of Hofmann’s other forgeries, has served as a bishop in the Mormon Church. Steven Christensen and J. Gary Sheets, who invested in the Salamander letter and later had bombs delivered to them, were also bishops in the church. (Sheets’ wife, of course, opened the package addressed to him and died in the explosion.)

Mark Hofmann was well acquainted with Wade Lillywhite and Curt Bench who worked at the church’s Deseret Book. Many of Hofmann’s forgeries, in fact, were sold to the church’s bookstore. David Sorenson, who was to purchase the McLellin collection on the day Hofmann was injured, was serving as a mission president. Mr. Hofmann was well acquainted with the former LDS Church Archivist Donald Schmidt and sometimes met with Gordon B. Hinckley, of the church’s First Presidency. Donald Schmidt testified that Hinckley and Apostle Boyd K. Packer often gave approval for the church to purchase Hofmann’s documents.

Hugh Pinnock, of the First Quorum of Seventy, helped Hofmann find a buyer for the McLellin collection and secure a loan of \$185,000, and even Apostle Dallin Oaks found himself meeting with Hofmann.

One thing that must be very embarrassing for Mormon Church leaders is that they not only gave Hofmann money for forgeries, but that they also traded genuine material stored in the archives for bogus documents. At the press conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley said that the “Historical Department later traded him other documents of interest for the ‘Anthon Manuscript’ ” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 27, 1985). Hinckley also said that the Joseph Smith III Blessing “was acquired from Mr. Hofmann with a trade of historic materials . . .” (*Ibid.*).

The Hofmann documents which were not unfavorable to the Mormon Church were proudly displayed in church publications. The church’s *Ensign* magazine, December 1983, printed an article which was filled with pictures of documents that came through Hofmann. On the other hand, the unfavorable documents which the public were not aware

of, were buried in the church’s vaults. In the *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1986, we find the following:

Sources close to the investigation have said the church apparently did little to authenticate many of these documents before they were purchased, stating that church historians felt “they had time and all eternity” to check their veracity. “They just wanted them off the streets,” the source said.

Although the story of Mark Hofmann and his document dealing is a real tragedy for everyone involved, it can provide some very helpful insights with regard to Joseph Smith and the origin of the Mormon Church. In fact, it even throws light on the actions of the present leaders of the church. While it must be admitted that there are many dissimilarities between Mark Hofmann and Joseph Smith, there are some remarkable parallels between the two men. To begin with, Joseph Smith was only in his twenties when he brought forth the Book of Mormon. Because of his age many people have argued that it would have been impossible for him to produce a book like the Book of Mormon without divine help. Mark Hofmann was about the same age when he began making his discoveries. Hofmann’s followers have advanced an argument similar to that used for Joseph Smith—i.e., how could such a young, inexperienced man fabricate so many remarkable documents and fool church leaders, historians and document experts?

Both Joseph Smith and Mark Hofmann had many devoted followers. It is often argued that the rapid growth and dedication of the early Mormon Church is a strong argument for Joseph Smith’s divine calling. While it is certainly true that Joseph Smith had many people who firmly believed in him, the same could be said of Mark Hofmann. In fact, the leaders of the Mormon Church had a great deal of faith in “Brother Hofmann” (see *Deseret News*, Church Section, May 3, 1980). In the *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 19, 1986, Mike Carter referred to the “blind trust of LDS officials in Bombing suspect Mark W. Hofmann . . .” Mr. Carter went on to say that it “was apparent that church leaders, including President Hinckley, trusted Mr. Hofmann implicitly . . .”

Another parallel between Mark Hofmann and Joseph Smith is that they both became famous because of a document they discovered. The *Los Angeles Times*, November 8, 1985, printed the following:

Indeed, the very founding of Mormonism was based on the discovery of a document of sorts. Church doctrine holds that . . . Joseph Smith was led by an angel named Moroni to a set of golden plates . . . Smith, the Mormons believe, translated a “reformed Egyptian” text on the plates into the Book of Mormon, which supposedly corrects the errors of other Christian religions.

Mark Hofmann, of course, found himself in the limelight when he discovered the Anthon transcript—purported to be Joseph Smith’s own handwritten copy of the characters from the gold plates of the Book of Mormon. Mr. Hofmann went on to discover the first extant letter of Joseph Smith—the 1825 letter to Josiah Stowell. As if this were not startling enough, he found the last extant letter of Joseph Smith, written on the very day of his death. Prior to Hofmann’s time, no one had ever found a letter signed by Martin Harris. Hofmann filled this gap by finding two letters signed by Harris—the Salamander letter of 1830 and the 1873 letter, which was written toward the end of his life. Both letters were extraordinary in their content. The 1873 letter contained a glowing testimony to both the Book of Mormon and the angel who showed Harris the gold plates. The Salamander letter, on the other hand, turned out to be a devastating account of how Joseph Smith found the gold plates. Mr. Hofmann also found the earliest known letter of Joseph Smith’s mother, Lucy Mack Smith. Besides these documents and many others, Hofmann claimed to have the McLellin collection, containing extremely important and sensitive Mormon documents. Hofmann’s finds even went beyond Mormonism. For instance, he found an original Betsy Ross letter. Then, to top it all off, he discovered the “Oath of a Freeman,” the first document printed in colonial America. While the discovery of a copy of the Oath of a Freeman would be astounding enough, Mark Hofmann claimed that he found two copies of the document! Moreover, he said that these copies were worth \$1,500,000 each—making a **total of \$3,000,000.**

While Mark Hofmann’s claims almost leave one breathless, they seem insignificant when compared with the claims of Joseph Smith. We have already discussed some of these claims in the first chapter of this book. The reader may remember that Joseph Smith claimed to have found original papyri containing the writings of Abraham and Joseph of Egypt. According to Josiah Quincy, the Prophet showed him the papyrus rolls and commented:

“**That is the handwriting of Abraham**, the Father of the Faithful,” . . . “**This is the autograph of Moses**, and these lines were written by his brother **Aaron**. Here we have the earliest account of the Creation, from which Moses composed the First Book of Genesis.” . . .

While Mark Hofmann claimed to have some very old and important autographs, Joseph Smith’s collection was far superior.

Although Mark Hofmann’s actions can not be excused in the eyes of the law because of his background, we can not help but feel sorry for him. His involvement with Mormon history certainly could have played an important role in his problems. If we assume that he started out as a true believer

in the church, the things he learned from his study of Joseph Smith and early Mormonism could have come as a shattering blow to his faith. Before Mark Hofmann went on his mission for the church, he would have been thoroughly instructed in the importance of Joseph Smith to those who wish to be good Mormons. For instance, in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, section 135, verse 3, we read:

Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. . . . He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; . . .

What a disappointment it must have been to Mr. Hofmann when he found out that Joseph did not tell the truth concerning his involvement in polygamy (see pages 245-248 of this book). If Mark Hofmann had learned from his study of history that the first Prophet of his church had been a man of impeccable honesty, it could have made a great difference in his life. Perhaps he would have continued his study of medicine and become a doctor. Instead, he finds himself accused of deceit and treachery. Alvin Rust claimed that Mr. Hofmann told him four stories with regard to the McLellin collection. In this respect Hofmann was no different than Joseph Smith. On pages 143-150, we demonstrated that the Mormon Prophet told a variety of different stories concerning his most important vision—the First Vision of 1820. In a manuscript written in his own hand in 1832, preserved in the Mormon Church Archives, Joseph Smith clearly taught that only one personage (Jesus) appeared to him in this vision. In an entry in Joseph Smith’s diary for 1835, also stored in the Mormon Church Archives, Joseph Smith related a different story. He claimed that there were many personages in the vision. In the official account, written in 1838, Joseph Smith asserted that both God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ appeared to him.

When it comes to the forgery of historical church documents, Mark Hofmann could have read a great deal about Mormonism that might be used in an attempt to justify his actions. For instance, Mormon leaders claim that the Book of Mormon is a translation of an ancient history of the Nephites written on gold plates. The internal evidence in the book itself, however, clearly reveals that it is a 19th century production. It appears to have material taken from the Westminster Confession, which was not adopted until 1729 (see pages 68-69), and also reflects the anti-Masonic controversy which was raging in Joseph Smith’s time (pages 69-72). The most devastating evidence against the Book of Mormon, however, is its use of material from the Bible. That Joseph Smith plagiarized from the King James Version of the Bible in creating the Book of Mormon is evident to those who have made a careful comparison of the two books. On pages 74-79, we have

cited over 200 places where the Book of Mormon used quotations from the New Testament. Most of these quotations were supposed to have been recorded in the Book of Mormon between 600 B.C. and 33 A.D.—i.e., before the New Testament was even written!

Joseph Smith's successors also seemed to have little regard for truthful history. The Mormon leaders actually forged the greatest portion (60%) of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* after his death. While it is true that they used carefully selected portions from Joseph Smith's diaries and letters written by him, other portions were taken from newspapers and diaries written by other people and some material was created specifically to fill in vacancies in the record. The portions taken from other authors were changed to the first person in an obvious attempt to mislead the reader into believing that they were written by Joseph Smith himself (see pages 126-142 of this book). What Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders did when they fabricated Joseph Smith's *History* and claimed that it was written by Joseph Smith "himself" (*History of the Church* vol. 1, title page), is exactly what happened in the production of the Salamander letter. In both cases other documents have been plagiarized to create what appears to be an original document written in the first person singular. While the *History of the Church* and the Salamander letter both contain a certain amount of material that is historically accurate, neither of them can be really depended upon because the authorship has been misrepresented. The *History of the Church*, of course, presents a pro-Mormon position, whereas the Salamander letter is anti-Mormon in content. In both cases, however, the same deceptive method has been used.

Mr. Hofmann must have believed that his "discoveries" would tend to liberalize the Mormon Church as scholars and church leaders came to accept them, and there is little doubt that this has turned out to be the case. Some Mormon scholars, in fact, have confessed that the Salamander letter served as the catalyst that led them to deeper studies regarding the connection between Mormonism and magic. Now that the documents have been exposed as forgeries, historians may have suffered some loss of credibility with the average member of the church. This would probably tend to strengthen the orthodox position in the church if it were not for another factor—i.e., the loss of credibility that the Mormon leaders have suffered. While it is true that both Mormon and non-Mormon historians were fooled, as a general rule historians do not claim to be inspired by God. The Mormon leaders, on the other hand, claim special guidance from the Lord. According to Ezra Taft Benson,

the present Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the Mormon Church, "*The Prophet Will Never Lead The Church Astray*" ("Fourteen Fundamentals In Following The Prophets," an address given at BYU, February 26, 1980; printed in *Following The Brethren*, p. 5). President Benson claims that the leaders of the church have special discernment which is far superior to "earthly knowledge":

FIFTH: *The Prophet is Not Required to Have Any Particular Earthly Training or Credentials to Speak on Any Subject or Any Matter at Any Time.*

Sometimes there are those who feel their earthly knowledge on a certain subject is superior to the heavenly knowledge which God gives to His Prophet on the same subject. . . . We haven't yet had a prophet who earned a doctorate degree in any subject, but as someone said, "A prophet may not have his PhD but he certainly has his LDS." We encourage earthly knowledge in many areas, but remember if there is ever a conflict between earthly knowledge and the words of the prophet, you stand with the prophet and you'll be blessed and time will vindicate you. (*Ibid.*, p. 6)

On page 10 of his address, President Benson said:

NINTH: *The Prophet Can Receive Revelation on Any Matter—Temporal or Spiritual.*

As we think of President Benson's statements concerning the special powers of a prophet, we cannot help but remember a photograph of his predecessor, Spencer W. Kimball, the twelfth Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the Mormon Church, which appeared in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* on May 3, 1980. President Kimball is flanked by Mark Hofmann, President N. Eldon Tanner, President Marion G. Romney, Apostle Boyd K. Packer and Apostle Gordon B. Hinckley. Neither President Kimball nor any of the other General Authorities were able to detect anything wrong with either "Brother Hofmann" or the Anthon transcript which he was trying to palm off on them. Although President Kimball was supposed to be a "seer" and have the power to "translate all records that are of ancient date" (Book of Mormon, Mosiah 8:13), he was unable to translate the purported Book of Mormon characters which appear on the Anthon transcript. Instead of using the "seer stone," he examined the characters which appear on the transcript with a magnifying glass. Not only did he fail to provide a translation, but he was unable to detect that the church was being set up to be defrauded of a large amount of money and many items out of its archives. Moreover, he entirely failed to see the devastating and embarrassing effect this transaction and others which followed would have on the Mormon Church. If ever revelation from the



Lord was needed, it was on that day in 1980 when Mark Hofmann stood in the presence of President Kimball.

While the Mormon leaders claim to have the same powers as the ancient Apostles in the Bible, their performance with regard to Mark Hofmann certainly does not match up to that of the Apostle Peter when he caught Ananias and Sapphira red-handed in their attempt to deceive the church with regard to a financial transaction: “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?” (Acts 5:3).

As President Kimball got older, he became less able to function and President Gordon B. Hinckley took over many of his responsibilities and became to all appearances the acting president of the church. Hinckley, who stood with President Kimball in the 1980 photograph, was deceived on a number of occasions by Mr. Hofmann. He, together with Apostle Boyd K. Packer (also shown in the picture), approved many of the deals the church made with Hofmann. It appears that if the Mormon Church was ever led by revelation, it has been lacking since Mark Hofmann came into the church offices with the Anthon transcript. The inability of the Mormon leaders to detect the religious fraud perpetrated upon them raises a question as to their testimony with regard to the Book of Mormon. After all, if they could not determine that Hofmann’s documents—which were only 150 years old—were forgeries, how can we trust their judgment with regard to a record which is supposed to be ten times as old? They have seen and inspected Mark Hofmann’s documents, but they have never seen the gold plates the Book of Mormon was translated from. While it could be possible that Joseph Smith really had some kind of metal plates, how would the present leaders of the Mormon Church know if they were genuine or fabricated? With regard to the inability of the Mormon leaders to detect that the Hofmann documents were fraudulent, a person might try to argue that these documents were not really important spiritual writings, and therefore the Lord did not see fit to intervene when the General Authorities examined them. The truth of the matter, however, is that they contain extremely important material directly relating to spiritual affairs. The Salamander letter, for example, changes the story of the Angel Moroni appearing to Joseph Smith to that of a cantankerous and tricky “old spirit” who transforms himself from a white salamander and strikes Joseph Smith. Moreover, some of the purported Joseph Smith writings which Hofmann sold to the church contain revelations from the Lord Himself. For instance, the Joseph Smith III Blessing document gives this message from the Lord: “Verily, thus saith the Lord: if he abides in me, his days shall be lengthened upon the earth,

but, if he abides not in me, I, the Lord, will receive him, in an instant, unto myself.” The 1838 letter of Joseph Smith to his brother, Hyrum, is in its entirety a revelation purporting to come from the Lord. It begins with the words, “Verily thus Saith the Lord,” and ends with the word “Amen.” The fact that the Mormon leaders were unable to recognize the spurious nature of these revelations casts doubt upon their ability to discern the truthfulness of the other revelations given by Joseph Smith. It has always been claimed that it is virtually impossible for a person to write a revelation that would compare with Joseph Smith’s. It now appears that there is someone who can write revelations comparable to Joseph Smith’s and that it is even possible to get them past the scrutiny of the highest leadership of the Mormon Church.

The Mormon leaders teach that there has been “a restoration of the gospel” through Joseph Smith the Prophet. Smith restored the Book of Mormon and a great deal of other ancient Scripture. All of these purported Scriptures have no provenance—i.e., there is no proof of their existence prior to the manuscripts written on what was modern paper during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. Mark Hofmann, like Joseph Smith, seems to have produced his own “restoration” of religious documents from the past. While he has not pretended to find the signatures of Abraham, Moses and Aaron, he has “discovered” Mormon material which was supposed to have been written as far back as the 1820’s. Mr. Hofmann restored important letters and revelations from Joseph Smith as well as material from other prominent Mormons. Hofmann’s “restoration” was even more convincing than Joseph Smith’s because he not only gave us the text of these significant documents, but he claimed to have the very original copies on paper dating back to the period in which they were supposed to have been written.

The exposure of Mr. Hofmann’s attempt to undermine the Mormon Church does not really help the church. On the contrary, it shows how gullible we all can be and that even the Prophet of the Mormon Church can be deceived. Once the fallibility of the present Prophet, Seer and Revelator is perceived, one begins to wonder about Joseph Smith himself. When the searchlight is focused upon him, we see that he looks remarkably like Mark Hofmann.

Mark Hofmann’s forgery scheme has been referred to as “an attempted blackmail of the Mormon church itself.” (*Chicago Tribune*, October 25, 1985) The purported 1825 letter of Joseph Smith to Josiah Stowell is a good example of Hofmann’s attempt to play upon the fears of the Mormon leaders. This letter has Joseph Smith attempting to help a money-digger find buried treasure. Smith tells him

that the “treasure must be guarded by some clever spirit” and instructs him to “take a hasel stick one yard long being new Cut and cleave it Just in the middle and lay it asunder on the mine . . . and if there is treasure after a while you shall see them draw and Join together again of themselves . . .” While we have marshalled a great deal of evidence linking Joseph Smith to money-digging and magic, the Mormon leaders must have felt that it would be just too devastating to church members to allow them to read a letter signed by Joseph Smith which seemed to confirm his occultic activities. Consequently, “on or about January 11, 1983,” Gordon B. Hinckley, a member of the Mormon Church’s First Presidency, secretly purchased the letter from Mark Hofmann for “\$15,000.” If the contents of this letter had not been embarrassing, the church’s *Deseret News* would have undoubtedly published a photograph of it with a large headline announcing that the earliest known letter of Joseph Smith had been discovered. As it turned out, the letter was put in a vault and very few people knew of its existence. In 1984 a typescript of the letter leaked out and we published it in *The Money-Digging Letters*. One would think that after we published the contents of the letter the Mormon Church would admit that it had the letter. Instead, however, the church decided to “stonewall.” At about the time we printed the letter, we had a discussion with one of the top historians in the Mormon Church, who lamented that the church had allowed itself to become involved in a cover-up a situation with regard to the 1825 letter. On April 29, 1985, *Salt Lake Tribune* reporter Dawn Tracy wrote:

A letter reportedly written by Mormon Church founder Joseph Smith describing money-digging pursuits and treasure guarded by a clever spirit seems to have disappeared from view. . . .

Research historian Brent Metcalfe said he knows from “very reliable, first-hand sources” the letter exists, and the Mormon Church has possession of it.

Church spokesman Jerry Cahill denied the claim.

“**The church doesn’t have the letter,**” said Mr. Cahill, “It’s not in the church archives or the First Presidency’s vault.” . . .

Someone may be playing word games, said George Smith, president of Signature Books, a Mormon publishing house focussing on scholarly publications.

“The church clearly has possession of the letter,” he said. “If the exact question isn’t asked, someone can wink and say the church doesn’t have it.”

“No, said Mr. Cahill, **the church does not have possession of the letter.**” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 29, 1985)

On May 6, 1985, the *Salt Lake Tribune* published a letter to the editor by George Smith. In this letter he revealed that “some scholars have reported seeing it at the church offices, . . . A number of scholars have photocopies of the letter, . . .” When it became apparent to the church leaders that the letter was going to be published in a major newspaper without their consent, they decided to back down and admit the existence of the letter. Jerry Cahill, Director of Public Affairs for the Mormon Church, admitted in a letter to the editor that his earlier statement was incorrect:

. . . staff writer Dawn Tracy correctly quoted my statement to her that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints doesn’t have a letter purportedly written in 1825 by Joseph Smith to Josiah Stowel (or Stool) either in the church archives or in the First Presidency’s vault.

My statement, however, was in error, for which I apologize . . . Some months ago I was asked the same question by another inquirer and made a thorough check before responding. Dawn Tracy called me twice as she prepared her article and I responded without checking again.

When my published statement came to his attention, President Gordon B. Hinckley of the First Presidency of the church informed me of my error. **The purported letter was indeed acquired by the church.** For the present it is stored in the First Presidency’s archives . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 7, 1985)

It is very obvious from all this that the Mormon leaders were caught in a very embarrassing cover-up with regard to the letter and that they only published it because their own scholars were preparing to release it to the press. Since President Hinckley secretly bought this letter in 1983 and never mentioned its existence, it is obvious that church leaders intended to suppress it. *Time* magazine for May 20, 1985, reported that “The church offered no explanation for withholding news of the earliest extant document written by Smith, . . .” Church leaders were able to hide the fact that they had the letter for 28 months! In the *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 20, 1985, Dawn Tracy revealed that even top Mormon historians, including the Church Archivist, were kept in the dark concerning the purchase of the 1825 letter:

Don Schmidt, retired LDS Church archivist, said members of the First Presidency didn’t tell him or church historians about the 1825 letter. Nor did they ask him or anyone in his department to authenticate the letter. . . . Church spokesman Jerry Cahill said Dean Jesse[e], an expert in writings of Joseph Smith, had authenticated the letter at the time

church officials purchased it.

Dr. Jesse[e] said he did not see the letter until after church officials purchased it and publicly released its contents. He said the man who invited him in May to authenticate the letter was Mr. Cahill.

In April Mr. Cahill said the church did not possess the 1825 letter. A few days later he said he had been in error and apologized.

At Hofmann's preliminary hearing, document expert William Flynn testified that "The ink cracking phenomenon, that I'm talking about, is present in the Josiah Stowell letter . . ." Flynn concluded: "I don't believe it's a genuine document of that era."

The action of the church leaders in buying up and suppressing Mark Hofmann's documents raises another important question: if they were willing to pay thousands of dollars to buy forgeries which tended to discredit Joseph Smith, how many authentic documents have they bought up and locked away in the church archives and the First Presidency's vault? The fact that the General Authorities of the church believed in and bought Mr. Hofmann's forgeries reveals a great deal about their own thinking concerning the original Prophet. They must have known from other things they have read that Joseph Smith was deeply involved in money-digging and magic or they would not have been so easily persuaded to buy Hofmann's documents. The impression one gets is that the Mormon leaders know that Joseph Smith was not really like the image the church has presented to the people, but that they must maintain that image at all costs—even if it means they have to buy up and suppress documents.

We are only able to present a portion of the results of our investigation into the Hofmann affair in the space available. For a detailed study see our publication, *Tracking the White Salamander—The Story of Mark Hofmann, Murder and Forged Mormon Documents*.

### Suppressed Material Concerning the Civil War Prophecy

On pages 190-92 of this book we deal with Joseph Smith's famous prophecy concerning the Civil War. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 324, we find another reference to the 1832 prophecy attributed to Joseph Smith:

I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of Man will be in South Carolina. It may probably arise through the slave question. This a voice declared to me while I was praying earnestly on the subject, December 25, 1832.

In our research in the diary of Joseph Smith we found that this statement does appear under the date of April 2, 1843, although there have been a few changes in wording. A careful examination of this portion of Joseph Smith's diary, however, reveals that some very important material has been suppressed. Before we can understand the significance of this matter we must turn back in Joseph Smith's diary to the date of March 11, 1843, where we find the following:

A dream, then related, Night before last I dreamed that an old man came to me and said there was a mob force coming upon him, and he was likely to loose his life, that I was Leut General and had the command of a large force, and I was also a patriot and disposed to protect the innocent & — [word unclear] finding & wanted I should assist him. I told him I wanted some written documents to show the facts that they are the aggressors, & I would raise a force sufficient for his protection, that I would call out the Legion. He turned to go from me, but turned again and said to me. "I have any amount of men at my command and will put them under your command."

This dream, with some modifications, appears in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 301.

Now, when we move ahead to the date of April 2, 1843, in the diary of Joseph Smith, we find that just before Joseph Smith gives his second account of the prophecy concerning South Carolina, there is an interpretation of the dream which reads as follows:

Related the dream written on page 3—Book B Interpretation by O. Hyde—old man.—government of these United States, who will be invaded by a foreign fee, probably England. U.S. Government will call on Gen. Smith to defend probably all this western territory and offer him any amount of men he shall desire & put them under his command.

This important interpretation of the dream should appear in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 324, just before the words "I prophesy." The reader will find, however, that the interpretation has been completely omitted. The reason that it was suppressed is obvious: Joseph Smith was dead by the time the Civil War started, and therefore the interpretation could not be fulfilled. In his first account of the prophecy on the Civil War, *Doctrine and Covenants* 87:3, Joseph Smith had predicted that England would come into the war and that the war would spread until it "shall be poured out upon all nations." The war did not spread to "all nations" as Smith had predicted, and the U.S. Government certainly did not call upon Joseph Smith to protect it from England or any other country. As we shall show later, Joseph Smith was lieutenant general of the Nauvoo Legion, and he did ask the U.S. Government for "100,000 men to extend protection to persons wishing to settle Oregon and other portions of the territory" (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 282). This request, however, was denied.

We feel that the interpretation of the dream that was suppressed undermines the prophecy on the Civil War. It should be noted also that the part omitted should have appeared in the middle of a portion of Joseph Smith's *History* (vol. 5, pp. 323-24) which was later canonized as a revelation in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, section 130. In other words, section 130 contains the abbreviated material from the *History of the Church*. The portion that was suppressed should appear between verses 11 and 12.

On pages 190-92 of this book, we have shown that the prophecy about the Civil War came because of the rebellion of South Carolina in 1832, and that it contains inaccuracies which tend to invalidate it. In addition to this we have found out that the Mormon leaders have suppressed part of Joseph Smith's diary which tended to discredit the revelation.



## 14. The Hereafter

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn states: “I know of nowhere outside the Book of Mormon where the relationship of justice and mercy is so fully discussed as it is here. Indeed, it is almost central” (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 1954, p. 124).

While we must agree that the Book of Mormon is filled with the discussion of justice and mercy, this is not too surprising when we find that this was a very important issue at the time Joseph Smith was working on his book.

### Universalists

Because the Universalists were claiming that man would not receive eternal punishment for his sins, the question of justice and mercy was a burning issue during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. The evangelist Charles G. Finney tells of an incident that took place in the 1820’s:

... a Universalist minister came in and began to promulge his objectionable doctrines ... people became so interested that there was a large number that seemed to be shaken in their minds, in regard to the commonly received views of the Bible. ... The great effort of the Universalist was of course to show that sin did not deserve endless punishment. He inveighed against the doctrine of endless punishment as unjust, infinitely cruel and absurd ... how could a God of love punish men endlessly? ...

When the evening came for my lecture, the house was crowded. I took up the question of the justice of endless punishment, and discussed it through that and the next evening. There was general satisfaction with the presentation. (*Charles G. Finney*, pp. 48-49)

Speaking of another incident, Charles G. Finney said: “. . . as Universalists always do, he dwelt mainly on the utter injustice of endless punishment” (*Ibid.*, p. 120).

The *Gospel Advocate*, a Universalist publication which was printed in Buffalo, New York, stated that orthodox Christians were the “violent opposers of the Universalists . . .” (*Gospel Advocate*, April 21, 1826, p. 118). On November 17, 1826, the *Gospel Advocate* printed a letter from a minister to Mrs. Mary Cooley. In this letter we read:

It is currently reported, that you deny the final and eternal punishment of the wicked; and avow your belief that all men will finally be saved . . . if you do not renounce this error and heresy, the Church will be obliged to cut you off as a heretic from their communion.

On March 3, 1826, the *Gospel Advocate* printed a letter from an orthodox Christian which stated that “infidel preachers have come into the neighborhood, who blas[p]hemiously assert that there is neither hell nor devil, and that all my fears proceed from ignorance.”

When we examine the Book of Mormon we see that it is filled with this controversy. In Alma 1:3 we read of a wicked man who “had gone about among the people, preaching to them that which he termed to be the word of God, . . .” In the fourth verse of the same chapter it becomes clear that this man was a Universalist in his doctrine:

And he also testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice; for the Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life. (Alma 1:4)

The reader will notice that this wicked man taught that “all mankind should be saved at the last day.” In the Universalist publication, *Gospel Advocate*, we find many similar expressions:

The Universalists believe . . . all men will ultimately enjoy happiness, . . . (*Gospel Advocate*, Feb. 17, 1826, p. 47)

. . . he both can and will save all mankind with an everlasting salvation . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 47)

. . . all punishment will ultimately have an end. (*Ibid.*, p. 123)

. . . all men will be saved. (*Ibid.*, p. 158)

. . . all men will finally be saved. (*Ibid.*, p. 178)

The Universalists taught that “the devil is a nonentity, and an endless hell of brimstone a bug-bear . . .” (*Gospel Advocate*, August 25, 1826, p. 245). The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, warns against such a teaching:

And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, . . . and all that have been seized therewith must . . . go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment. (2 Nephi 28:22-23)

Joseph Smith could hardly have avoided this controversy. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts informs us that Joseph Smith lived with Joseph Knight and his family “when he was twenty-one years of age, . . .” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 85, n. 1), and on page 200 of the same volume, B. H. Roberts informs us that they were Universalists: “Of this family and the friendship subsisting between them and Joseph Smith we have already spoken. The family were Universalists in their faith, . . .”

Richard L. Anderson, of Brigham Young University, has recently discovered evidence that Joseph Smith’s own father was at one time a Universalist:

. . . the Tunbridge Town Record, . . . records the formation of a Universalist Society in 1797, three of whose members were Asael Smith, Jesse Smith (the eldest son), and Joseph Smith (the Prophet’s father). (*The Ensign*, Feb. 1971, p. 16)

Although Joseph Smith’s father was a Universalist in Tunbridge, he apparently did not give much support to any church in Palmyra. Joseph Smith states that his “father’s family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith,” but that “my mind became somewhat partial to the Methodist sect, . . .” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:7-8). Since the Presbyterians and the Methodists were opposed to the Universalists, it is not surprising that the Book of Mormon supports the orthodox position. It is also interesting to note that Alexander Campbell was opposed to the Universalists. On December 5, 1825, he wrote:

. . . I would earnestly request those preachers of universal

deliverance from hell, to stop and think...we are very sure that all the Universalists on earth cannot produce one sentence in all the revelations of God that says any thing about the termination of the punishment of the wicked. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 3, pp. 104-105)

On September 7, 1826, Alexander Campbell published a letter from a boy who was questioning the doctrine of eternal punishment. In this letter we read the following:

You will, no doubt, be surprised at receiving a letter from a boy; . . . While reflecting, one day, on the subject of the truth of revealed religion, a thought occurred to me with peculiar force, it was: Whether the Deity would have created any being and placed him in such a situation in which it was possible for him to make himself deserving of eternal torment. . . . I was led strongly to doubt the divinity of the Bible. . . . I thought that as the greatest degree of happiness, was the only object of creation, the design of the Almighty would have failed, if as the scripture authorize us to believe, a majority of mankind will be forever damned: . . . I thought that as the Deity was the first cause of all things, . . . he could not punish any of his creatures with eternal misery; . . . I . . . could not satisfy myself of the necessity or justice of God's punishing a being, eternally, for the effects of a weakness in which he was born. Punishment, I thought, should be proportioned to criminality; but in inflicting eternal punishment for temporal crimes, this principle of justice [is] violated. (*The Christian Baptist*, vol. 4, pp. 36-37)

Alexander Campbell devoted almost 20 pages of *The Christian Baptist* to answer this boy's arguments.

In the Book of Mormon we find that Alma had a similar problem with his son:

And now, my son, I perceive there is somewhat more which doth worry your mind, which ye cannot understand—which is concerning the justice of God in the punishment of the sinner; for ye do try to suppose that it is injustice that the sinner should be consigned to a state of misery.

Now behold, my son, I will explain this thing unto thee. (Book of Mormon, Alma 42:1-2)

In the *Gospel Advocate* for January 19, 1827, we read: "In England, . . . several of the most zealous and useful Unitarian ministers publicly avow their belief in the final **restoration** of all men to happiness; . . ."

In another article, we read of "the doctrine of the final **restoration**" of all souls to "holiness and happiness" (*The Gospel Advocate*, February 3, 1826, p. 25).

Now, in Alma's discussion with his son, he seems to answer this very point:

And now, my son, I have somewhat to say concerning the **restoration** of which has been spoken; for behold, some have wrested the scriptures, . . . Behold, it is requisite . . . that the soul of man should be restored to its body, and that every part of the body should be restored to itself.

And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good.

And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil. . . .

Do not suppose, because it has been spoken concerning **restoration**, that ye shall be restored from sin to **happiness**. Behold, I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness. . . .

And now behold, is the meaning of the word **restoration** to take a thing of a natural state and place it in an unnatural state, or to place it in a state opposite to its nature?

O, my son, this is not the case; but the meaning of the word **restoration** is to bring back again evil for evil, or carnal for carnal, or devilish for devilish—. . . therefore, the word **restoration** more fully condemneth the sinner, and justifieth him not at all. (Book of Mormon, Alma 41:1-4, 10, 12, 13, 15)

It is very difficult for us to believe that the ancient Nephites would be arguing over exactly the same issues and terms that were being discussed in Joseph Smith's time.

Richard L. Anderson informs us that "the Universalists held a faith that denied the orthodox doctrine of damnation . . . A convention agreed on the following typical tenet in 1803: 'We believe there is one God, . . . who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness'" (*The Ensign*, February 1971, p. 16).

Milton V. Backman, Jr., says that during Joseph Smith's boyhood days in Palmyra "the views of the Universalists were also being fanned in the area by means of pamphlets written by their apologists and by a few enthusiastic spokesmen living within seven miles of the Smith farm, . . ." (*Joseph Smith's First Vision*, 1971, p. 93).

## Joseph Changes His Mind

Although Joseph Smith vigorously opposed the doctrine of the Universalists and supported the orthodox position concerning hell in his Book of Mormon, within a year he had completely changed his mind concerning this matter. In a revelation given to Martin Harris in March, 1830, Joseph Smith made this statement: "Nevertheless, it is **not** written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written *endless torment*" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 19:6). Joseph Smith goes on to explain that "endless punishment" does not mean that the sinner will suffer the punishment eternally. B. H. Roberts stated: "Christians believed that to receive eternal punishment was to be punished eternally. This popular Christian **error** was **corrected** in a revelation to Martin Harris . . ." (*Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, p. 408).

President Joseph Fielding Smith stated: "We learn from the *Doctrine and Covenants* that **eternal punishment, or everlasting punishment, does not mean that a man condemned will endure this punishment forever, . . .**" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 160). On page 228 of the same book President Smith states that a "man may partake of endless torment, and when he has paid the penalty for his transgression, he **is released**, but the punishment remains and awaits the next culprit, and so on forever."

When Joseph Smith became converted to the ideas of the Universalists he completely repudiated the teachings of the Book of Mormon. It would almost appear that he completely forgot what he had previously written in the Book of Mormon. In his later theology he taught that eternal punishment would eventually come to an end, but in the Book of Mormon he had stated that eternal punishment is as eternal as the life of the soul:

Now, repentance could not come unto men except there were a punishment, which also was **eternal as the life of the soul** should be, affixed opposite to the plan of happiness, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul. (Book of Mormon, Alma 42:16)

In Mosiah 2:38, 39, we read that it is a **final doom**: "Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, . . . mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore his **final doom** is to **endure a never ending torment**." In 3 Nephi 27:11, 17, it is made clear that the wicked can never return:

. . . and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, **from whence there is no return**. . . .

And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, **from whence they can no more return**, because of the justice of the Father.

Although it seems almost incredible that Joseph Smith completely reversed his position regarding eternal punishment, we must remember that he did this with regard to many other doctrines and practices. For instance, he condemned polygamy and secret societies in the Book of Mormon, yet he became a polygamist and a Mason before his death.

Although Joseph Smith took a great deal of space in the Book of Mormon to warn against an "awful hell," toward

the end of his life he seemed to be indifferent and even flippant concerning this matter. In the *Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844, we read the following:

... our petitions were treated with contempt; and in many cases the petitioner spurned from their presence, and particularly by Joseph, who would state that if he had sinned, and was guilty of the charges we would charge him with, he would not make acknowledgment, but would rather be damned; for it would detract from his dignity, and would consequently ruin and prove the overthrow of the Church. We would ask him on the other hand, if the overthrow of the Church was not inevitable, to which he often replied, that we would all go to Hell together, and convert it into a heaven, by casting the Devil out; and says he, Hell is by no means the place this world of fools suppose it to be, but on the contrary, it is quite an agreeable place: to which we would now reply, he can enjoy it if he is determined not to desist from his evil ways; but as for us, and ours, we will serve the Lord our God! (*The Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844)

That Joseph Smith may have made the comments attributed to him seems likely, for we find the following in the *History of the Church*:

I see no faults in the Church, and therefore let me be resurrected with the Saints, whether I ascend to heaven or descend to hell, or go to any other place. And if we go to hell, we will turn the devils out of doors and make a heaven of it. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 517)

The fact that Joseph Smith completely changed his position concerning hell has led to a great deal of confusion among the Mormon people. Brigham Young taught that there would be no females in hell:

I doubt whether it can be found, from the revelations that are given and the facts as they exist, that there is a female in all the regions of hell. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 222)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe taught that “Very few will be so condemned” as to become the “sons of perdition” because “very few have the knowledge required.” The Apostle Widtsoe went on to state:

All others, who are not classed as sons of perdition, will be “redeemed in the due time of the Lord”; that is, they will all be saved. The **meanest sinner** will find some place in the heavenly realm. . . .

In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, **there is no hell**. All will find a measure of salvation. . . . The gospel of Jesus Christ has **no hell** in the old proverbial sense. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, Salt Lake City, 1951, pp. 177-178)

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon says that it is the devil who will say there is no hell. In 2 Nephi 28:21 and 22 we read:

And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the **devil** cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away **carefully down to hell**.

And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them **there is no hell**; . . . and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is **no deliverance**.

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe seemed to be teaching the very thing that the Book of Mormon condemned!

### Mormon Purgatory

Milton V. Backman, Assistant Professor of Church History at the Brigham Young University, stated: “Joseph Smith . . . accepted the **Roman Catholic concept** that there was an intermediate or preparatory stage between death and a final judgment” (*Seminar On The Prophet Joseph Smith*, Brigham Young University, Feb. 18, 1961).

President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

It is the duty of men in this life to repent. Every man who hears the gospel message is under obligation to receive it. **If he fails, then in**

**the Spirit World he will be called upon to receive it. . . .** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 183)

On page 220 of the same book President Smith says:

Even the **wicked** of the earth . . . shall at last come forth from the **prison house, repentant** and willing to bow the knee and acknowledge Christ, . . .

President Smith also stated:

It is decreed that the **unrighteous** shall have to spend their time during this thousand years in the **prison house** prepared for them where **they can repent** and cleanse themselves through the things which they shall **suffer**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 60)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, made these statements:

That is loving the **wicked**, to send them there to **hell** to be **burnt out until they are purified**. Yes, they shall go there and stay there and **be burnt**, like an old pipe that stinks with long usage and corruption, **until they are burnt out**, and then **their spirits may be saved** in the day of God Almighty. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 223)

You have often heard me speak about my kindred. . . . Will they be saved? Yes, they will, but they will be saved as I have told you many of this people will; they **will first go to hell** and remain there until the corruption with which they are impregnated is **burnt out**; and the day will yet come when they will come to me and **acknowledge me as their Savior and I will redeem them** and bring them forth from hell to where I live and **make them my servants**; and they will be quite willing to enter into my service. (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 109)

In accepting the Roman Catholic concept of a purgatory or “preparatory stage between death and a final judgment,” the Mormon Church leaders have had to lay aside the teachings of the Book of Mormon. In Alma 34:32-35 it is made very clear that there is **no** chance for repentance after death:

For behold **this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God**, yea, behold the day **of this life** is the day for men to perform their labors. . . . I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for **after this day of life**, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time **while in this life**, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be **no** labor performed.

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

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

### Degrees of Glory

On February 16, 1832, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which states that there will be three different degrees of glory after the resurrection (see *Doctrine and Covenants*, section 76). In the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 283, we find the following statement about these three degrees:

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God . . . A man may be saved, after the judgment, in the **Terrestrial** kingdom, or in the **Telestial** kingdom, but he can never see the **Celestial** kingdom of God, without being born of water and the Spirit.

President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

Those who **reject the gospel**, but live honorable lives, **shall also be heirs of salvation**, but not in the **Celestial** kingdom. The Lord has prepared a place for them in the **Terrestrial** kingdom.

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**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 133)

This doctrine of three degrees of glory is certainly not in harmony with the teachings of the Book of Mormon. In 1 Nephi 15:35 we read that there is only a heaven and a hell:

And there is a place prepared, yea, even that awful **hell** of which I have spoken, and the devil is the foundation of it; wherefore the **final state** of the souls of men is to dwell in the **kingdom of God**, or to be cast out because of that justice of which I have spoken.

In Alma 5:24, 25, 39, we read that those who are cast out of the kingdom of heaven are of the kingdom of the devil:

Behold, my brethren, do ye suppose that such an one can have a place to sit down in the **kingdom of God**, . . . I say unto you, **Nay**; except ye make our Creator a liar from the beginning, . . . ye cannot suppose that such can have place in the **kingdom of heaven**; but they shall be cast out for they are the children of the **kingdom of the devil**. . . .

And now if ye are **not** the sheep of the good shepherd, of what fold are ye? Behold, I say unto you, that the **devil** is your shepherd, and ye are of **his fold**; and now, who can deny this? Behold, I say unto you, whosoever denieth this is a liar and a **child of the devil**.

The Apostle Orson Pratt had to admit that the Bible and Book of Mormon did not lend much support to the doctrine of three degrees of glory:

Then again, what could we learn from either the **Bible** or **Book of Mormon** in regard to **three glories**—the celestial, the terrestrial and the telestial glories? What did we know concerning those that should inhabit these various worlds of glory? **Nothing at all**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 70)

The Mormon Church uses the statement made by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:40 to try to prove there are three degrees of glory: “There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.”

The first thing that should be noted about this verse is the fact that it does not use the word **telestial**; this is a word that was made up by Joseph Smith. Bruce R. McConkie says: “The fact that some of these are telestial bodies has been lost from the King James Version of the Bible” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 777). Bruce R. McConkie and other Mormon writers are, of course, unable to furnish any evidence that this has been deleted from the Bible or even that “telestial” is an actual word.

The second thing that should be noted is the meaning of the words **celestial** and **terrestrial**. The *American College Dictionary* tells us that the meaning of **celestial** is “pertaining to the spiritual or invisible heaven; heavenly; . . .” The word **terrestrial** means “pertaining to, consisting of, or representing the earth: . . .” So we see that the word **celestial** simply means “heavenly” and the word **terrestrial** means “earthly.” In *Young’s Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*, the original Greek words **epourania** and **epigeia** are rendered as “heavenly” and “earthly” instead of “celestial” and “terrestrial”: “. . . and there are **heavenly** bodies, and **earthly** bodies; but one is the glory of the **heavenly**, and another that of the **earthly**; . . .”

The third thing that should be noted concerning this verse is the context it appears in. A careful examination of the context, verses 35-54, reveals that Paul was comparing our earthly body with the body we shall receive in the resurrection; he was not speaking of three kingdoms in heaven. All of us now have a terrestrial or earthly body, but in the resurrection we shall have a celestial or heavenly body. Verse 44 makes it clear that Paul was speaking of the difference between the body we now have and the body we shall receive in the resurrection: “It is sown a **natural** body; it is raised a **spiritual** body. There is a **natural** body, and there is a **spiritual** body.”

Therefore, we see that the doctrine of three degrees of glory cannot be supported from the Bible, nor can it be supported from the Book of Mormon. Both books condemn this teaching.

It is very interesting to note that the revelation concerning the degrees of glory (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 76) had four important changes made in it regarding the “sons of perdition.” When the revelation was first published in *The Evening And The Morning Star*, it contained these statements:

And we saw a vision of the **eternal** sufferings of those . . . who are the sons of perdition, . . . they are vessels of wrath doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels, **throughout** eternity: . . . to reign with the devil and his angels **throughout** eternity, . . . this is the end of the vision of the **eternal** sufferings of the ungodly! (*The Evening And The Morning Star*, July, 1832, p. 2)

In the *Doctrine and Covenants* this has been changed to read:

And we saw a vision of the sufferings of those . . . who are the sons of perdition, . . . they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels **in** eternity; . . . to reign with the devil and his angels **in** eternity, . . . this is the end of the vision of the sufferings of the ungodly. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:30, 32, 33, 44, 49)

The reader will notice that the word “**throughout**” has been changed to “**in**” in two places and that the word “**eternal**” has been deleted in two places.

## Dissolved and Reorganized Spirits

Brigham Young once stated: “Every possession and object of affection will be taken from those who forsake the truth, and **their identity and existence will eventually cease.**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 31-32) Heber C. Kimball said:

I believe in **annihilation** in one degree. Men will sin so that they will be damned spiritually and temporally. **There will be a dissolution of the natural body and of the spirit**, and they will go back into their native element, the same as the chemist can go to work and dissolve a five-dollar gold piece, and throw it into a liquid. Does not that show there can be a **dissolution** of the natural body and of the **spirit**? This is what is called the **second death**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 95)

Brigham Young hinted that after the spirits were dissolved they would be reorganized or made over again:

He had not the power of endless life in him, and he will be **decomposed**, and the particles which compose his body and **spirit** will return to their native element. . . . What can you make of this but **decomposition**, the returning of the organized particles to their native element, after suffering the wrath of God until the time appointed. . . . When the elements in an organized form do not fill the end of their creation, they are **thrown back again**, like brother Kimball’s old pottery ware, to be ground up, and **made over again**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 275)

The rebellious will be thrown back into their native element, there to remain myriads of years before their dust will again be revived, before they will be **re-organized**. Some might argue that this principle would lead to the re-organization of Satan, and all the devils. I say nothing about this, only what the Lord says—that when he comes, “he will destroy death, and him that has the power of it.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 118)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made the following statement:

President Brigham Young has suggested that the ultimate punishment of the sons of perdition may be that they, having their spiritual bodies disorganized, must **start over again**, must begin anew the long journey of existence, repeating the steps that they took in the eternities before the Great Council was held. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, pp. 213-214)



## 15. The Missionary System

Since the time of Joseph Smith the Mormon leaders have sent missionaries throughout the world to gain converts to the church. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith once stated that a member of the Mormon Church had been excommunicated for refusing to go on a mission:

It was at the same Council that Daniel Copley, a timid young man, who had been ordained a Priest, and required to go and preach the Gospel, was called to an account **for not going on his mission**. The young man said he was too weak to attempt to preach, and the **Council cut him off the Church**. I wonder what our missionaries now would think of so rigid a discipline as was given at that time thirty years ago, under the immediate supervision of the **Prophet**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 8)

Under Brigham Young the church continued to send missionaries throughout the world, but Young did not seem to be very concerned about the quality of the missionaries he sent out. In an article published in the *Valley Tan* on April 26, 1859, it was claimed that Brigham Young was sending men on missions to get rid of them:

We have heard it intimated that it is the custom of the church whenever they want to rid themselves of bad elders, without resorting to violent means, the Conference politely gives them a call to go on a mission, a species of exile which, while it relieves them from their presence at home, is not the most complementary or befitting way to propagate even Mormonism.

Brigham Young did not attempt to deny this charge; instead, he frankly admitted that he “sent men on missions to get rid of them”:

Some of you wondered why I sent Thomas Bullock to take your names; I wanted to know the men who were coaxing hell into our midst, for I wish to send them to China, to the East Indies, or to where they cannot get back, at least for five years. . . . we will **send off the poor curses on a mission, and then the devil may have them**, and we do not care how soon they apostatize, after they get as far as California. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 239)

Keep away from court houses; no decent man will go there unless he goes as a witness, or is in some manner compelled to go. I know that many are obliged to go, but those who creep around to see what is going on, let me tell you, the **devil** has possession of them. I wish such persons to go to California, if they wish to. I counsel you to keep away from courts, we have got the names of those who have attended that court room, and we will **send those characters on long missions, for we want to get rid of them**, and we do not care whether they apostatize or not. . . . People abroad may say, “Why don’t you send us all good men?” Do you believe them? No, you do not, when we send them. We wish them to stay here, only those whom it is necessary to have go, but we **have no business here for those poor miserable devils**. (*Ibid.*, p. 241)

We have at times **sent men on missions to get rid of them**; but they have generally come back. Some think it is an imposition upon the world to send such men among them. But which is best—to keep them here **to pollute others**, or to send them where pollution is more

prevalent? . . . We have tried to turn the filthy ones out of the flock, but they will not always stay out. (*Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 228-229)

Things have changed a great deal since Brigham Young’s time. The Mormon leaders no longer send men on missions to get rid of them, although in some cases they might be sent to help reform them. Bruce R. McConkie states: “Foreign missionaries drop their temporal pursuits, travel to the nations of the earth, and for periods of two or three years, without financial help from the Church, devote their full time to proclaiming the message of the restoration” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 509). Most of the missionaries are young men just out of high school—for example, Lynn Kenneth Packer was 19 years old at the time he began his mission (*A Missionary Experience*, p. 9). Except for a “week’s general training in the Salt Lake City mission home” (*Ibid.*, p. 9), the missionary receives no formal preparation before going to the field. In 1961 Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, made these revealing statements:

The missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a modern miracle. In the world the idea prevails that a man must go to school, college, get an education, be trained and get a degree to qualify him to preach and to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, as he understands it. We call our young men and women at the beginning, really, of life, . . . We send them out into the world untrained, . . . They are unprepared, insofar as education and knowledge are concerned. **Most of them have never read the Book of Mormon**, a great part of them, **if not the greater part, have never read the New Testament**. They are **not** familiar with **the revelations** in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. I find this out when I interview them. But they have one thing that the world does not have, and cannot have, and that’s a **testimony** and the determination to go out into the field, as unprepared as they are, and spend two or maybe more years bearing witness to the restoration of the gospel, expounding the scriptures, **as they learn them**. (*Improvement Era*, October 1961, p. 716)

Joseph H. Weston, who was converted to the church in 1948, stated that before the missionaries left for the field they were given a letter containing 42 “strict rules of personal conduct.” One of these rules reads as follows: “26. Never say in public or in private that you do not know the gospel is true” (*These Amazing Mormons*, Salt Lake City, 1961, p. 64).

Because the Mormon missionaries go to the field almost unprepared—and perhaps for other reasons—the Mormon leaders have published a booklet entitled “A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators.” This booklet contains six lessons which the missionary is supposed to memorize. William J. Whalen states:

Such is the six-lesson course of instruction completed by more than 100,000 men and women last year. Little is left to chance. The young missionaries are not encouraged to depart from the prescribed dialogue. The basis is simple memorization of dialogue and appropriate passages from the Bible and Book of Mormon. The subjects about which the typical

Gentile may be most curious, such as polygamy and the Mormon temple rites, are not even mentioned. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World* by William J. Whalen, New York, 1964, p. 243)

Lynn Kenneth Packer, who has served on a mission for the church, made these statements:

The six lessons are to be memorized and then used, exclusively, for the entire mission of the missionary. Theoretically the only allowed deviation from the word-for-word dialog[ue] would be that of overcoming objections and explaining doctrine . . . we discover that the use of the six discussions is compulsory. (*A Missionary Experience*, New York, 1969, p. 138)

The manual used by the missionaries even tells them how to bear their testimony! Below is a photo of page 3 from the manual, *A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, August 1961.

#### TEACHING THE INVESTIGATOR

Our hope in teaching the gospel is to convert people and baptize them. Your work is not finished until your contact either understands and accepts the gospel or understands and rejects it.

##### I. TEACHING PRINCIPLES

###### A. Repetition

1. Ask questions which require the contact to think before he answers.
2. Have contact repeat ideas rather than words.
3. As your teaching progresses make certain contact agrees before proceeding.

###### B. Enthusiasm

1. Have the "Attitude of Success."
2. Relax. Be at ease with your contacts.
3. Show genuine interest in your contacts. Praise them for their achievements.
4. Motivate your contacts by expressing confidence in their ability. Do not rely on forceful speech or logic alone.

###### C. Simplicity

1. Follow the handbook dialogues.
2. Stick to the logic and scriptures given in the dialogues.
3. Answer objections with questions. Avoid the temptation to lecture.

###### D. Testimony

1. Remember: Conversion comes only through the Holy Ghost. Your contacts feel his presence strongest as you bear testimony.
2. Set your testimony apart.
  - a. Pause slightly.
  - b. Look contact in the eye.
  - c. Bear testimony in a natural tone of voice.

###### E. Addressing the contact

In all discussions except the first, the contact probably should be called "Brother Brown" rather than "Mr. Brown." This is never offensive, and it makes the contact feel much closer to being a member of the Church, since he knows that the members refer to each other in this way. People enjoy being called "brother" and "sister." If the meeting is being held in the home of a member

On pages 21-22 of *A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, we find the following:

Elder: The Church of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth, Mr. Brown. I know and testify that these things we have discussed here are true.

Elder J: (**Interrupting spontaneously**) It has been a real pleasure for me to be here tonight and to participate in this discussion, Mr. Brown. I also know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that the true Church of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth.

In a rebuttal to the handbook, Hal Hougey makes this interesting observation:

How can one interrupt "spontaneously" (by impulse, lack of prompting - *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*) when he has previously been taught to do so by this manual? (*Mormon Missionary Handbook*, Concord, Calif., 1969, comment on p. 21)

Lynn Kenneth Packer, who served on a mission for the Mormon Church, had a difficult time accepting the idea of a "memorized lesson plan":

. . . from a spiritual standpoint I found it hard to justify a memorized lesson plan with a scripture in the *Doctrine and Covenants* given as advice to missionaries:

"Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man." (*A Missionary Experience*, p. 24)

Because of his opposition to the missionary plan, Lynn Kenneth Packer found himself in trouble with the Mormon leaders. He finally wrote a letter home in which he stated:

. . . I don't believe that people can be converted with "6 easy lessons." . . . I don't believe that just because a contact stumbles through the lesson logic that he understands the gospel sufficiently to be baptized. . . . I stated that I was unwilling to comply with all that the mission asked of me. . . . Pres. Allen said either I would do everything the mission asked or I would have to go home. If I don't (or won't) teach exclusively by the lessons, etc., then I would have to go home. (*Ibid.*, pp. 85-86)

The Mormon leaders allowed Packer to finish his mission, but he was assigned to an "Indian reservation in Nevada." He states that "Owyhee had a reputation for being a place to send problem Elders" (*Ibid.*, p. 95).

Lynn K. Packer is apparently not the only missionary opposed to the "memorized lesson plan." In a review of *A Missionary Experience*, Edward Geary quotes the following from "a current mission handbook":

Sometimes missionaries feel they are restricted by being required to learn the discussions **word for word**. There was never a more fallacious train of reasoning. **Salesmen**, who are sent out to sell their products, must commit to memory certain lines by which they can be effective in conveying their product in just the right manner. Once they have learned their lines, then they can bring forth their personality in affecting the thoughts of others. **Actors** on a stage must learn their lines; and having once learned them they are in a position to use themselves through those lines to touch hearts and to convey feelings in a very moving manner. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1970, pp. 103-104)

Lynn Kenneth Packer stated that in the "missionary lesson we try to prove the LDS Church is the only true church" (*A Missionary Experience*, p. 14). In proving that the LDS Church is the only true church, the missionary is supposed to attack all other churches by claiming that they are false. Conclusion number nine, which the contact is supposed to reach, is: "There was a complete apostasy and **my church is false**" (*A Uniform System For Teaching Investigators*, p. 9). William J. Whalen makes the following comments about this matter:

Mormon missionaries generally labor among people who already profess some belief in Christianity. Clergymen of other denominations often accuse the eager Mormon missionaries of sheep stealing but the Mormons believe that they are simply building on a previous belief in God, in Jesus Christ, and in the Bible to bring the potential convert to a knowledge of the restoration of the true Church in these latter-days. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, p. 231)

None of the present Christian churches except the LDS Church is said to have apostles, authority to teach or baptize, or the valid priesthood. This frontal attack on all other Christian churches is what arouses the Church of England clergymen and others. Except in a few Pacific islands and Japan, the Mormons concentrate their mission activities among people who are at least nominally Christians. (*Ibid.*, p. 240)

As we have shown at the first of this book, the Mormon leaders claim that the church now has about 3,000,000 members, and they predict that if they continue to grow at the same rate they will have 10,000,000 members by 2000 A.D. (*Deseret News*, October 21, 1967) While we feel that the idea of 10,000,000 Mormons by 2000 A.D. is rather fantastic, we must admit that the missionary system has been very effective—in 1970 they made 79,126 converts. The Mormon Church therefore, still remains a serious threat to Christian churches, especially since its attack is directed against these churches.



## 16. Plural Marriage

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart made this statement:

... there are at least two points of doctrine and history of the Church about which many LDS themselves—to say nothing of non-members—feel apologetic or critical. One of these is its doctrine and history regarding plural marriage. There is probably no other Church subject on which there is so much ignorance and misunderstanding and so many conflicting views. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 8)

On pages 21 and 22 of the same book Mr. Stewart states:

So gross have been the falsehoods circulated against it, and so strong the feelings created over it, that it may be an under-statement rather than an overstatement to say that within the Church itself misunderstanding and lack of understanding about it are more nearly universal than a correct understanding of it. This despite the fact that **seven** of our nine Church presidents have lived plural marriage, and that this principle still is and always will be a **doctrine of the Church**.

The revelation sanctioning the practice of plural marriage was given by the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith on July 12, 1843. This revelation is still printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church. The following is taken from this revelation:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, **justified** my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and **doctrine** of their **having many wives and concubines**—

Behold, and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter.

Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same.

For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory. . . .

And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, . . . they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation . . .

Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; . . .

God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to wife. . . .

Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Verily I say unto you, Nay; for I, the Lord, commanded it. . . .

Abraham received concubines, and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, . . .

David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, . . . and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me.

David's wives and concubines were given unto him of me, . . .

And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me; and those who are not pure, and have said they were pure, shall be destroyed, saith the Lord God. . . .

Let no one, therefore, set on my servant Joseph; for I will justify him; . . .

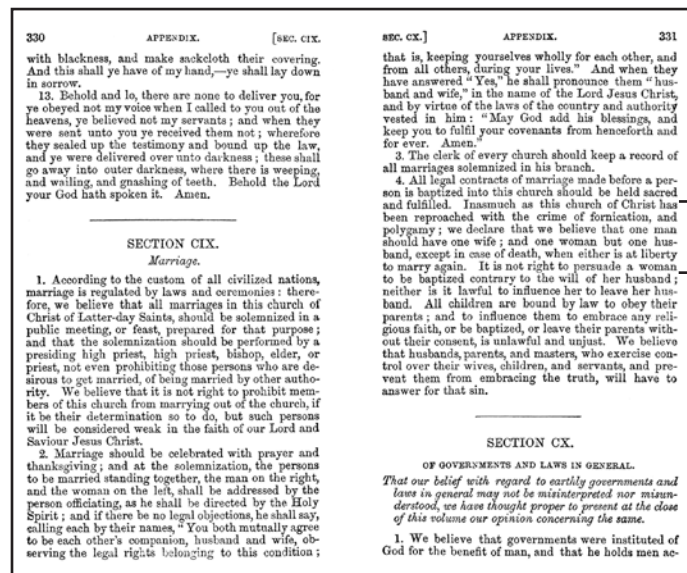
And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood—if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else.

And if he have **ten virgins** given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified. (*The Doctrine and Covenants*, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1966, section 132, verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 19, 20, 34, 35, 38, 39, 52, 60, 61, 62)

To begin with the Mormon Church did not believe in the practice of plural marriage. In the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, printed in 1835, there was a section which denounced the practice of polygamy. In section 101:4 it was stated:

Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the **crime** of fornication, and **polygamy**: we declare that we believe, that **one** man should have **one** wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in the case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again.

Below is an actual photograph of this section as it appeared in the 1854 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*.



This section was printed in every edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* until the year 1876. At that time the Mormon leaders inserted section 132, which permits a plurality of wives. Obviously, it would have been too contradictory to have one section condemning polygamy and another approving of it in the same book! Therefore, the

section condemning polygamy was completely removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, testified as follows concerning this matter:

Q.—Now I will ask you, Mr. Woodruff, why the church of which you are President in the publication of the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* in the edition of 1876, **eliminated** from that edition the section on marriage as found in the 1835 edition, and in all the editions of the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* published up to 1876, and inserted in lieu of that section on marriage the revelation on polygamy, dated July 12, 1843.

A.—**I do not know why it was done.** It was done by the authority of whoever presided over the church, I suppose. Brigham Young was the President then.

Q.—Was it not done because one was in conflict with the other?

A.—I do not know that I can state why it was done. (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 309)

Lorenzo Snow, who became the fifth President of the Mormon Church, testified:

And a man that violated this law in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835 edition, until the acceptance of that revelation by the church, violated the law of the church if he practiced plural marriage. **Yes, Sir, he would have been cut off from the Church**, I think I should have been if I had.

Before the giving of that revelation in 1843 if a man married more wives than one who were living at the same time, he would have been cut off from the church. It would have been **adultery under the laws of the Church and under the laws of the state, too.**

Q.—I will ask you now, Mr. Snow, why it was that in this edition of the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, this article on marriage was taken out and this revelation or purported revelation put in its stead?

A.—That is, I take it, you want to know why this principle of plural marriage was inserted instead of the principle of single marriage?

Q.—Yes, sir, why did you take out one and put the other in?

A.—**I cannot tell you, for I did not do it, nor I cannot tell why.**

Q.—Was it not because this taught or had changed the order of marriage in the church?

A.—**Well, it is a fact that the order of marriage was changed**, but whether that was the purpose of the substitution or not, I do not know.

Q.—...you state that if a person had been married or sealed by this revelation, according to your understanding, that is, if they had been married according to the provisions of this polygamous revelation prior to the year 1843, they would have violated the laws of the church and been guilty of adultery?

A.—**Yes, Sir.**

Q.—You state now that Joseph Smith was sealed or married to your sister in April, 1843, and this so-called revelation was given in July, 1843?

A.—Well, the time I said it, it was all right. According to my understanding of this new covenant, the woman is sealed to the man and not the man to the woman, and **I stated that Joseph took my sister for a wife when he had a wife living, and that was prior to the giving of this revelation.**

Q.—Well, what kind of a position did it put your sister and Joseph Smith in?

A.—It put them in a **first-rate**, splendid condition for time and eternity. (*Temple Lot Case*, pp. 320-322)

Just when and how the practice of plural marriage started in the Mormon Church has caused much controversy. There is evidence, however, to show that it was secretly practiced when the church was in Kirtland, Ohio. In the introduction to vol. 5 of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*, the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated that the "date in the heading of the Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including the Plurality of Wives, notes the time at which the revelation was committed to writing, not the time at which the principles set forth in the revelation were first made known to the Prophet." Fawn Brodie states that Joseph

Fielding Smith told her "that a revelation foreshadowing polygamy had been written in 1831, but that it had never been published. In conformity with the church policy, however, he would not permit the manuscript, which he acknowledged to be in possession of the church library, to be examined" (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 184, footnote).

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states:

... Joseph as a servant of God was authorized to enter plural marriage, and it is not at all unlikely that he did so in the early or mid-1830's. Perhaps **Nancy Johnson** or **Fanny Alger** was his first "plural" wife, at Hiram or Kirtland, Ohio. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 31)

The reader will find information concerning Nancy Johnson's relationship with Joseph Smith in *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pages 25-26.

The Mormon writer Max Parkin made this statement concerning Fanny Alger:

The charge of adulterous relations "with a certain girl" was leveled against Smith by Cowdery in Missouri in 1837; this accusation became one of the complaints the Church had against Cowdery in his excommunication trial in Far West, April 12, 1838. In rationalizing Cowdery's accusation, the Prophet testified "that Oliver Cowdery had been his bosom friend, therefore he entrusted him with many things." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max H. Parkin, 1966, p. 166)

Max Parkin's source for this information is the "Far West Record." This is an unpublished "record book containing minutes of meetings in Kirtland and Far West, Missouri." The original is in the Church Historian's Office.

The reader will remember that Oliver Cowdery was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. In a letter dated January 21, 1838, Oliver Cowdery plainly stated that Joseph Smith had an "affair" with Fanny Alger:

When he [Joseph Smith] was there we had some conversation in which in every instance I did not fail to affirm that what I had said was strictly true. **A dirty, nasty, filthy affair of his and Fanny Alger's** was talked over in which I strictly declared that I had never deviated from the truth in the matter, and as I supposed was admitted by himself. (Letter written by Oliver Cowdery and recorded by his brother Warren Cowdery; see photograph in *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, p. 27)

Mormon writers admit that there was a connection between Joseph Smith and Fanny Alger; however, they claim that Fanny Alger was Joseph Smith's plural wife and that he was commanded by God to enter into polygamy.

Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant L.D.S. Church Historian, made a list of 27 women who were sealed to Joseph Smith. In this list he said the following concerning Fanny Alger: "Fanny Alger, one of the **first plural wives** sealed to the Prophet" (*Historical Record*, p. 233). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: "It seems that Fannie Alger was one of Joseph's first plural wives. She lived many years after the Prophet's death and never denied her relationship to him" (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, p. 237).

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart gives this interesting information:

Benjamin F. Johnson, another close friend to Joseph...says,

In 1835, at Kirtland, I learned from my sister's husband, Lyman R. Sherman, who was close to the Prophet, and received it from him, "that the ancient order of Plural Marriage was again to be practiced by the Church." This, at the time, did not impress my mind deeply, although there lived then with his family [the Prophet's] a neighbor's daughter, **Fannie Alger**, a very nice and comely

young woman . . . toward whom not only myself but everyone, seemed partial, for the amiability of her character; and it was whispered even then that **Joseph loved her**.

Johnson, a church patriarch at the time of writing, put his finger on the beginning of Oliver Cowdery's and Warren Parrish's downfall—Parrish was the Prophet's secretary:

There was some trouble with Oliver Cowdery, and whisper said it was relating to a girl then living in his (the Prophet's) family; and I was afterwards told by Warren Parrish, that he himself and Oliver Cowdery did know that Joseph had Fannie Alger as wife, for **they were spied upon and found together**. . . . "Without doubt in my mind," says Johnson, "Fannie Alger was, at Kirtland, the Prophet's first plural wife, in which, by right of his calling, he was justified of the Lord, . . ."

One of the charges against Cowdery when he was excommunicated was that he had insinuated that Joseph was guilty of adultery. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, pp. 103-104)

John Whitmer, who was one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, wrote the following in chapter 20 of his history of the church:

In the fall of 1836, Joseph Smith, Jun., S. Rigdon and others of the leaders of the Church at Kirtland, Ohio, established a bank for the purpose of speculation, and the whole Church partook of the same spirit; they were lifted up in pride, and lusted after the forbidden things of God, such as covetousness, and in secret combinations, **spiritual-wife doctrine, that is plurality of wives**, . . . (*John Whitmer's History*, p. 21)

Ebenezer Robinson gives this information:

In the spring of 1841, the doctrine of "spiritual wives" began to be **secretly** talked about . . . Don Carlos Smith said: "Any man who will teach and **practice** the doctrine of **spiritual wifery** will go to hell, **I don't care if it is my brother Joseph**." (*The Return*, vol. 2, p. 287)

## Reason For Revelation

The revelation on polygamy was apparently given to convince Emma Smith (Joseph's wife) that polygamy was right. William Clayton, who wrote the revelation as Joseph Smith dictated it, stated:

On the morning of the 12th of July, 1843; Joseph and Hyrum Smith came into the office . . . They were talking on the subject of plural marriage. Hyrum said to Joseph, "If you will write the revelation on celestial marriage, I will take it and read it to Emma, and I believe I can convince her of its truth, and you will hereafter have peace." Joseph smiled and remarked, "**You do not know Emma as well as I do**." . . . Joseph then said, "Well, I will write the revelation and we shall see." . . . Hyrum then took the revelation to read to Emma. Joseph remained with me in the office until Hyrum returned. When he came back, Joseph asked how he had succeeded. Hyrum replied that **he had never received a more severe talking to in his life**, . . .

Joseph quietly remarked, "I told you you did not know Emma as well as I did." Joseph then put the revelation in his pocket, and they both left the office.

. . . Two or three days after the revelation was written Joseph related to me and several others that Emma had so teased, and urgently entreated him for the privilege of destroying it, that he became so weary of her teasing, and to get rid of her annoyance, he told her she might destroy it and she had done so, but he had consented to her wish in this matter to pacify her, realizing that he . . . could rewrite it at any time if necessary. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Introduction to vol. 5, pp. xxxii-xxxiii)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, gave this information:

Brother George A. Smith has been reading a little out of the revelation concerning celestial marriage, and I want to say to my sisters that if you lift your heels against this revelation, and say that you would obliterate it, and put it out of existence if you had the power to nullify and destroy it, I say that if you imbibe that spirit and

feeling, you **will go to hell**, just as sure as you are living women. Emma took that revelation, supposing she had all there was; but Joseph had wisdom enough to take care of it, and he had handed the revelation to Bishop Whitney, and he wrote it all off. After Joseph had been to Bishop Whitney's he went home, and Emma began to teasing for the revelation. Said she—"Joseph you promised me that revelation, and if you are a man of your word you will give it to me." Joseph took it from his pocket and said—"Take it." She went to the fireplace and put it in, and put the candle under it and burnt it, and she thought that was the end of it, **and she will be damned** as sure as she is a living woman. Joseph used to say that he would have her hereafter, **if he had to go to hell for her, and he will have to go to hell for her as sure as he ever gets her**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, p. 159)

The revelation was not printed until 1852 and did not appear in the *Doctrine and Covenants* until 1876. As we have shown, the revelation on polygamy is now printed as section 132 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Upon careful examination it can be seen that this revelation is filled with inconsistencies. Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, was apparently embarrassed by the contents of the revelation, for he stated that it could have been written in a somewhat different form:

When the revelation was written, in 1843, it was for a **special** purpose, by the request of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith, and was **not** then designed to go forth to the **Church** or to the world. It is most probable that had it been then written with a view to its going out as a doctrine of the church, **it would have been presented in a somewhat different form**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 29)

The first contradiction in this revelation is the date it was given. The date on the revelation reads July 12, 1843, yet Lorenzo Snow, who became the fifth President of the Mormon Church, testified that anyone who lived in plural marriage prior to the time the revelation was given was living in "**adultery** under the laws of the **Church** and under the laws of the State, too" (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 320). Upon careful examination we find that Joseph Smith was married to at least twelve women prior to July 12, 1843. According to Lorenzo Snow's statement, this would make Joseph Smith an adulterer. In an article published in the *Millennial Star* (a Mormon publication) on July 25, 1857, we read as follows: "The Latter-day Saints, from the rise of the Church in 1830, till the year 1843, had no authority to marry any more than one wife each. To have done otherwise, would have been a great transgression" (*Millennial Star*, vol. 19, p. 475).

In order to get out of this dilemma the Mormon leaders now claim that Joseph Smith received the revelation prior to the time he wrote it down and that the date on the revelation is the date the revelation was written down, not the date it was actually received. It is interesting to compare the introduction to the revelation as printed in the 1890 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* with the way it is printed today. In the 1890 edition it is stated that the revelation was actually given on July 12, 1843: "Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including Plurality of Wives. **Given** through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12th, 1843" (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1890 ed., p. 463). In the edition printed today the word "recorded" has been added and it completely changes the meaning:

**Revelation** given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Nauvoo, Illinois, **recorded** July 12, 1843, relating to the new and everlasting covenant, including the eternity of the marriage covenant, as also plurality of wives. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1963 ed., p. 239)

Even though the Mormon leaders have changed the introduction to the revelation, Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* still says that the revelation was actually given on July 12, 1843:

Wednesday, 12.—**I received** the following revelation in the presence of my brother Hyrum and Elder William Clayton:—



“Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including the Plurality of Wives. **Given** through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12th, 1843.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 500-501)

### Breaking the Law

The revelation on polygamy (section 132 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*) contradicts section 58 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, for section 58 states that a person that keeps the laws of God has no need to break the laws of the land:

Let no man break the **laws of the land**, for he that **keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land.** (*Doctrine and Covenants* 58:21)

Now, in order to practice polygamy in Nauvoo the Mormons had to break the law of the land, for there was an Illinois State law against bigamy (or “the crime of marrying while one has a wife or husband still living from whom no valid divorce has been effected”). This law was enacted February 12, 1833, before Joseph Smith established his doctrine of polygamy. Anyone who was convicted of this crime could be punished by “a fine not exceeding one-thousand dollars, and imprisoned in the penitentiary not exceeding two years” (see the pamphlet *Is Plural Marriage Essential to Salvation?* p. 2).

The Mormon Church leaders understood that polygamy was a crime. In an article published in the *Times and Seasons* (a Mormon paper) on November 15, 1844, the following statement appeared: “The **law of the land** and the rules of the church **do not** allow one man to have more than one wife alive at once, . . .” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 715).

After the Mormons came to Utah Brigham Young made this comment: “If I had forty wives in the United States, they did not know it, and could **not substantiate it**, neither did I ask any lawyer, judge, or magistrate for them. I live **above** the law, and so do this people” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 361).

Just before he was murdered Joseph Smith was indicted for polygamy. The following is found in the *Church Chronology* under the date of May 25, 1844: “Sat. 25.—Joseph Smith learned that the grand jury at Carthage had found two indictments against him, one of them for **polygamy**” (*Church Chronology*, p. 25). Joseph Smith was murdered shortly after this. Had he lived, however, it is very possible that he would have gone to prison for being a polygamist.

### Contradicts Book of Mormon

Joseph Smith used the polygamous practices of David and Solomon as justification for polygamy, but this is a direct contradiction to the teachings of the Book of Mormon. Below is a comparison of some verses from the Book of Mormon and the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

Book of Mormon	Doctrine and Covenants
<p>. . . For behold, thus saith the Lord: This people begin to wax in <b>iniquity</b>; they understand <b>not</b> the scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves in committing <b>whoredoms</b>, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son.</p> <p>Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was <b>abominable before me</b>, saith the Lord. (Book of Mormon, Jacob 2:23-24)</p>	<p>Verily, thus saith the Lord . . . you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, <b>justified</b> my servants . . . David and Solomon, . . . as touching the principle and doctrine of having <b>many wives and concubines</b>—</p> <p>David’s wives and concubines were given unto him of me, . . . (<i>Doctrine and Covenants</i>, section 132, verses 1, 39)</p>

Notice that the revelation states that David and Solomon were justified in their polygamous practices, whereas the Book of Mormon states that it was an **abominable** practice. When the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards was asked concerning this contradiction, he stated:

Your fourth question: . . . explain Jacob, 2:23-27 compared to D. & C. 1[3]2:1. In one place it said it was “abominable” and the other “justified.” **I am afraid I can’t** adequately **reconcile** these two statements. **If** the one in *Doctrine and Covenants* 131:1 **had omitted the names of David and Solomon, then I think I could reconcile the two statements.** (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, dated July 14, 1966)

When Wilford Woodruff, who was President of the Church, was questioned concerning this matter, he gave this testimony:

Q.—Well, now, from the reading, do you say that the Lord approved or condemned the practice of polygamy in David and Solomon?

A.—Well, he condemned these men for the course they pursued in that matter.

Q.—In the 27th paragraph [Book of Mormon, Jacob 2:27] it says:—Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord; for there shall **not any man among you have save it be one wife**; and concubines he shall have none. Have I read that correct?

A.—Yes, sir, that is correct.

Q.—that is the law as it was laid down in the days of David and Solomon.

A.—Well, **it seems to apply to them.**

Q.—Well, don’t it apply to them?

A.—Yes, sir, **it was the law of God to them**,— . . . (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 306)

Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, gave the following testimony in the “Reed Smoot Case”:

The CHAIRMAN. That is the Book of Mormon?

Mr. SMITH. Yes sir; that is the Book of Mormon.

The CHAIRMAN. Is the doctrine of polygamy taught in that revelation?

Mr. SMITH. Taught in it?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. **It is emphatically forbidden in that book.**

The CHAIRMAN. In that book it is emphatically forbidden?

Mr. SMITH. **It is.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 480)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these statements with regard to this matter:

Do you believe that the Book of Mormon is a divine revelation? We do. Does that book teach the doctrine of plurality of wives? **It does not.** Does the Lord in that book forbid the plurality doctrine? He forbid the ancient Nephites to have any more than one wife. . . . a man among the Nephites, by the law of God, had no right to take more than one wife, unless the Lord should command for the purpose of raising up seed unto Himself. . . . the Book of Mormon is somewhat more strict than the Bible; for there is nothing in the Bible that limits mankind to one wife, but the Book of Mormon does **absolutely forbid** a man to have more than one wife, unless God shall command otherwise.

Now in the early rise of this church, the Lord gave no command unto any of His servants authorizing them to take more than one wife, but on the contrary, said unto them that they should give heed to that which was written in the book of Mormon; therefore, they were under the strictest obligations to confine themselves to one wife, until a commandment came to the contrary, . . . (*The Seer*, by Orson Pratt, p. 30)

The Book of Mormon, therefore, is the only record (professing to be divine) which **condemns the plurality of wives as being a practice exceeding abominable before God.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 351)

Some Mormons have claimed that the words “raise up seed unto me” (found in Jacob 2:30) refer to the practice of polygamy, but this is proven false in 1 Nephi 7:1, for it says: “. . . the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not mete for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might **raise up seed unto the Lord** in the land of promise.” This raising up seed unto the Lord was evidently done by the one wife system, for according to the Book of Mormon. Nephi stated: “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took **one** of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; . . .” (1 Nephi 16:7). From this it is obvious that the Book of Mormon teaches that the Lord raises up seed to himself by monogamy, and not polygamy.

The Jaredites, as well as the Nephites, were commanded not to enter into polygamy, for in Ether 10:5 we read: “And it came to pass that Riplakish did **not** do that which was right in the sight of the Lord, **for he did have many wives and concubines**, . . .”

Another reference to polygamy is found in Mosiah 11:2: “For behold, he did **not keep the commandments of God**, but he did walk after the desires of his own heart. And **he had many wives and concubines**.”

It is very interesting to note that David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, denounced the doctrine of polygamy:

I desire to say a few words especially to the Latter Day Saints who believe in the doctrine of polygamy. Why is it that you can put your trust in a man, and believe a revelation of his that contradicts the Word of God in the Book of Mormon, is very strange indeed. . . . that revelation is a plain contradiction of the Word of God in the Book of Mormon. This is plain enough for any one to see and understand. Can you not see that this revelation is not of God? Why, oh why are you trusting in an arm of flesh? . . . you are believing in a revelation purporting to come from God, that He had changed and allowed his people to practice what He says is a sin and an abomination in his sight! (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, p. 44)

### Contradicts the Bible

The *Doctrine and Covenants*, section 132, verse 65, contains this statement: “. . . I, the Lord his God . . . commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife.” This is in direct contradiction to the account given in the Bible, for the Bible says nothing about God commanding this but rather that “Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai” (Genesis 16:2). Why, then, did Sarai give Hagar to Abram? Simply because she did not believe that she could have a child in her old age. It is obvious that God was not involved in this transaction, for Genesis 16:5 makes it clear that Sarai had sinned in this matter: “And Sarai said unto Abram, **my wrong** be upon thee . . .”

Although some of the kings mentioned in the Old Testament had many wives, Deuteronomy 17:17 condemned this practice: “Neither shall he **multiply wives** to himself that his heart turn not away . . .”

There is no mention in the New Testament of any of the apostles practicing polygamy. In fact, in 1 Timothy the bishops and deacons were instructed to have only one wife: “A bishop then **must** be blameless, the husband of **one wife** . . . Let the deacons be the husbands of **one wife** . . .” (1 Timothy 3:2, 12). In Titus we find that elders are to have but one wife: “. . . ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of **one wife**, . . .” (Titus 1:5, 6).

The Mormon Church uses the Old Testament to justify the practice of plural marriage. While it is true that it was practiced by the people of the Old Testament, that does not mean that it was right in the sight of God. These people also committed many other sins which God will not allow us to commit now that Christ has revealed the perfect way. The people in the Old Testament also had slaves, and cursed their enemies. To say that plural marriage

is right because it was practiced in the Old Testament makes no more sense than to say that God approves of slavery since it was also practiced in the Old Testament. Christ came to set us free from these Old Testament practices. For instance, divorce was common in the Old Testament, but Jesus said: “. . . Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so” (Matthew 19:8).

Polygamy, as well as divorce, was instituted by man, not God. Jesus said that the perfect pattern for marriage was that the twain (two) should become one flesh:

. . . Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his **wife**: and they **twain** shall be one flesh? (Matthew 19:5)

### Threatened With Destruction

In the revelation on polygamy (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:54) Emma Smith is threatened with destruction: “. . . I am the Lord thy God, and will **destroy** her if she abide not my law.” It is interesting to note, however, that it was Joseph who was destroyed. He was killed less than a year after this revelation was written, while Emma lived until 1879.

The *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:64 reads as follows:

And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man have a wife, holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe and administer unto him, or she shall be **destroyed**, saith the Lord your God; for I will **destroy** her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law.

The Mormon Apostle John Henry Smith testified as follows in the case concerning “the application of John Moore, for naturalization”:

Q. Do you understand that revelation to be to this effect—that if the first wife refuses to consent to her husband taking a second wife, she shall be damned?

A. I understand that principle; and a good many women have taken that chance. Under the Mormon theory **they shall be damned**. (Extracts from the report of the proceedings in 1889 in the district court of Utah, quoted in *Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R. N. Baskin, 1914, p. 95)

In the 132nd section of the *Doctrine and Covenants* it is plainly stated that a man must obtain the consent of the first wife in order to be justified in taking more wives:

And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood—if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and **the first give her consent**, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, **then is he justified**; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:61)

Joseph Smith certainly did not follow the rules of his own revelation, for he took plural wives without his first wife’s consent. Emily Dow Partridge testified that she was married to Joseph without Emma’s consent:

. . . the Prophet Joseph and his wife Emma offered us a home in their family, and they treated us with great kindness. We had been there about a year when the principle of plural marriage was made known to us, and I was **married to Joseph Smith** on the 4th of March 1843, Elder Heber C. Kimball performing the ceremony. My sister Eliza was also **married to Joseph** a few days later. **This was done without the knowledge of Emma Smith**. Two months afterward she consented to give her husband two wives, providing he would give her the privilege of choosing them. She accordingly chose my sister Eliza and myself, and **to save family trouble Brother Joseph thought it best to have another ceremony performed**. Accordingly on the 11th of May, 1843, we were sealed to Joseph Smith a

second time, in Emma's presence, . . . From that very hour, however, Emma was our **bitter enemy**. We remained in the family several months after this, but things went from bad to worse until we were obligated to leave the house and find another home. (*Historical Record*, p. 240)

Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, testified as follows:

Senator PETTUS. Have there been in the past plural marriages without the consent of the first wife?

Mr. SMITH. I do not know of any, unless it may have been **Joseph Smith himself**.

Senator PETTUS. Is the language that you have read construed to mean that she is bound to consent?

Mr. SMITH. The condition is that if she does not consent the **Lord will destroy her**, but I do not know how He will do it.

Senator BAILEY. Is it not true that in the very next verse, if she refuses her consent her husband is exempt from the law which requires her consent?

Mr. SMITH. **Yes; he is exempt from the law which requires her consent.**

Senator BAILEY. She is commanded to consent, but if she does not, then he is exempt from the requirement?

Mr. SMITH. Then he is at liberty to proceed without her consent, under the law.

Senator BEVERIDGE. In other words, her consent amounts to nothing?

Mr. SMITH. It amounts to **nothing but her consent**. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 201)

Many other Mormons married without obtaining the consent of the first wife. Joseph Smith told Heber C. Kimball to take a second wife and not to let his first wife know anything about it. Heber C. Kimball's daughter related the following:

"In Nauvoo, shortly after his return from England, my father, among others of his brethren, was taught the plural wife doctrine, and was told **by Joseph**, the Prophet, three times, to go and take a certain woman as his wife; but not till he commanded him in the name of the Lord did he obey. At the same time **Joseph** told him **not to divulge this secret**, not even to my **mother**, for **fear that she would not receive it**; . . . This was one of the greatest tests of his faith he had ever experienced. The thought of **deceiving** the kind and faithful wife of his youth, . . . was more than he felt able to bear. . . . his sorrow and misery were increased by the thought of my mother hearing of it from **some other source**, which would no doubt separate them, and he shrank from the thought of such a thing, or of causing her any unhappiness. Finally he was so tried that he went to Joseph and told him how he felt—that he was fearful if he took such a step he could not stand, but would be overcome. The Prophet, . . . inquired of the Lord; His answer was, 'Tell him to go and **do as he has been commanded**, and if I see that there is any danger of his apostatizing, I will take him to myself.' . . .

"When first hearing the principle taught, believing that he would be called upon to enter into it, he had thought of two **elderly ladies** named Pitkin, . . . But the woman he was **commanded** to take was an English lady named Sarah Noon, nearer my **mother's age**, who came over with the company of Saints in **the same ship in which Father** and Brother Brigham returned from Europe. She **had been married** and was the mother of two little girls, but **left her husband** on account of his drunken and dissolute habits. Father was told to take her as his wife and provide for her and her children, and he did so." (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, by Orson F. Whitney, pp. 335-336)

In February, 1853, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt gave certain rules governing the practice of polygamy. One of those rules was that a man must obtain the consent of the first wife before entering into the practice of plural marriage:

It is necessary to state, that **before** any man takes the least step towards getting another wife, it is **his duty to consult the feelings of**

**the wife which he already has, and obtain her consent**, as recorded in the 24th paragraph of the revelation, published in the first No. of "The Seer." (*The Seer*, p. 31)

Strange as it may seem, Orson Pratt himself violated this rule. The Mormon writer T. Edgar Lyon stated:

While in England on this short business trip, Pratt married Sarah Louise Lewis, . . . There are not many times in his life when he appears to have deviated from the strict letter of the law of the Church, **but this marriage was one of them**. Before leaving Washington he had published the rules governing the practice of plural marriage by the church. He stated that the first wife **must give her consent** to such a marriage, the bride's parents must consent and the President of the Church must receive a revelation that such a union would be pleasing in the sight of God before such a marriage could be consummated. He further specified that at the actual ceremony, the first wife **must be present and give her consent** and the President of the Church alone had the authority from God to perform the ordinance. But **in the face of these rules** which he was endeavoring to show would safeguard the system against abuse, he married another wife in England, **without the consent, knowledge or presence of any of his other wives** and the ceremony was not performed with the sanction of, or by the President of the Church, who was then in Utah. It was such **imprudent** actions as these, which gave **some foundation** to the persistent rumors that the "Mormons were marrying English girls and taking them to Utah as plural wives." Such conduct displays a **hypocritical attitude toward the very religious laws he was laying down for observance of others**. (Thomas Edgar Lyon, "Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader," M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, June 1932, pp. 54-55 of typed copy)

This is quite an admission for a Mormon writer to make. In a footnote on page 55 of the same thesis, T. Edgar Lyon stated that Orson Pratt did the same thing in 1857: "Pratt **repeated this same procedure** on July 24, 1857, when he married Eliza Crooks at Liverpool."

B. H. Roberts, the famous Mormon historian, testified that he married his third wife without the knowledge or consent of his first and second wives:

Senator OVERMAN. Did your first wife or your second wife consent to your marrying the third wife?

Mr. ROBERTS. **No, sir.**

Senator OVERMAN. Did they protest against it?

Mr. ROBERTS. I do not hear the question.

Senator OVERMAN. Was there any protest on their part?

Mr. ROBERTS. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Did they know of it at the time?

Mr. ROBERTS. **Not at the time.**

Mr. TAYLOR. When did they learn of it?

Mr. ROBERTS. I can not answer that question.

Mr. TAYLOR. I mean about when—how long afterwards?

Mr. ROBERTS. **Two or three years afterwards, I think.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 712-713)

The Mormon leaders have claimed that polygamy is different than the crime of bigamy. In 1889 the Apostle John Henry Smith gave the following testimony in the case concerning "the application of John Moore for naturalization":

Q. Didn't you know that the Congress of the United States, as early as 1862, prohibited the practice of polygamy in the Territory of Utah?

A. No, sir. It prohibited the practice of bigamy in the Territory of Utah.

Q. Well, what distinction do you make between bigamy and polygamy?

A. I make this distinction—that a bigamist is a man that marries a wife, and then marries another, deceiving the first by not permitting her to know that he has married a second, or the second that he had married the first. (Extracts from the report of proceedings in the district court, quoted in *Reminiscences of Early Utah*, p. 95)



The Apostle F. D. Richards stated:

Wherein consists the crime of bigamy? It is this. When a man takes one wife he covenants to adhere to her until death do them part. He violates that covenant when he takes another woman, **unknown** to his wife; he thus practices **fraud** upon her. This is where the crime comes in. **Fraud** is perpetrated upon his own family. . . . This crime of taking another wife when a man has one is called bigamy; and there are laws and penalties against it. With the Latter-day Saints there is no fraud practiced, the second wife being accepted **with the mutual consent of the first**, and in accordance with the revelations of God. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 26, p. 341)

Now, according to the statements above Joseph Smith was a bigamist in every sense of the word, for he definitely practiced “fraud” upon his first wife Emma. He not only deceived her, but he also advised Heber C. Kimball to deceive his first wife. Orson Pratt, B. H. Roberts and many other Mormon men married without the consent of their first wife.

### Wives Before the Revelation

One thing that is very obvious when reading the 132nd section of the *Doctrine and Covenants* is the fact that Joseph Smith was already in the practice of plural marriage before he ever inquired of the Lord to see if it was right. The first verse of section 132 tells that Joseph Smith inquired of the Lord to see if plural marriage was right, but verse 52 shows that he had already taken wives before the revelation was given, for it commands Emma (his first wife) to receive the other women that had already been given to Joseph: “And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that **have been given** unto my servant Joseph, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:52).

Some people have tried to excuse this by saying that the date on the revelation was only the date it was written down and not the date the revelation was actually given, but anyone who honestly examines this argument must admit that it doesn’t make any difference when the revelation was given. Whether it was given in 1843 or years before isn’t important. Regardless of the date it was given, verse 52 plainly states that Joseph had **already** entered into the practice of polygamy.

It is interesting to note that section 132 not only says that plural marriage is justifiable in God’s sight, but also concubinage: “Abraham received **concubines**, and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for **righteousness**, . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:37).

### Leaders Puzzled

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: “We do not understand why the Lord commanded the practice of plural marriage” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 1960, p. 393). Some Mormons have maintained that the church practiced polygamy because there was a surplus of women. The Mormon writer William E. Berrett stated: “In the early period of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints an unusual condition prevailed. **More women** than men joined the Church . . . There were **not** enough men to go around . . . The alternative was plural marriage” (*The Restored Church*, 1956, p. 250). This explanation is very popular in the Mormon Church. The truth is, however, that there were **less** women than men. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe admitted that there was no surplus of women:

Plural marriage has been a subject of wide and frequent comment. Members of the Church unfamiliar with its history, and many nonmembers, have set up fallacious reasons for the origin of this system of marriage among the Latter-day Saints.

The most common of these conjectures is that the Church, through plural marriage sought to provide husbands for its large surplus of

female members. The implied assumption in this theory, that there have been more female than male members in the Church, is **not** supported by existing evidence. On the contrary, there seems always to have been **more males** than females in the Church . . .

The United States census records from 1850 to 1940, and all available Church records, uniformly show a preponderance of **males** in Utah, and in the Church. Indeed, the excess in Utah has usually been larger than for the whole United States, . . . Orson Pratt, writing in 1853 from direct knowledge of Utah conditions, when the excess of females was supposedly the highest, declares against the opinion that females outnumbered the males in Utah . . .

Another conjecture is that the people were few in numbers and that the Church, desiring greater numbers, permitted the practice so that a phenomenal increase in population could be attained. This is not defensible, since there was **no surplus of women**. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 1960, pp. 390-392)

The following appeared in the Mormon publication *The Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 20, page 133:

But then the proportion of the sexes in Utah would not, at present, admit of an extensive practice of plural marriage. When the census was taken five years ago, there were 143,963 souls in Utah Territory, not counting untaxed Indians. In this number there was an excess of 5,055 **males** over females. This does not have the appearance of permitting an extensive practice of plural marriage, . . .

The sociologist Kimball Young says that “under polygamy some men would have to remain unwed. . . it was not uncommon for a man to select a plural mate from among recent arrivals of converts in Salt Lake City. . . This was a kind of open matrimonial market and men, on hearing of the coming of attractive girls, would seek them out with an eye to courtship and possible marriage” (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* by Kimball Young, 1954, pp. 124-125).

The Mormon leaders were evidently worried that the missionaries would take the best women. Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, stated:

I say to those who are elected to go on missions, . . . gather the sheep into the fold. You are sent out as shepherds to gather the sheep together; and remember they are not your sheep: they belong to Him that sends you. **Then do not make a choice of any of those sheep; do not make selections before they are brought home and put into the fold.** You understand that. Amen. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 256)

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information:

Kimball always kept an eye out for romance. “Brethren,” he instructed some departing missionaries, “I want you to understand that it is not to be as it has been heretofore. The brother missionaries have been in the habit of picking out the prettiest women for themselves before they get here, and bringing on **the ugly ones for us**; hereafter you have to bring them all here before taking any of them, and let us all have a fair shake.” (*The Lion of the Lord*, New York, 1969, pp. 129-130)

The shortage of women was so great that some of the men were marrying girls who were very young. Fanny Stenhouse stated:

That same year, a bill was brought into the Territorial Legislature, providing that boys of fifteen years of age and **girls of twelve** might legally contract marriage, with the consent of their parents or guardians! In stating this disgraceful fact, I feel certain that the reader who has never lived among the Saints and is not versed in Utah affairs will think that I must be mistaken in what I say. It is, however, I am sorry to say, only too true, and the records of the Legislature will bear me witness. The fact was stated in the *New York Herald* of January 27, 1872. (*Tell It All*, 1875, p. 607)

The early Mormon leaders certainly did allow their young people to marry at an early age. Mosiah Hancock was only 11 years old when he was “sealed” to a “young girl.” According to his journal, he was “born in Kirtland, Ohio, on April the 9th, 1834” (“The Mosiah Hancock Journal,” typed copy, p. 1). On pages 20-21 of the same

journal, we find this statement by Mosiah Hancock:

On about January 10, 1846, I was privileged to go in the **temple** and receive my washings and anointings. I was **sealed** to a lovely young girl named Mary, who was about my age, but it was with the understanding that we were not to live together as man and wife until we were 16 years of age. The reason that some were sealed so young was because we knew that we would have to go West and wait many a long time for another temple.

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information:

“Make haste and get married,” Remy heard Young preach. “Let me see no boys above sixteen and girls above fourteen unmarried.” Fifteen years later, as Dodge’s party listened, . . . Young threatened that “if the young men did not marry the girls, he and the old men would.”

With such encouragement Saints married early . . . In 1857 *The New York Times*, reporting the sealings to old men of two girls aged ten and eleven, estimated that most girls married before they were fourteen. . . . Troskolawski knew one bishop who was sealed to four of his nieces, the youngest thirteen years old, . . . On August 1, 1856, he put on the stagecoach for Ohio twelve-year-old Emma Wheat, who was being forced into a marriage she detested. (*The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 126-127)

### Sorrows of Polygamy

The fact that plural marriage brought great sorrow to many of the women involved can hardly be denied. Heber C. Kimball once stated: “There is a great deal of quarrelling in the houses, and contending for power and authority; and the second wife is against the first wife, perhaps, in some instances” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 178).

Brigham Young made the following statements:

Our sisters need not be worried about any doctrine. Brother Penrose said it would be better for them if they believed in the doctrine of polygamy. But they do believe it; they know it is true, and that is their **torment**. It perplexes and annoys many of them, because they are not sanctified by the spirit of it; if they were there would be no trouble. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 312)

A few years ago one of my wives, when talking about wives leaving their husbands said, “I wish my husband’s wives would leave him, every soul of them **except myself** . . .” **That is the way they all feel**, more or less, at times, both old and young. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 195)

Sisters, do you wish to make yourselves happy? Then what is your duty? It is for you to bear children, . . . are you tormenting yourselves by thinking that your husbands do not love you? I would not care whether **they loved a particle or not**; but I would cry out, like one of old, in the joy of my heart, “I have got a man from the Lord!” “Hallelujah! I am a mother— . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 37)

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information:

In 1869, while describing to the *New York World* the responsibilities of Mormon women, Zina Huntington inadvertently revealed how lonely and unhappy she and Young’s other wives were. “It is the duty of a first wife to regard her husband not with a selfish devotion that would claim the whole of his society, time, and attention,” she noted, “but rather as owing attentions to other women also, which they have a right to expect. She finds before she has been many years the head of a polygamous household that she must regard her husband with **indifference**, and with no other feeling than that of reverence, for **love we regard as a false sentiment**; a feeling which should have no existence in polygamy. . . . we believe in the good old custom by which marriages should be arranged by the parents of the young people.” (*The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 229-230)

One of Heber C. Kimball’s wives testified that there was no love in her union with him:

I was married to Heber C. Kimball in 1845, . . . I was married in the Temple; . . .

I never asked Mr. Kimball how many wives he had at the time I married him. I do not know how many he had besides myself after I married him. I never asked him whether he had more wives than me or not.

There was **not any love** in the union between myself and Kimball, and it is my business entirely whether there was any courtship or not. (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 375)

It is almost impossible to conceive of the sorrow that the Mormon women went through. Joseph Lee Robinson, who was himself a polygamist and a faithful member of the Mormon Church, made this comment: “Plural marriage . . . is calculated in its nature to severely try the women even to nearly **tear their heart strings out of them**, . . .” (*Journal and Autobiography of Joseph Lee Robinson*, p. 60).

In a letter written November 4, 1856, from Great Salt Lake City, Ellen Spencer Clawson reveals the sorrows of plural marriage. Her husband had just taken another wife:

Your letter commenced with a wedding so mine shall be “ditto.” Just ten days ago Hiram brought home a new wife, no more or less than Miss Alice Young, . . . as they have just gone out riding on horse back and I am alone, I feel as though it would do me good to write, for my heart is rather heavy. I never thought I could care again if Hiram got a dosen wives, but it seems as though my affections return with double force, now that I feel as if I had lost him...you know a new wife is a new thing, and I know it is impossible for him to feel any different towards her just at present, still it make[s] my heart ache to think I have not the same love, but I console myself with thinking it will subside into affection, the same as it is with me, for you know the honey-moon cannot always last at least if you dont know it now you will sometime perhaps.

I think perhaps Margaret feels worse than I do for she was the last, and I suppose thought he would never get another, the same as I did, and “miserly loves company” you know. . . .

But excuse me for dwelling on this subject so long, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” and I forgot myself. (Letter written by Ellen Spencer Clawson to Ellen Pratt McGary, printed in “Dear Ellen”: A Utah-California Correspondence, 1856-1857, by S. George Ellsworth; reprinted from *The Western Humanities Review*, Spring 1959, pp. 214-215)

Kimball Young gave this interesting information:

When James Hunter took his second wife, the first who had accompanied the couple to the Endowment House for the ceremony could not sleep and walked the floor all night as she thought of her husband lying in the arms of his new bride. . . .

A person brought up in a polygamous household and in a town in which there were a great many plural households told this story: “There is one real tragedy in polygamy that I can remember. One evening a man brought home a second wife. It was in the winter and the first wife was very upset. That night she climbed onto the roof and froze to death.” (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* pp. 147-148)

The first wife of Herbert Winslow made the following statement about her life in polygamy:

Three of us lived in the same house for a year. I said I couldn’t stand it, I was going to lose my mind. I couldn’t stand to see him fondle over the others. Oh, he had to show them a little affection . . . No, he never slighted me, but I just couldn’t stand it. I’m not the jealous kind, though. (*Ibid.*, p. 201)

At one time conditions became so bad in Brigham Young’s family that he offered to set all his wives free:

Now for my proposition; it is more particularly for my sisters, as it is frequently happening that women say they are **unhappy**. Men will say, “My wife, though a most excellent woman, has **not seen a happy day since I took my second wife**.” “No, **not a happy day for a year**,” says one; and another **has not**

seen a happy day for five years. It is said that women are tied down and abused: that they are misused and have not the liberty they ought to have; that many of them are wading through a perfect flood of tears, . . .

I wish my own women to understand that what I am going to say is for them as well as others, and I want those who are here to tell their sisters, yes, all the women of this community, and then write it back to the States, and do as you please with it. I am going to give you from this time to the 6th day of October next, for reflection, that you may determine whether you wish to stay with your husbands or not, and then I am going to set every woman at liberty and say to them, Now go your way, my women with the rest, go your way. And my wives have got to do one of two things; either round up their shoulders to endure the afflictions of this world, and live their religion, or they may leave, for I will not have them about me. I will go into heaven alone, rather than have scratching and fighting around me. I will set all at liberty. “What, first wife too?” Yes, I will liberate you all. . . . I wish my women, and brother Kimball’s and brother Grant’s to leave, and every woman in this Territory, or else say in their hearts that they will embrace the Gospel—the whole of it . . . say to your wives, “Take all that I have and be set at liberty; but if you stay with me you shall comply with the law of God, and that too without any murmuring and whining. You must fulfil the law of God in every respect, and round up your shoulders to walk up to the mark without any grunting.”

Now recollect that two weeks from to morrow I am going to set you at liberty. But the first wife will say, “It is hard, for I have lived with my husband twenty years, or thirty, and have raised a family of children for him, and it is a great trial to me for him to have more women;” then I say it is time that you gave him up to other women who will bear children. If my wife had borne me all the children that she ever would bare, the celestial law would teach me to take young women that would have children. . . .

Sisters, I am not joking. I do not throw out my proposition to banter your feelings, to see whether you will leave your husbands, all or any of you. but I know that there is no cessation to the everlasting whining of many of the women in this territory; I am satisfied that this is the case. And if the women will turn from the commandments of God and continue to despise the order of heaven, I will pray that the curse of the Almighty may be close to their heals, and that it may be following them all the day long. . . .

Prepare yourselves for two weeks from to morrow; and I will tell you now, that if you will tarry with your husbands, after I have set you free, you must bow down to it, and submit yourselves to the celestial law. You may go where you please, after two weeks from to-morrow; but, remember, that I will not hear any more of this whining. (Sermon by Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 55-57; also printed in *Deseret News*, vol. 6, pp. 235-236)

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, also offered to set his wives free:

How long is it since brother Brigham proffered to release all the women in this Territory who wished to be released? At the last October Conference. That woman is to blame who wanted to be free and did not take the liberty that was given; and I say to all of mine that want to go, go, and I will give you all the writings you want; and, besides that, I will give you the means to help you away. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 274)

Jedediah M. Grant, second counselor to Brigham Young, made this statement:

And we have women here who like any thing but the celestial law of God; and if they could break as under the cable of the Church of Christ, there is scarcely a mother in Israel but would do it this day. And they talk it to their husbands, to their daughters, and to their neighbors, and say they have not seen a week’s happiness since their husbands took a second wife. (*Deseret News*, vol. 6, p. 235; also *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 51)

## Discord in Joseph’s Home

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

Thus did Satan sow the seeds of discord in the Prophet’s own home, cause a torment of mind to Emma, distress to Joseph, and lay the groundwork of the apostate Reorganized Church, eventually taking Emma and their sons outside the true Church. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 33)

In his thesis on Emma Hale, Raymond T. Bailey indicates that there was serious trouble in Joseph Smith’s marriage from 1841 until the time of his death:

Joseph did love Emma and was also extremely happy when he could be with his children, but from the year 1841 until the time of his martyrdom a portion of that happiness seems to be lacking. (“Emma Hale—Wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” a thesis by Raymond T. Bailey, Brigham Young University, 1952, p. 52 of typed copy)

Also during this period we find several stories told about quarrels between Joseph and Emma and their periods of reconciliation. . . .

From all that I have read on both sides of this issue . . . I feel that the teachings on polygamy must have been the cause for her [Emma’s] dissatisfaction with the main body of the Church and with the Apostolic quorum which led it after the death of her husband. It appears to be public knowledge that there were quarrels between Emma and Joseph especially during the Illinois period of their lives. (*Ibid.*, p. 104)

On April 17, 1844, the *Warsaw Signal* reported the following:

We learn direct from Nauvoo, that Jo Smith, on Friday last, turned his wife out of doors. “Sister Emma’s” offence was, that she was in conversation with Mr. E. Robinson, and refused, or hesitated to tell the Prophet on what subject they were engaged. The man of God, thereupon, flew into a holy passion, and turned the partner of his bosom, and the said Robinson, into the street—all of which was done in broad day-light, and no doubt in the most approved style.

In his journal and autobiography, Joseph Lee Robinson (the brother of “E. Robinson” who is mentioned above) frankly admitted that Joseph and Emma had a fight over the doctrine of polygamy:

. . . Angeline Ebenezers wife had some time before this had watched Brother Joseph the Prophet had seen him go into some house that she had reported to sister Emma the wife of the Prophet it was at a time when she was very suspicious and jealous of him for fear he would get another wife . . . she was determined he should not get another if he did she was determined to leave and when she heard this she Emma became very angry and said she would leave . . . It came close to breaking up his family . . . the Prophet felt dreadful bad over it, he went to my Brothers and talked with Angelene on the matter, and she would not give him any satesfaction, and her husband did not reprove his wife, and it came to pass, the Prophet cursed her severely . . . I thought that I would not have a wife of mine do a thing of that kind for a world, but if she had done it she should get upon her nees at his feet and beg his pardon . . .

The reader will remember that the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards tried to prevent us from seeing the autobiography and journal cited above.

The following appears in the book *Mormon Portraits*:

Mr. W.: “Joseph kept eight girls in his house, calling them his ‘daughters.’ Emma threatened that she would leave the house, and Joseph told her, ‘All right, you can go.’ She went, but when Joseph reflected that such a scandal would hurt his prophetic dignity, he followed his wife and brought her back. But the eight ‘daughters’ had to leave the house.”

“Miss” Eliza R. Snow, one of the most curious figures in the history of Mormondom, . . . was one of the first



(willing) victims of Joseph in Nauvoo. She used to be much at the prophet's house and "Sister Emma" treated her as a confidential friend. Very much interested about Joseph's errands, Emma used to send Eliza after him as a spy. Joseph found it out and, to win over the gifted (!) young poetess, he made her one of his celestial brides. There is scarcely a Mormon unacquainted with the fact that Sister Emma, on the other side, soon found out the little compromise arranged between Joseph and Eliza. Feeling outraged as a wife and betrayed as a friend, Emma is currently reported as having had recourse to a vulgar broomstick as an instrument of revenge: and the harsh treatment received at Emma's hands is said to have destroyed Eliza's hopes of becoming the mother of a prophet's son. (*Mormon Portraits*, by Dr. W. Wyl, 1886, pp. 57-58)

Fawn M. Brodie made this statement:

There is a persistent tradition that Eliza conceived a child by Joseph in Nauvoo, and that Emma one day discovered her husband embracing Eliza in the hall outside their bedrooms and in a rage flung her downstairs and drove her out into the street. The fall is said to have resulted in a miscarriage. (This tradition was stated to me as fact by Eliza's nephew, LeRoi C. Snow, in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City.) (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 447)

The Mormon writer Claire Noall made this statement:

Willard realized that Emma had refused to believe that any of the young women boarding at the Mansion when it was first used as a hotel had been **married to Joseph. She had struck Eliza Snow at the head of the stairs, and Eliza, it was whispered, had lost her unborn child.** (*Intimate Disciple, a Portrait of Willard Richards*, 1957, p. 407)

In a letter to Mrs. Vesta Pierce Crawford, John R. Young related the following:

At the time Joseph and Alexander—the Prophet's sons—visited S.L. city—I was living at St. George—at a Sacrament meeting I heard Solon Foster, who in Nauvoo lived with Joseph, was his coachman—He went from St. George to S.L. City to meet the Prophet's sons—upon his return Pres. Snow asked him to tell the Saints of the meeting—He said after greeting the Boys—I said, . . . Joseph, the night **your mother turned Eliza R. Snow, into the street in her night clothes**, you and all the Family stood crying, I led you back into the house and took you into Bed with me—you said, "**I wish Mother wouldn't be so cruel to Aunt Eliza**"—You called her Aunt, because you knew she was your father's wife. He did not deny it—I believe that was what drove Emma from the main body of the Church. (Letter written by John R. Young, quoted in full in the thesis "Emma Hale—Wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith," pp. 186-187)

### Lived With His Wives

There are some members of the Mormon Church who maintain that Joseph Smith did not actually live with his wives here on earth. There is plenty of evidence, however, to show that he did. Benjamin F. Johnson stated:

As I could not long be absent from my home and business, we soon returned to Ramus. On the 15th day of May some three weeks later, the Prophet again came and at my home occupied **the same room and bed, with my sister, that the month previous he had occupied with the daughter of the late Bishop Partridge as his wife.** (Letter from Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, 1903, mimeographed copy)

Mr. Johnson made the following statement in an affidavit dated March 4, 1870:

After a short period, President Smith . . . came again to Macedonia (Ramus), where he remained two days, lodging at my house **with my sister as man and wife (and to my certain knowledge he occupied the same bed with her).** This visit was on the 16th and 17th of May, 1843, returning to Nauvoo on the 18th. (*Historical Record*, vol. 6, p. 222)

Lucy Walker made this statement in an affidavit:

I was a plural wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith . . . The Prophet was then living with his first wife, Emma Smith, and I know that she gave her consent to the marriage of at least four women to her husband as plural wives, and she was well aware that **he associated and cohabited with them as wives.** (Affidavit of Lucy Walker Smith Kimball, printed in *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 68)

R. C. Evans related the following:

When in Salt Lake City I called at the residence of Patriarch John Smith, . . . while there his wife, Helen, told me among many other interesting things, that "Melissa Lott told me that when a girl she sewed for Emma Smith and took care of the children. Joseph had to pass through her room to go to Emma's room. She said Joseph never had sexual intercourse with her but once and that was in the daytime, saying he desired her to have a child by him. She was barefooted and ironing when Joseph came in, and the ceremony was performed in the presence of her parents." (*Forty Years in the Mormon Church*, by R. C. Evans, 1920, p. 38)

### Number of Wives

Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant Mormon Church Historian, listed 27 women who were married to Joseph Smith (see the *Historical Record*, pp. 233-234). The Mormon author John J. Stewart, however, states that Joseph Smith may have married 36 or even 48 wives: ". . . he married many other women, perhaps **three or four dozen or more.** . . ." (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 31).

Fawn M. Brodie includes a list of 48 women who may have been married to Joseph Smith (see *No Man Knows My History*, pp. 434-465). Stanley S. Ivins was considered to be "one of the great authorities on Mormon polygamy" (*The Mormon Establishment*, p. 187). At one time he stated that the number of Joseph Smith's wives "can only be guessed at, but it might have gone as high as **sixty or more**" (*Western Humanities Review*, vol. 10, pp. 232-233). Before his death Stanley S. Ivins prepared a list of 84 women who may have been married to Joseph Smith during his lifetime. We published this information in the book *Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, pp. 41-47. While Mr. Ivins was not certain that every woman listed was actually married to Smith, he pointed out that there may have been others who were married to Joseph Smith whose names did not appear on the list. In preparing this list Mr. Ivins did a great deal of research in the Nauvoo Temple records, the Endowment House records and other genealogical records. After Mr. Ivins' study was completed, some of the temple records in the L.D.S. Genealogical Library were restricted and are no longer available to the general public.

Before listing the last 11 names on his list, Stanley S. Ivins stated:

On April 4, 1899, eleven of the wives of Joseph Smith, all long since dead, were sealed to him by proxy. A not[e] accompanying the record of the sealing said: "The sealings of those named below were performed during the life of the Prophet Joseph but there is no record thereof. President Lorenzo Snow decided that they be repeated in order that a record might exist; and that this explanation be made." This incident suggests that others of the many dead women to whom Smith was sealed, by proxy, may have been married to him during his life. . . .

At the end of his paper Mr. Ivins stated: "In addition to these dead women, Joseph Smith was sealed to at least 229 others, up to March 18, 1881 (Additional note: Sealed to 246 Dead Women.)" (*Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, p. 47).

In the Preface to the Second Edition of her book *No Man Knows My History*, Fawn Brodie states:

. . . over two hundred women, apparently at their own request, were sealed as wives to Joseph Smith after his death in special temple ceremonies. Moreover, a great many distinguished women in history, including several Catholic saints, were also sealed to Joseph Smith in Utah. I saw these astonishing lists in the Latter-day Saint Genealogical Archives in Salt Lake City in 1944.

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe admitted that women were sealed to Joseph Smith after his death and without his approval:

After the death of the Prophet, women applied for the privilege of being sealed to him for eternity. . . . To these requests, **assent was often given** . . .

Women no longer living, whether in Joseph's day or later, have also been sealed to the Prophet for eternity. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, single volume edition, 1960, pp. 342-343)

If the Mormon doctrine concerning plural marriage were true, Joseph Smith would have hundreds of wives in the resurrection. Some of the women Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball married—who were previously married to Joseph Smith—would have to be surrendered to Joseph in the hereafter. Lucy W. Kimball testified:

The contract when I married Mr. Kimball was that I should be his wife for time, and time only, and the contract on the part of Mr. Kimball was that he would take care of me during my lifetime, and **in the resurrection would surrender me, with my children, to Joseph Smith**. That is what I call marrying by proxy, and men have been crushed who have refused to do such things. That was the kind of an agreement I had with Mr. Kimball.

I decline to answer whether I had any children while I was sealed to Joseph Smith. I have nine children since I was married to Heber C. Kimball. (*The Temple Lot Case*, 1893, p. 379)

In an article published in *Western Humanities Review*, vol. 10, pages 232-233, Stanley S. Ivins made this statement concerning the number of wives Brigham Young had:

Brigham Young is usually credited with only twenty-seven wives, but he was sealed to **more than twice that many living women**, and to at least **150 more who had died**.

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart lists the names of 53 women who were sealed to Brigham Young, and then he makes this statement:

There were perhaps one or two others, **plus some 150 dead women** whom he had sealed to him; also a few women who were sealed to him **after his death**. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 96)

The Mormon Apostle Ezra T. Benson, in a speech delivered January 24, 1858, in the Tabernacle, indicated that Brigham Young had as many as 50 or 60 wives:

The next man who came on to the carpet wanted to know how many wives Brother Brigham had. I replied, “. . . I will guess, if that will do you any good . . . if I may judge from appearances, I should presume he has some **fifty or sixty**.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 180-181)

Stanley P. Hirshon lists seventy women who may have been married to Brigham Young (see *The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 190-221). On pages 188-189 of the same book, he gives this information:

Like Kimball, Young often joked about his wives. “Tell the Gentiles,” he once observed, “I do not know half of them when I see them.” Later, asked the usual question by a Gentile governor of Utah, Young answered: “I don't know myself! I never refuse to marry any respectable woman who asks me, and it is often the case that I separate from a woman at the marriage altar, never to meet her again to know her. My children I keep track of, however. I have fifty-seven now living, and have lost three.” To a lady who wanted to see his wives, Young coldly said: “Madam, they are not on exhibition.”

Brigham Young made the following statements concerning his ability to obtain wives:

We are complained of for having more wives than one. **I don't begin to have as many as I shall have by and by**, nor you either, if you are faithful. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 222)

Brother Cannon remarked that people wondered how many wives and children I had. He may inform them, that **I shall have wives**

**and children by the million**, and glory, and riches and power and dominion, and kingdom after kingdom, and reign triumphantly. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 178)

I could prove to this congregation that I am young; for I could **find more girls who would choose me for a husband than can any of the young men**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 210)

Irving Wallace claims that Brigham Young fell in love with an actress:

She was the justly celebrated and breath-takingly beautiful Julia Dean Hayne. Brigham, said Ann Eliza Webb, “was madly in love with her.” . . .

There seems every evidence that Brigham, at sixty-four had a deeply romantic involvement with Julia Dean Hayne. For winter sport Brigham ordered a huge green sleigh built and, in bold lettering on its side, he named it “The Julia Dean.” The sleigh, decorated with two large swan heads, and drawn by six horses, was capable of carrying two to three dozen adults. On two known occasions Brigham threw glittering parties for the actress at his country residence, The Farm House, four miles outside the city, and drove Julia Dean Hayne to the celebrations in the sleigh.

It is said that Brigham tried to convert the actress to the Mormon faith and even proposed marriage. But Julia Dean Hayne would have her patron neither as Prophet nor as polygamist. Besides, she had fallen in love with a non-Mormon. . . . On May 19, 1868, she died . . .

In faraway Utah Territory, Brigham Young grieved her loss. “His regard for her never ceased,” wrote Ann Eliza Webb, “and I have heard, on what seemed very good authority—although I cannot vouch for its truth—that after he heard of her death he had one of his wives baptized for her, and then sealed to him for her; so he is sure, he thinks, of possessing her in the next world, although he could not induce her to look kindly upon him here.” (*The Twenty-Seventh Wife*, New York, 1962, pp. 123, 125, 126)

The fact that Brigham Young did have Julia Dean sealed to himself was verified by Stanley S. Ivins when he was doing research in the Endowment House Records for August 16, 1866, to September 30, 1870. He found that on September 15, 1869, Brigham Young was sealed to the actress Julia Dean. Amelia Folsom Young acted as “proxy.”

Although Brigham Young was constantly marrying new wives, he claimed that “There are probably but few men in the world who care about the private society of women **less than I do**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 99).

Heber C. Kimball claimed that the congregation would not believe how many wives he had:

Plurality of wives! I have a good **many wives**. How much would you give to know how many? If I were to tell you, **you would not believe it**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 91)

John J. Stewart claims that Heber C. Kimball actually had 45 wives. Heber C. Kimball believed that in the resurrection he would be able to have thousands of wives:

Supposing that I have a wife or a dozen of them, and she should say, “You cannot be exalted without me,” and suppose they all should say so, what of that? . . . Suppose that I lose the whole of them before I go into the spirit world, but that I have been a good, faithful man all the days of my life, and lived my religion, and had favour with God, and was kind to them, do you think I will be destitute there. No, the Lord says **there are more there than there are here**. They have been increasing there; they increase there a great deal faster than we do here, . . .

In the spirit world there is an increase of males and females, there are **millions of them**, and if I am faithful all the time, and continue right along with brother Brigham, we will go to brother Joseph and say, “Here we are brother Joseph; we are here ourselves are we not, with none of the property we possessed in our probationary state, not even the rings on our fingers?” He will say to us, “Come along, my boys, we will give you a good suit of clothes. **Where are your wives?**” “They are back yonder; they would not follow us.” “Never mind,”



says Joseph, “**Here are thousands, have all you want.**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 209)

The Mormon men certainly believed that they could have all the wives they wanted. Kimball Young stated:

One of the informants for this study said that her uncle had “**some hundreds of wives sealed to him for eternity only.**” (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 146)

According to Stanley S. Ivins, the Endowment House Records reveal that on November 22, 1870, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt had himself sealed to 101 dead women. On November 29, 1870, he was sealed to 109 dead women. The same day (November 29, 1870) 91 dead women were sealed to his brother, Parley P. Pratt, who had died in 1857. Mr. Ivins found that the St. George Temple Records show that Wilford Woodruff—who later became the fourth President of the Mormon Church—was sealed to 189 dead women in a period of slightly over two years (January 29, 1879, to March 14, 1881). Moses Franklin Farnsworth probably holds the record, however, for he was sealed to 345 dead women in a two year period.

### Taking Other Men's Wives

The fact that Joseph Smith asked for other men's wives was made very plain in a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle by Jedediah M. Grant, second counselor to Brigham Young. In this sermon, delivered February 19, 1854, Jedediah M. Grant stated:

When the family organization was revealed from heaven—the **patriarchal order** of God, and **Joseph** began, on the right and on the left, **to add to his family**, what a quaking there was in Israel. Says one brother to another, “Joseph says all covenants are **done away**, and **none are binding but the new covenants**; now suppose **Joseph** should come and say **he wanted your wife**, what you say to that?” “I would tell him to go to hell.” This was the spirit of many in the early days of this Church. . . .

What would a man of God say, who felt aright, when **Joseph** asked him for his money? He would say, “Yes, and I wish I had more to help to build up the kingdom of God.” Or if **he came and said**, “**I want your wife?**” “**O Yes**,” he would say, “**Here she is, there are plenty more.**” . . . Did the **Prophet Joseph** want every man's wife **he asked for?** He did not, . . . If such a man of God should come to me and say, “I want your gold and silver, **or your wives**,” I should say, “**Here they are. I wish I had more to give you. Take all I have got.**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, pp. 13-14)

In his book *Mormon Portraits*, Dr. Wyl gave the following information:

Joseph Smith finally demanded the **wives of all the twelve apostles** that were at home then in Nauvoo. . . . Vilate Kimball, the first wife of Heber C. Kimball, . . . loved her husband, and he, . . . loved her, hence a reluctance to comply with the Lord's demand that Vilate should be **consecrated** . . . They thought the command of the Lord must be obeyed in some way, and a “proxy” way suggested itself to their minds. They had a young daughter only getting out of girlhood, and the father apologizing to the prophet for his wife's reluctance to comply with his desires, stating, however, that the act must be right or it would not be counselled—the abject slave of a father asked **Joe if his daughter wouldn't do as well as his wife**. Joe replied that she would do just as well, and the Lord would accept her instead. The half-ripe bud of womanhood was delivered over to the Prophet. (*Mormon Portraits*, 1886, pp. 70-72)

The fact that Joseph Smith asked for Heber C. Kimball's wife but actually married his daughter is verified in the book *The Life of Heber C. Kimball*, written by the Mormon Apostle Orson F. Whitney:

Before he would trust even Heber with the full secret, however, he put him to a test which few men would have been able to bear.

It was no less than **a requirement for him to surrender his wife, his beloved Vilate, and give her to Joseph in marriage!**

The astounding revelation well-nigh paraly[z]ed him. He could hardly believe he had heard aright. **Yet Joseph was solemnly in earnest**. . . . He knew Joseph too well, as a man, a friend, a brother, a servant of God, to doubt his truth or the **divine origin of the behest he had made**. No; Joseph was God's Prophet, His mouthpiece and oracle, and so long as he was so, his words were as the words of the Eternal One . . . **He would try and do as he was told**. Such, now, was his superhuman resolve.

Three days he fasted and wept and prayed. Then, with a broken and a bleeding heart, but with soul self-mastered for the **sacrifice, he led his darling wife to the Prophet's house and presented her to Joseph**.

It was enough—the heavens accepted the sacrifice. The will for the deed was taken, and “accounted unto him for righteousness.” Joseph wept at this proof of devotion, and embracing Heber told him that was all the Lord required.

The Prophet joined the hands of the heroic and devoted pair, and then and there, by virtue of the sealing power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, Heber and Vilate Kimball were made husband and wife for all eternity. (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 333-335)

Soon after the revelation was given, a golden link was forged whereby the houses of Heber and Joseph were indissolubly and forever joined. Helen Mar, the **eldest daughter of Heber Chase and Vilate Kimball was given to the Prophet in the holy bonds of celestial marriage**. (*Ibid.*, p. 339)

According to John D. Lee, Brigham Young tried to justify Joseph Smith's actions by saying that the Lord gave him special privileges: “After the death of Joseph, Brigham Young told me that Joseph's time on earth was short, and that **the Lord allowed him privileges that we could not have**” (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photo reprint of 1880 ed., p. 147).

Joseph Smith was apparently worried concerning adultery. Joseph Lee Robinson recorded the following in his journal and autobiography:

. . . God had revealed unto him [Joseph Smith] that any man that ever committed **adultery** in either of his probations that that man could never be raised to the highest exaltation in the celestial glory, and that **he felt anxious with regard to himself** that he enquired of the Lord that the Lord told him that **he Joseph had never committed adultery**.

John D. Lee tells that Joseph Smith took H. B. Jacobs' wife while Mr. Jacobs was absent:

It was now June, 1842 . . . I then took a tour down through Illinois. H. B. Jacobs accompanied me as a fellow companion of the way. Jacobs was bragging about his wife and two children, what a true, virtuous, lovely woman she was. He almost worshiped her. **But little did he think that, in his absense, she was sealed to the Prophet Joseph, and was his wife.** (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, p. 132)

Juanita Brooks states that “Zina Diantha Huntington” was the woman who was married to Henry B. Jacobs and later sealed to Joseph Smith. She states that after she was sealed to Joseph Smith she continued to live with Jacobs, and that later she “renounced Jacobs and joined the family of Brigham Young” (see *On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 141, n. 18). Andrew Jenson, who was assistant Church Historian, confirmed the fact that Zina D. Huntington married Joseph Smith and later became the wife of Brigham Young:

Zina D. Huntington, afterwards the wife of Pres. Brigham Young, sealed to the Prophet Oct. 27, 1841, Dimick B. Huntington officiating. Her sister Fanny was present as a witness. (*Historical Record*, by Andrew Jenson, p. 233)



declaration to me was as the voice of Almighty God. Why? Because he had the Priesthood of God on the earth; the Priesthood that is without father, without mother, without beginning of days or end of years, which is God's authority, the eternal power and right of the government of God upon the earth. I was subject to that government in the days of Joseph. Men used to talk on this wise—"But would you believe in the Prophet if he should demand all your property?" Lucifer would suggest this idea to them. "No," says another, "I would not." "Suppose he should come to you, and tell you, you must sell your farm in the east, and go to Kirtland, and consecrate your property to the Lord, would you do it?" "No," answers his neighbor, "the Lord has no use for my property, I would not do it." "Well," says one, "do you think Joseph is right to dictate in temporal matters?" "No." There were quite a majority, I believe, in the days of Joseph, who believed he had no right to dictate in temporal matters, in farms, houses, merchandize, gold, silver, &c.; and they were tried on various points.

When the family organization was revealed from heaven—the patriarchal order of God, and Joseph began, on the right and on the left, to add to his family, what a quaking there was in Israel. Says one brother to another, "Joseph says all covenants are done away, and none are binding but the new covenants; now suppose Joseph should come and say he wanted your wife, what would you say to that?" "I would tell him to go to hell." This was the spirit of many in the early days of this Church.

If you maintain the fact that the Priesthood of God is upon the earth, and God's representatives are upon the earth, the mouth-piece of Jehovah, the head of the kingdom of God upon earth, and the will of God is done

upon earth as it is in heaven, it follows that the government of God is upon the earth. I allude to the Church which it dictates; and then to the whole earth which it will dictate. Satan may succeed for a season to curtail the extent of this government, and the free working of its machinery, but if the Lord Almighty has organized a government upon the earth, and has committed the keys and Priesthood of it to His Prophet, that Prophet holds jurisdiction over the earth, the same as Adam did in the beginning. And righteous men in every dispensation since the creation, if they had any keys, had the keys of the kingdom of God; and they extended over this wide world, wherever God had a people and a government; and just as far as the Priesthood exercised its authority, just so far the rule of the Almighty reached.

If Joseph had a right to dictate me in relation to salvation, in relation to a hereafter, he had a right to dictate me in relation to all my earthly affairs, in relation to the treasures of the earth, and in relation to the earth itself. He had a right to dictate in relation to the cities of the earth, to the natives of the earth, and in relation to everything on land and on sea. That is what he had a right to do, if he had any right at all. If he did not have that right, he did not have the Priesthood of God, he did not have the endless Priesthood that emanates from an eternal being. A Priesthood that is clipped, and lacks length, is not the Priesthood of God; if it lacks depth, it is not the Priesthood of God; for the Priesthood in ancient times extended over the wide world, and coped with the universe, and had a right to govern and control the inhabitants thereof, to regulate them, give them laws, and execute those laws. That power looked like the Priesthood of God. This same Priesthood has been given to Joseph

A photograph of the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, page 13. Jedediah M. Grant, second counselor to Brigham Young, tells what happened when Joseph Smith began to practice polygamy.

Smith, and has been handed down to his successors.

I do not care how many devils rap, it is no trouble to me. I say, rap away, and give as many revelations as you please, whether you are good spirits or bad ones, it does not trouble my cranium. Rap away, for I trust in the anchor of my soul that is sure and steadfast, in the Priesthood of God upon the earth.

What would a man of God say, who felt aright, when Joseph asked him for his money? He would say, "Yes, and I wish I had more to help to build up the kingdom of God." Or if he came and said, "I want your wife?" "O yes," he would say, "here she is, there are plenty more."

There is another main thread connected with this, that I have not brought out. You know in fishing with the hook and line, if you draw out suddenly on the line when you have got a large trout, you may break your line; you must therefore angle a little, and manage your prize carefully. I would ask you if Jehovah has not in all ages tried His people by the power of Lucifer and his associates; and on the other hand, has He not tried them and proved them by His Prophets? Did the Lord actually want Abraham to kill Isaac? Did the Prophet Joseph want every man's wife he asked for? He did not, but in that thing was the grand thread of the Priesthood developed. The grand object in view was to try the people of God, to see what was in them. If such a man of God should come to me and say, "I want your gold and silver, or your wives," I should say, "Here they are, I wish I had more to give you, take all I have got." A man who has got the Spirit of God, and the light of eternity in him, has no trouble about such matters.

I am talking now of the present day. There was a time when we could be tried pretty severely upon

these points, but I now could pick you out hundreds of men that cannot be tried in this way, but they will hand over every thing they possess. They understand the nature of such doctrines, and the object of such requirements. They know it is to prove the people, both men and women, and to develop what they will do. How can the Priesthood judge the people, if it does not prove them.

If ever you are brought into the presence of God, and exalted to a seat in His celestial kingdom, it will be by virtue of the Holy Priesthood, therefore you have got to be proved, not only by being tempted by the devil, but the Priesthood will try you—it will try you to the core. If one thing won't try you, something else will be adopted, until you are like the passive clay in the hands of the Potter. If the Lord our God does not see fit to let the devil loose upon you, and mob you, He will employ some other means to try you as in a crucible, to prove you as gold is tried seven times in the furnace.

The world philosophizes about the "Mormons," about their leaders, and the life they are living. There are a thousand conjectures among them in relation to the "Mormons." The grand secret is told in a few words; the fact is, the Almighty God has spoken from the heavens, sent heavenly messengers, and organized His Church, restored the Holy Priesthood, established His government on the earth, and exerted his power to extend it, and send forth His word. And that Priesthood understands the principles and motives by which men are actuated, and it understands the workings of the devil on the earth; that Priesthood knows how to govern, when to strike, and when not to strike.

Some things in this Church start up at times, that you would think the whole Church would be rent asunder, like the clans of Scotland. Clanism,



Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs is listed as wife number five in Stanley Ivins' list of 84 women who may have been married to Joseph Smith:

5.—ZINA DIANTHA HUNTINGTON JACOBS. Daughter of William and Zina Baker Huntington, and wife of Henry B. Jacobs. Born in Watertown, New York, January 31, 1821. Married Jacobs March 7, 1841. Married Joseph Smith, October 27, 1841. On February 2, 1846, she was sealed to Smith for eternity and to Brigham Young for time. She lived with Young as his wife, and died August 29, 1901. (*Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, p. 42)

Fawn M. Brodie stated:

Zina left Jacobs in 1846 to marry Brigham Young. William Hall asserted that he had heard Young say publicly to Jacobs: "The woman you claim for a wife does not belong to you. She is the spiritual wife of brother Joseph, sealed to him. I am his proxy, and she, in this behalf, with her children, are my property. You can go where you please, and get another, but be sure to get one of your own kindred spirits." Jacobs apparently accepted Young's decision as the word of the Lord, for he stood as witness in the Nauvoo temple in January 1846 when Zina was sealed to Brigham Young "for time" and to Joseph Smith "for eternity." (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 443)

Juanita Brooks stated: ". . . Zina had been moved to Winter Quarters. She now renounced Jacobs and joined the family of Brigham Young, traveling west in 1848 in a wagon provided by him and driven by her brother Oliver" (*On The Mormon Frontier, the Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 141, n. 18). According to Juanita Brooks, Henry Jacobs was still alive in 1886 (*Ibid.*, p. 142, footnote). Zina Diantha Huntington died on August 29, 1901.

Ann Eliza Young, who had been married to Brigham Young, charged that Joseph Smith was guilty of adultery:

Joseph not only paid his addresses to the young and unmarried women, but he sought "spiritual alliance" with many married ladies . . . He taught them that all former marriages were null and void, and that they were at perfect liberty to make another choice of a husband. The marriage covenants were not binding, because they were ratified only by Gentile laws. These laws the Lord did not recognize; consequently all the women were free.

One woman said to me not very long since, while giving me some of her experiences in polygamy: "The greatest trial I ever endured in my life was living with my husband and deceiving him, by receiving **Joseph's** attentions whenever he chose to come to me."

This woman, and others, whose experience has been very similar, are among the very best women in the church; they are as pure-minded and virtuous women as any in the world. They were seduced under the guise of religion, . . .

Some of these Women have since said they did not know who was the father of their children; this is not to be wondered at, for after Joseph's declaration annulling all gentile marriages, the **greatest promiscuity was practiced**; and, indeed, all sense of morality seemed to have been lost by a portion at least of the church. (*Wife No. 19*, by Ann-Eliza Young, 1876, pp. 70-71)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe admitted that Joseph Smith was sealed to married women, but he claimed that they were not to be his wives until after death:

7. Another kind of celestial marriage seems to have been practiced in the early days of plural marriage. It has **not** been practiced since Nauvoo days, for it is under Church **prohibition**. Zealous women, **married** or unmarried, loving the cause of the restored gospel, considered their condition in the hereafter. Some of them asked that they might be sealed to the Prophet for eternity. They were not to be his wives on earth, in mortality, **but only after death** in the eternities. . . . Such marriages led to misunderstandings by those not of the Church, . . . Therefore any ceremony uniting a **married woman**, for example to **Joseph Smith** for eternity seemed **adulterous** to such people. Yet, in any day, in our day, there may be women who prefer to spend eternity with another than their husband on earth.

**Such cases, if any, and they must have been few in number**, gave enemies of the Church occasion to fan the flaming hatred against the Latter-day Saints. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 1960, p. 343)

John A. Widtsoe's statement that Joseph Smith did not live with the married women to whom he was sealed is certainly false. Patty Bartlett Sessions, the wife of David Sessions, made it very clear in her private journal that she was married to Joseph Smith for both "time" and "eternity":

I was sealed to Joseph Smith by Willard Richards Mar 9, 1842, in Newel K. Whitney's chamber, Nauvoo, **for time** and all eternity, and if I do not live to attend to it myself when there is a place prepared I want someone to attend to it for me according to order, Sylvia my **daughter** was present when I was sealed to Joseph Smith. I was after **Mr. Sessions'** death sealed to John Parry for time on the 27th, March, 1852, GSL City. (Journal of Patty Sessions, as quoted in *Intimate Disciple, Portrait of Willard Richards*, 1957, p. 611)

The following information concerning Patty Sessions is found in Stanley S. Ivins' list of 84 women who may have been married to Joseph Smith:

34.—PATTY BARTLETT SESSIONS. Wife of David Sessions. . . . Married Sessions, June 28, 1812. Married Joseph Smith on March 9, 1842. Her husband Sessions died about 1850. . . . On July 9, 1867, she was sealed to Joseph Smith in the Endowment House. . . . (*Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, p. 44)

Number 4 on the same list is Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris:

4.—LUCINDA PENDLETON MORGAN HARRIS. Daughter of Joseph Pendleton and the wife of George W. Harris. . . . She married William Morgan of Masonic notoriety, and after his death, married Harris. She married Joseph Smith, date unknown, and then on January 22, 1846, was sealed to him for eternity and to Harris for time. The next day she was again sealed to Harris for time. (Nauvoo Temple Sealing Record). On April 4, 1899, she was sealed, by Proxy, to Joseph Smith.

Andrew Jenson, the Assistant Church Historian, admitted that Lucinda Harris was sealed to Joseph Smith: "Lucinda Harris, also one of the first women sealed to the Prophet Joseph." (*Historical Record*, p. 233)

Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, the wife of Adam Lightner, stated: "Joseph said I was his before I came here and he said all the Devils in Hell should never get me from him. I was sealed to him in the Masonic Hall, over the old brick store by Brigham Young in February 1842 and then again in the Nauvoo Temple by Heber C. Kimball. . . ." (Affidavit of Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, as quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, p. 444).

In a speech given at Brigham Young University, Mrs. Lightner stated:

He [Joseph] preached polygamy and he not only preached it, but he practiced it. I am a living witness to it. It was given to him before he gave it to the Church. **An angel** came to him and the last time he came with a drawn sword in his hand and told Joseph if he did not go into that principle he would slay him. Joseph said he talked to him soberly about it, and told him it was an abomination and quoted scripture to him. He said in the Book of Mormon it was an abomination in the eyes of the Lord, and they were to adhere to these things except the Lord speak. . . .

I asked him if Emma knew about me and he said, "Emma thinks the world of you." I was not sealed to him until I had a witness. I had been **dreaming** for a number of years **I was his wife**. I thought I was a great sinner. I prayed to God to take it from me for I felt it was a sin, but when Joseph sent for me he told me all of these things. "Well," said I, "Don't you think it was an angel of the Devil that told you these things?" Said he, "No, it was an angel of God. God Almighty showed me the difference between an angel of Light and Satan's angels". . . . I talked with him for a long time . . . He asked me if I was going to be a traitor. "I have never told a mortal and shall never tell a



a mortal I had such a talk with a married man,” said I. . . .

Joseph came up the next Sabbath.... **My husband was far away** from me at the time, . . . I went forward and was sealed to him. Brigham Young performed the sealing and Heber C. Kimball the blessing.

I knew he had six wives and I have known some of them from childhood up. **I know he had three children.** They told me. I think two of them are living today, they are not known as his children as they go by other names. (Speech by Mary E. Lightner, Brigham Young University, April 14th, 1905, typed copy)

Andrew Jenson admits that Mary Elizabeth Rollins was sealed to Joseph Smith (see *Historical Record*, vol. 6, p. 234). In Stanley Ivins’ list of 84 women who may have been married to Joseph Smith we find the following:

22.—MARY ELIZABETH ROLLINS LIGHTNER. Daughter of John Rollins and **wife** of Adam Lightner. . . . Married Lightner on August 11, 1835. Married Joseph Smith in February, 1843. (Brodie: *No Man Knows My History*, page 444). On January 17, 1846 she was sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity and to Brigham Young for time. However she remained with her legal husband and came to Utah with him in 1863. Her death was on December 17, 1913. (*Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, p. 43)

It would appear, then, that Mary E. Lightner had two different husbands for “time” and a third for “eternity.” The Mormon writer John J. Stewart confirms this in his book *Brigham Young and His Wives*:

17. Mary Elizabeth Rollins. Born April 9, 1818, at Luna, New York; died December 17, 1913. **The wife of a non-Mormon**, Adam Lightner. Sealed to the Prophet Joseph in February, 1842, at the age of 23, and again January 17, 1846, at which time she was sealed to Brigham for **time**. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 89)

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this interesting information concerning Augusta Adams Cobb:

. . . Augusta Adams Cobb, . . . married Henry Cobb, a prosperous Boston merchant, about 1822 and bore seven children.

Augusta lived quietly until Young came east to preach in the summer of 1843. She heard him, converted to Mormonism, and with her two smallest children headed for Nauvoo. . . . Augusta continued on to Nauvoo and on November 2, 1843, without divorcing her first husband married Young. A few months later she briefly returned to Boston, where she saw her other children and told Henry she was leaving him forever. . . .

Augusta returned to Nauvoo and on February 2, 1846, was sealed to Young for eternity. The following year Henry Cobb, still in Massachusetts, divorced her. (*The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 192-194)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart confirms the fact that Mrs. Cobb was married to Brigham Young in 1843:

5. AUGUSTA ADAMS. Born December 7, 1802, at Beverly, Massachusetts; died in 1886. Married to Brigham November 2, 1843, at the age of 40, and sealed to him February 2, 1846. She had several children by a previous marriage. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 86)

From these facts it is hard to escape the conclusion that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were living in adultery (for additional evidence see our book *Joseph Smith and Polygamy*). John D. Lee stated:

Some have mutually agreed to **exchange wives and have been sealed to each other as husband and wife** by virtue and authority of the holy priesthood. One of Brigham’s brothers, Lorenzo Young, now a bishop, made an **exchange of wives** with Mr. Decker, the father of the Mr. Decker who now has an interest in the cars running to York. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photo reprint of 1880 ed., p. 165)

The fact that some members of the Mormon Church were worried that someone else would take their wives is shown by a speech delivered by Brigham Young on February 16, 1847. Young stated:

There is another principle that has caused considerable uneasiness and trouble (E.I.) the idea of some men having more **wives than one**. Such tremendous fear takes hold of some that they don’t know how to live and still they can’t die, and begin to whisper and talk around saying, I am actually afraid to go on a mission for fear some man **will be sealed to my wife**, or when they return home some will be babbling about **you don’t know but what you have got another man’s wife**. For my part some say **I am afraid to speak to a young woman for fear that she belongs to someone else** or for fear somebody else wants her (others deny the faith as they think, but they never had any), and say that it is all from the devil . . . those that suffer fears and jealousy to arrive in their bosoms either back right out or get to be mighty righteous and for fear that they are sleeping **with some other man’s wife** they kick up a broil at home and perhaps abuse their companions through jealousy, . . . (Sermon of Brigham Young, as quoted in *Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859*, edited by Charles Kelly, 1938, pp. 79-80)

## Polygamy or Promiscuity?

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states:

So it was that from the spring of 1841 Nauvoo had three patterns of sexual relationship: monogamy, **polygyny, and promiscuity**. These latter two, insisted Smith, were extreme opposites, the one divinely revealed and commanded, and lived by the morally worthy; the other inspired of Satan, the great counterfeiter, and lived by the morally corrupt; the one exalting, the other debasing. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 1966, p. 148)

Although John J. Stewart claims that there is a difference between Joseph Smith’s plural wife doctrine and the promiscuity practiced at Nauvoo, many people—including some members of the Mormon Church—cannot make this distinction. John J. Stewart has to admit that some members of the church believe that Brigham Young and Joseph Smith were guilty of sexual transgression:

. . . Satan, . . . is wrecking havoc among us in the sacred matter of marriage and morals, exploiting the LDS doctrine and history of plural marriage to deceive in two ways:

First, by persuading many members of the Church to rationalize themselves into committing acts of sexual sin, by whispering in their ear that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and other associates were guilty of sexual transgression . . . In recent years there have been several novels and at least three pseudo-scholarly books by prominent LDS apostates depicting **plural marriage as adultery** and the **Prophet Joseph** as the most debauched of libertines. . . .

There is no question but what these gross falsehoods, given the respectability of print, have taken their toll, having an adverse effect upon the morals of some Church members, and sowing doubts among many others. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, pp. 12-13)

Some people may wonder how Joseph Smith could convince his people that polygamy was a revelation from God. The answer is that the Mormon people were taught to follow their leaders in all things. Joseph Smith not only claimed to receive the 132nd section of the *Doctrine and Covenants* by direct revelation of God, but he also claimed that he received other personal revelations concerning the matter. For instance, according to Mercy R. Thompson, Joseph Smith claimed to have a revelation that she should be the plural wife of his brother Hyrum:

“My beloved husband, R. B. Thompson . . . died August 27th, 1841, . . . Nearly two years after his death your father told me that my husband had appeared to him several times, telling him that he did not wish me to live such a lonely life, and wished him to request your uncle Hyrum to have me sealed to him for time.” (*Historical Record*, p. 229)

While Joseph Smith used revelation as a tool to convince women to enter polygamy, the fact that he was very appealing to women must have helped him establish the doctrine. The reader will remember that Mrs. Lightner said that she “had been dreaming for a number of years

I was his wife.” Speaking of the time when she first met Joseph Smith, Mrs. Lightner stated:

“When I entered the room, . . . he looked at me so earnestly I felt afraid and thought, ‘He can read my every thought, and I thought how blue his eyes were.’ After a moment he came and put his hands on my head and gave me a great blessing.” (*Autobiography of Mary E. Rollins Lightner*, as quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, p. 443)

George A. Smith, a member of the First Presidency of the Church, related the following:

. . . General Lucas hesitated to execute the sentence of his court-martial, and he delivered Joseph Smith and his associates into the charge of General Moses Wilson, . . . I heard General Wilson, some years after, . . . telling some gentlemen about having Joseph Smith a prisoner in chains in his possession, and said he— “He was a very remarkable man. I carried him into my house, a prisoner in chains and in **less than two hours my wife loved him better than she did me.**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, p. 92)

As we consider the reasons that women entered into polygamy we should not forget that the Mormon leaders taught that a woman was inferior and that her salvation depended on a man. Brigham Young once stated: “The man is the head and **God** of the woman, but let him act like a God in virtuous principles . . .” (Sermon of Brigham Young, as quoted in the *Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859*, edited by Charles Kelly, 1938, p. 81). On page 114 of the same journal John D. Lee related:

Just in time I received a letter from Nancy the 1st stating that she had not forgotten that in the moment of passion that **I was the man to whom she was to look for salvation** spiritually or temporally . . . I read the letter to Pres. B. Young. His counsel was to tell her that inasmuch as she claimed **salvation at my hands** that she must come to me and place herself under my guidance and control and protection and respect the priesthood and my standing **as a savior** but on no other consideration whatever.

Kimball Young gives this information:

And Daisy Barclay, herself brought up in a plural family, remarks: “Polygamy is predicated on the assumption that a man is superior to a woman . . . Mormon tradition follows that of the early Hebrews. It teaches woman to honor and obey her husband and look upon him as her **Lord and Master.**” As a daughter of the second wife of Isaac Lambert once complained, “Mother figures you are supposed to spend your life taking care of a man, and **he is God.**” (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* p. 280)

It was no doubt easier to talk the men into believing in plural marriage than it was the women. John D. Lee, for example, made this statement:

I was **greatly interested** in the doctrine. **It accorded exactly with my views** of the Scripture, and I at once accepted and believed in the doctrine . . . In less than one year after I first learned the will of God concerning the marriage of the Saints, as made known by Him in a revelation to Joseph Smith, I was the husband of **nine wives.** . . . In 1858, Brigham Young gave me my **seventeenth** wife, . . . Brigham Young said that Isaac C. Haight, . . . and I, needed some young women to renew our vitality, so he gave us both a dashing young bride. . . .

After 1861 I never asked Brigham Young for another wife. By my eighteen real wives I have been the father of sixty-four children. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, pp. 288-289)

Joseph Smith evidently found that William Clayton had met a woman in England to whom he “was very much attached,” and used this to help convince Clayton that he should live in plural marriage. In an affidavit given February 16, 1874, William Clayton stated:

. . . the Prophet Joseph . . . became well acquainted with my wife Ruth, to whom I had been married five years. One day in the month of February, 1843, . . . the Prophet invited me to walk with him. During our walk, **he said he had learned that there was a sister back in**

**England, to whom I was very much attached. I replied there was,** but nothing further than an attachment such as a brother and sister in the Church might rightfully entertain for each other. He then said, “**Why don’t you send for her?**” I replied, “In the first place, I have no authority to send for her, and if I had, I have not the means to pay expenses.” To this he answered, “I give you authority to send for her, and I will furnish you with means,” **which he did.** This was the first time the Prophet Joseph talked with me on the subject of **plural marriage.** He informed me that the doctrine and principle was **right** in the sight of our Heavenly Father, and that it was a doctrine which pertained to **celestial order and glory.** After giving me lengthy instructions and informations concerning the doctrine of **celestial or plural marriage,** he concluded his remarks by the words, “**It is your privilege to have all the wives you want.**” (*Historical Record*, p. 225)

Although William Clayton denied that the “attachment” was in any way improper, we wonder how the rumor came all the way from England if the attachment was just “as a brother and sister in the Church might rightfully entertain”? If Clayton was not in love with the woman why did he accept Joseph Smith’s help in bringing her to America? From this it would appear that Joseph Smith looked for unfaithful tendencies in his followers and used these weaknesses to establish his doctrine.

## John C. Bennett

Ann Eliza Young made this statement concerning John C. Bennett:

One of the first persons to be initiated into the plural-wife doctrine, if not indeed Joseph’s confederate in producing it, was Dr. John C. Bennett, at that time Mayor of the city, Major-General of the Nauvoo Legion, and a very great friend of Joseph. It is said that the pupil fairly outran the teacher, and his success as special pleader for the system of Celestial Marriage was so decided that he incurred the displeasure of the Prophet, and they quarrelled violently. He taught the doctrine to some ladies whom Smith had intended to convert himself, and thus coming directly in contact with the Prophet and his schemes, a rupture was caused between the worthy co-workers. (*Wife No. 19*, 1876, p. 74)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart claims that Joseph Smith did not teach John C. Bennett the doctrine of plural marriage; however, he states that Bennett was a wicked man and may have joined the church because he had heard rumors concerning plural marriage:

One leader to whom Joseph did **not** confide the matter was Dr. John C. Bennett, Nauvoo’s mayor, whose **moral conduct** the Prophet had found **questionable.** Bennett, he learned, had deserted a wife and family in Indiana. Yet, professing to be Nauvoo’s most eligible bachelor, he was enthusiastically courting the women of Mormonism. Joseph’s admonition to him to refrain from this was ill received, and from that hour Bennett became his secret enemy. Rumors of **plural marriage** in the Church had persisted almost since **its beginning**—and may well have been the chief reason for Bennett seeking to affiliate with the Church. It was, of course, impossible to keep the doctrine and practice of it in Nauvoo from becoming known, **even though public denials of it were made by the Church leaders**— . . . (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, by John J. Stewart, pp. 147-148)

After John C. Bennett joined the church Joseph Smith gave a revelation commending him for his love and good works. This revelation was given in January, 1841, and is still published in the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

Again, let **my servant John C. Bennett** help you in your labor in sending my word to the kings and people of the earth, and stand by you, even you my servant Joseph Smith, in the hour of affliction; and **his reward** shall not fail if he receive counsel.

**And for his love he shall be great,** for he shall be mine if he do this, saith the Lord, **I have seen the work which he hath done, which I accept** if he continue, and will crown him with blessings and great glory. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 124:16-17)

The fact that this was a false revelation can be shown



from a sermon which Brigham Young delivered on January 23, 1847, for Young stated that Bennett never did have any faith: “Geo. J. Adams, **John C. Bennett** and others **never had any faith** nor interest only to **prostitute every female** that they could; men that were ordained unto this condemnation” (*Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859*, p. 57).

Although Bennett was a “scoundrel,” he soon became one of Joseph Smith’s best friends. Joseph Smith knew that Bennett was a wicked man but he honored him. John C. Bennett was elected Mayor of the city of Nauvoo, and was even made an assistant President of the Mormon Church. The following appeared in the minutes of the General Conference held in April of 1841: “John C. Bennett was presented, with the First Presidency, as **Assistant President** until President Rigdon’s health should be restored” (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 4, p. 431).

The Mormon publication *Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, page 432, vigorously defended Bennett:

But **General Bennett’s character** as a gentleman, an officer, a scholar, and physician **stands too high** to need defending by us, . . . He has, likewise, been favorably known for upwards of eight years by some of the authorities of the Church, . . . But being a Mormon, his virtues are construed into defects, . . .

On June 23, 1842, after John C. Bennett had left the church, Joseph Smith admitted that a letter had been received from a “respectable” person warning that Bennett had left a wife and two or three children and that he was a very mean man:

. . . Dr. John C. Bennett . . . located himself in the city of Nauvoo, about the month of August, 1840, and soon after joined the Church. Soon after it was known that he had become a member of said Church, a communication was received at Nauvoo from a person of respectable character and residing in the vicinity where Bennett had lived. This letter **cautioned** us against him, setting forth that he was a very mean man, and **had a wife** and two or three children . . . but knowing that it is no uncommon thing for good men to be evil spoken against, the above letter was **kept quiet**, but held in **reserve**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 35-36)

In a letter dated March 2, 1841, George Miller claimed that John C. Bennett’s “wife left him under satisfactory evidence of his adulterous connections; nor was this his only fault; he used her bad otherwise” (*The Wasp*, June 25, 1842, p. 3). It must have been very embarrassing for the Mormon leaders to have to publish this information, especially since Joseph Smith had received a revelation, purporting to come from God, stating that John C. Bennett would be “**great**” because of “**his love**.”

In a letter to Governor Carlin, Joseph Smith said:

Dear Sir: —It becomes my duty to lay before you some facts relative to the conduct of our major-general, John C. Bennett, . . .

It is evident that his general character is that of an **adulterer of the worst kind**, . . .

**Some time ago** it having been reported to me that some of the most aggravated cases of adultery had been committed upon some previously respectable females in our city, . . .

More than twenty months ago Bennett went to a lady in the city and began to teach her that promiscuous intercourse between the sexes was lawful and no harm in it, and requested the privilege of gratifying his passions; . . .

Finding this argument ineffectual, he told her that men in higher standing in the Church than himself not only sanctioned, but practiced the same deeds; and in order to finish the controversy, said and affirmed that **I both taught and acted in the same manner**, but publicly proclaimed against [it] in consequence of the prejudice of the people, and for fear of trouble in my own house. **By this means he accomplished his designs**; he seduced a respectable female with lying, and subjected her to public infamy and disgrace.

Not contented with what he had already done, he made the attempt on others, and by using the same language, seduced them also. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 42)

It is interesting to note, according to Joseph Smith’s own statement to Governor Carlin, that long after he found out what John C. Bennett was doing he still honored him. In the Conference Minutes for April 6, 1842, we find the following: “President William Law, General Bennett, **President pro tem**, and President Hyrum Smith all spoke upon the subject of military affairs, showing the necessity of a well organized and efficient force; . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 583).

Mormon writers are puzzled as to why Joseph Smith continued to honor Bennett. John J. Stewart states:

. . . Joseph did not attend the first day of the conference. **Surprisingly, he had Dr. Bennett serve as president pro tem in his absence**—surprising because by this time Nauvoo was teeming with rumors not only of the practice of polygamy but of **Bennett’s** debauched “spiritual wife” system of promiscuity. . . . And three days later, in a Sabbath sermon in the grove, the Prophet declared, “We have thieves among us, adulterers, liars, hypocrites,” and noted in his journal that he had “pronounced a curse upon all adulterers, and fornicators, and unvirtuous persons, and those who have made use of **my name** to carry on their iniquitous designs.” **It is impossible to believe that he was ignorant of the fact that Dr. Bennett was the chief among such culprits. Yet, knowing it, why he would still honor Bennett as he did at the conference is puzzling.** Perhaps it was because at the conference he wished to emphasize—as he did—the importance of further developing the Nauvoo Legion, and Bennett still was second in command of the Legion. Also, Joseph was very **charitable**, and perhaps he felt that the recognition given to Bennett would help him resolve to repent of his misdeeds. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, pp. 164-165)

In a speech delivered May 26, 1842, Joseph Smith stated: “At this time, the truth on the guilty should **not** be told openly, strange as this may seem, yet this is policy. We must use precaution in bringing sinners to justice, lest in exposing these heinous sins we draw the indignation of a Gentile world upon us . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 20).

Speaking of Bennett, the Mormon writer William E. Berrett says: “When his promiscuous sexual practices were discovered he was excommunicated from the Church and deprived of all his civic positions” (*The Restored Church*, 1956, p. 219). Many Mormons would like to believe that Bennett was promptly excommunicated when Joseph Smith became aware of his transgression, but the evidence plainly shows that this is not true. Even John J. Stewart has to admit that Joseph Smith did not expose Bennett until **after** he began making trouble for the church:

Naturally of a charitable disposition, and extremely anxious to avoid having Bennett become an open enemy of the Church and tell lies about it as other apostates had, Joseph at the Masonic hearing plead for forgiveness for Bennett, on condition that he mend his ways. A short time later, however, Bennett left Nauvoo and began **spreading lies** against Joseph and the Mormons, claiming that he had joined them only so that he could expose them.

Bennett, who had been disfellowshipped, was now excommunicated from the Church, officially dropped from all his offices in Nauvoo, expelled from the Masonic Lodge, and late in June the Prophet finally published in the Nauvoo papers a detailed **though belated** expose of the ex-mayor: . . . (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 168)

John C. Bennett began his expose of Joseph Smith in a series of letters to the *Sangamo Journal*. The same year (1842) his book, *The History of the Saints*, was published. Bennett charged that Joseph Smith was a very immoral man and that he was practicing polygamy and adultery. The Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* for August 1, 1842, made this statement concerning Bennett:

It may be asked why it was that we would **countenance**



him so long after being apprised of his iniquities, and why he was not dealt with long ago. To this we would answer, that he has been dealt with from time to time; . . . He frequently wept like a child, and begged like a culprit for forgiveness, . . . The church afterwards publicly withdrew their fellowship from him, and his character was published in the 17th number of this paper; since that time he has published that the conduct of the Saints was bad—that Joseph Smith and many others were adulterers, . . . that **we believed in and practiced polygamy**— . . . As he has made his statements very public, and industriously circulated them through the country, we shall content ourselves with answering his base **falsehoods** and misrepresentations, without giving publicity to them, as the public are generally acquainted with them already. E.D. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 869)

The *Times and Seasons* for December 1, 1842, carried an article from the *Baltimore Clipper*. This article stated that a Mormon preacher by the name of Winchester absolutely denied John C. Bennett's charges:

He spoke of the various publications of Bennett and others, and of the prejudices which they had necessarily excited—that the Mormons were charged with sanctioning a community of wives and of goods, **with polygamy**, and various other enormities, **not one word of which was true.** (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 28)

Although it is probably true that John C. Bennett was a scoundrel and may have exaggerated in his book, time has shown that much of what he revealed was the truth.

### Sarah Pratt Affair

In his book, *The History of the Saints*, John C. Bennett made this statement about Sarah Pratt, the wife of the Apostle Orson Pratt:

Her husband was sent to Europe to convert the heathen, under a solemn promise that his family should be honorably provided for by the Church; but, as Mrs. Pratt was a beautiful and charming woman, Joe's real object was to **convert her** in another way—from virtue, . . . no sooner had her husband crossed the ocean, than Joe ordered the Bishops to restrict her in her allowance, . . .

Joe Smith told me, confidentially, during the absence of her husband, that he intended to make Mrs. Pratt one of his spiritual wives, . . . for the Lord had given her to him as a special favor for his faithfulness and zeal; and, as I had influence with her, he desired me to assist him in the consummation of his hellish purposes; but I refused compliance, . . . in a few days, . . . we proceeded to the residence of Mrs. Pratt, and found her home, and alone, . . . Joe asked her if she would keep a secret for him; to which she assented. "Do you pledge me your honor," said he, "that you will never tell without my permission?" She replied in the affirmative. He then continued, "Sister Pratt, the Lord has given you to me **as one of my spiritual wives**. I have the blessings of Jacob granted me, as God granted holy men of old; and as I have long looked upon you with favor, and an earnest desire of **connubial bliss**, I hope you will not repulse or deny me." She replied, "And is that the great secret that I am not to utter? Am I called upon to break the marriage covenant, and prove recreant to my lawful husband? I never will. . . . I believe in no such revelations, neither will I consent, under any circumstances whatever. I have one good husband, and that is enough for me." He then went off to see Miss Louisa Beeman, . . .

Joe afterwards tried to convince Mrs. Pratt of the propriety of his spiritual wife doctrine, and she at last told him peremptorily, "Joseph, if you ever attempt any thing of the kind with me again, I will make a full disclosure to Mr. Pratt on his return home. Depend upon it, I will certainly do it." Joe replied, "Sister Pratt, I hope you will not expose me, . . . Will you promise me that you will not do it?" . . . "If you should tell," said he, "I will ruin your reputation; remember that;

. . ." Time passed on without further molestation, until one day, after Mr. Pratt's return from Europe, Joe called at her new house, and, looking at Mrs. Pratt, . . . grossly insulted her again, by stealthily approaching and kissing her. This highly offended her, and she told her husband, Colonel Orson Pratt, who was highly incensed, and gave Joe a **severe rebuke**. . . .

Joe lied to Colonel Pratt afterwards, **in the name of the Lord**. This shook his faith, and he told the Prophet to his face that he was a liar, . . . (*History of the Saints*, by John C. Bennett, 1842, pp. 226-232)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt evidently believed that Joseph Smith had tried to seduce his wife. The Mormon writer T. Edgar Lyon gives this information:

At the time Orson Pratt returned to Nauvoo from England in July, 1841, he had not been informed by the Prophet or any other Church official, that plural marriages were being contracted. When he heard the rumors afloat in the city, he was naturally astonished, but **when his wife told him that during his absence, Joseph Smith had attempted to seduce her, he was greatly agitated**. She said that Bennett had told her to beware of Joseph, as he planned to make her his spiritual wife. . . .

The summer of 1842 was a trying one for the professor of mathematics. With no session of school to occupy his mind, he worried over the moral situation of the Prophet and the Church. Had he really attempted to **seduce his wife**? Was Bennett telling the truth about Joseph, or had Bennett really deserved to be excommunicated? Or had both Bennett and the Prophet become libertines? If the Prophet was **guilty** as Bennett claimed, **was he still a prophet**?

These and many other questions raced through his mind. In this mental and emotional struggle he was trying to harmonize the conception of a Prophet of God, as he had always viewed Joseph, with that of the libertine Bennett had convinced him Joseph really was. In despair, his **mind collapsed**, and he wandered away from Nauvoo. Even the Prophet realized the seriousness of his **mental condition**, and fearing **suicide**, acted accordingly. ("Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader," M.A. Thesis by Thomas Edgar Lyon, University of Chicago, 1932, pp. 26, 28 of typed copy)

The following appears in Joseph Smith's *History* under the date of July 15, 1842:

Friday, 15.—It was reported early in the morning that Elder Orson Pratt was **missing**. I caused the Temple hands and the principal men of the city to make search for him. After which, a meeting was called at the Grove, and I gave the public a general outline of John C. Bennett's conduct. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 60-61)

Under the date of August 29, 1842, Joseph Smith wrote:

Orson Pratt has attempted to **destroy himself**, and caused almost all the city to go in search of him. . . . I have the whole plan of the kingdom before me, and no other person has. And as to all that **Orson Pratt**, Sidney Rigdon, or George W. Robinson can do to prevent me, I can kick them off my heels, as many as you can name; I know what will become of them. . . . to the **apostates** and enemies, I will give a lashing every opportunity, and I will **curse** them. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 138-139)

T. Edgar Lyon gives us this information concerning this matter:

Ebenezer Robinson, an associate editor of the *Times and Seasons*, said Pratt was found five miles below Nauvoo, in a state of **frenzy**, sitting on the bank of the Mississippi River.

His fellow Apostles then took up his case and endeavored to win back his allegiance to the Prophet. Brigham Young's *Journal* has this entry, for August 8, 1842:

Assisted by Elders H. C. Kimball and Geo. A. Smith, I spent several days laboring with Elder **Orson Pratt**, whose **mind became so darkened** by the influence and statements of **his wife**, that he came out in **rebellion against Joseph, refusing to believe his testimony or obey his counsel**.

He said he would believe **his wife in preference to the Prophet**. Joseph told him if he did believe his wife and followed here her suggestions, **he would go to hell**.

But Pratt was **not** convinced, even though the prophet had threatened him with hell and on August 20th, Brigham Young recorded: “. . . Brother Orson Pratt was cut off from the Church.” The notice of his excommunication was not given the usual widespread publicity, however, and he continued to reside in Nauvoo, again occupied with teaching duties. (“Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader,” M.A. Thesis by Thomas Edgar Lyon, University of Chicago, p. 29)

In footnote 5 on page 27 of his thesis, T. Edgar Lyon admitted that “Joseph’s conduct throughout this entire case does **not** appear to be admirable.” In another footnote on page 29, T. Edgar Lyon said: “Smith’s attitude throughout this entire affair is strange and without explanation. He did not appear to desire a reconciliation sufficiently to go to the bottom of the trouble with Pratt.”

A meeting of citizens of Nauvoo was held July 22, 1842. Joseph Smith said that “The object of the meeting was to correct the public mind relative to false reports put in circulation by Bennett and others. . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 70). A resolution was passed by the assembly which contained this statement:

Resolved, That having heard that John C. Bennett was circulating many base falsehoods respecting a number of the citizens of Nauvoo, and especially against our worthy and respected Mayor, Joseph Smith, we do hereby manifest to the world, that so far as we are acquainted with Joseph Smith, we know him to be a good, **moral, virtuous**, peaceable and patriotic man, and a firm supporter of law, justice and equal rights; that he at all times upholds and keeps inviolate the constitution of this state and the United States. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 70)

Joseph Smith’s *History* as it is published today assures us that this resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote: “This resolution was adopted **unanimously** by the numerous assembly” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 70). In doing research on Joseph Smith’s *History*, however, we found that the word “unanimously” was interpolated by later historians and that it did not appear in Joseph Smith’s *History* as it was first published in the *Millennial Star*. In the *Millennial Star* the statement read: “. . . which resolution was adopted by the numerous assembly” (*Millennial Star*, vol. 19, p. 615).

Further research in the Mormon newspaper *The Wasp* has revealed the fact that the Mormon leaders made this change to cover up the fact that Orson Pratt and one or two others voted against the resolution. In the July 23, 1842, issue of *The Wasp* we read:

Resolved—That, having heard that John C. Bennett was circulating many base falsehoods respecting . . . Joseph Smith, we do hereby manifest to the world that so far as we are acquainted with Joseph Smith we know him to be a good, moral, virtuous, peaceable and patriotic man, . . .

A vote was then called and the resolution adopted by a large concourse of citizens, numbering somewhere about a thousand men. Two or three, **voted in the negative**.

**Elder Orson Pratt** then rose and spoke at some length in explanation of **his negative vote**. (*The Wasp*, July 23, 1842, p. 3)

Orson Pratt and his wife later returned to the church. According to John J. Stewart, Orson Pratt “became chief spokesman for the Church in defense of the principle of plural marriage” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 180). His wife, on the other hand, became a bitter enemy to polygamy. In 1886, more than forty years after the events in Nauvoo, Sarah Pratt still maintained that Joseph Smith had tried to seduce her:

When Bennett came to Nauvoo Joseph brought him to my house, stating that Bennett wanted some sewing done, . . . and Bennett gave me a great deal of work to do. He knew that Joseph had his plans set

on me; Joseph made no secret of them before Bennett, and went so far in his impudence as to make **propositions to me** in the presence of Bennett, his bosom friend. . . .

You should bear in mind that Joseph did not think of a marriage or sealing ceremony for many years. He used to state to his intended victims, as he did to me: “God does not care if we have a good time, if only other people do not know it.” He only introduced a marriage ceremony when he had found out that he could not get certain women without it. I think Louisa Beeman was the first case of this kind. If any woman, like me, opposed his wishes, he used to say: “Be silent, or I shall ruin your character. My character must be sustained in the interest of the church.” (Statement of Sarah Pratt, as quoted in *Mormon Portraits*, pp. 61-62)

## Martha Brotherton

On July 13, 1842, Martha Brotherton sent John C. Bennett a letter in which she stated:

“Dear Sir,—

“I left Warsaw a short time since for this city, and having been called upon by you, . . . to come out and disclose to the world the facts of the case in relation to certain propositions made to me at Nauvoo, by some of the Mormon leaders, I now proceed to respond to the call, . . . I had been at Nauvoo near three weeks, during which time my father’s family received frequent visits from Elders Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, two of the Mormon Apostles; when, early one morning, they both came to my brother-in-law’s (John Mellwrick’s) house, at which place I then was on a visit, and particularly requested me to go and spend a few days with them. I told them I could not at that time, . . . they urged me to go the next day, and spend one day with them. The day being fine, I accordingly went. When I arrived at the foot of the hill. Young and Kimball . . . both came to me, . . . Kimball turned to me and said, ‘Martha, I want you to say to my wife, when you go to my house, that you want to buy some things at Joseph’s store, . . . Kimball and I went to the store together. As we were going along, he said, ‘Sister Martha are you willing to do all that the Prophet requires you to do?’ I said I believed I was, thinking of course he would require nothing wrong. . . . He further observed, ‘Martha, you must learn to hold your tongue, and it will be well with you. You will see Joseph, and very likely have some conversation with him, and he will tell you what you shall do.’ When we reached the building, he led me up some stairs to a small room, the door of which was locked, and on it the following inscription: ‘Positively no admittance.’ . . . Young came in, and seated himself before me, and asked where Kimball was. I said he had gone out. He said it was all right. Soon after, Joseph came in, . . . I was introduced to the Prophet by Young. Joseph offered me his seat, and, to my astonishment, the moment I was seated, Joseph and Kimball walked out of the room, and left me with Young, who arose, locked the door, closed the window, and drew the curtain. He then came and sat before me, and said, ‘This is our private room, Martha.’ . . . ‘Well,’ said he, ‘what are your feelings towards me?’ I replied, ‘My feelings are just the same towards you that they ever were, sir.’ ‘But, to come to the point more closely,’ said he, ‘have not you an affection for me, that, were it lawful and right, you could **accept of me for your husband** and companion?’ My feelings at that moment were indescribable. God only knows them. What, thought I, are these men, that I thought almost perfection itself, deceivers? . . . So I considered it best to ask for time to think and pray about it. I therefore said, ‘If it was lawful and right, perhaps I might; but you know, sir, **it is not**.’ ‘Well, but,’ said he, ‘brother Joseph has had a revelation from God that it is lawful and right for a man to have **two wives**; . . . and if you will have me in this world, I will have you in that which is to come, and brother Joseph will marry us here to-day, and you can go home this evening, and your parents will not know any thing about it.’ . . . ‘I want time to think about it,’ said I. ‘Well,’ said he, ‘I will have a kiss, any how,’ and then rose, and said he would bring Joseph. He then unlocked the door, and took the key, and locked me up alone. He was absent about ten minutes, and then returned with Joseph. ‘Well,’ said Young, ‘sister Martha

would be willing if she knew it was lawful and right before God.’ ‘Well, Martha,’ said Joseph, ‘it is lawful and right before God—I know it is. . . . I know Brigham will take care of you, and if he don’t do his duty to you, come to me, and I will make him; and if you do not like it in a month or two, come to me, and I will make you free again; and if he turns you off, I will take you on.’ ‘Sir,’ said I, rather warmly, ‘it will be too late to think in a month or two after. I want time to think first.’ ‘Well, but,’ said he, ‘the old proverb is, “Nothing ventured, nothing gained;” . . . “Well, then,” said Joseph, “what are you afraid of, sis? Come, let me do the business for you.” ‘Sir,’ said I, ‘do let me have a little time to think about it, and I will promise not to mention it to any one.’ . . . I then rose to go, when Joseph commenced to beg of me again. He said it was the best opportunity they might have for months, for the room was often engaged. I, however, had determined what to do. ‘Well,’ said Young, ‘I will see you to-morrow. I am going to preach at the school-house, opposite your house. I have never preached there yet; you will be there, I suppose.’ ‘Yes,’ said I.—The next day being Sunday, . . . Young stopped me, saying, ‘Wait, Martha, I am coming.’ I said, ‘I cannot; my sister is waiting for me.’ He then threw his coat over his shoulders, and followed me out, and whispered, ‘Have you made up your mind, Martha?’ ‘Not exactly, sir,’ said I; and we parted. I shall proceed to a justice of the peace, and make oath to the truth of these statements, and you are at liberty to make what use of them you may think best.

“Yours, respectfully,

“Martha H. Brotherton.

“Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 13th day of July, A.D. 1842.

“Du Bouffay Fremon,

“Justice of the Peace for St. Louis County.”

(*History of the Saints*, 1842, pp. 236-240)

Under the date of August 1, 1842, the following statement appeared in the *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*:

Among the most conspicuous of these apostates, we would notice a young female who . . . conceived the plan of gaining friendship and extraordinary notoriety with the world, . . . She accordingly selected president J. Smith, and elder B. Young for her victims, and wrote to England that these men had been trying to seduce her, by making her believe that God had given a revelation that men might **have two wives**; . . .

But, for the information of those who may be assailed by those **foolish tales about two wives, we would say that no such principle ever existed among the Latter-day Saints, and never will**; this is well known to all who are acquainted with our books and actions, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 3, pp. 73-74)

The Mormon newspaper *The Wasp* made a vicious attack upon the character of Martha Brotherton:

. . . and John C. Bennett, the pimp and file leader of such **mean harlots as Martha H. Brotherton** and her predecessors from old Jezebel, whom the dogs eat: may flourish with impunity! (*The Wasp*, August 27, 1842, p. 2)

Brigham Young made an affidavit in which he absolutely denied Martha Brotherton’s accusations:

I do hereby testify that the affidavit of Miss Martha Brotherton that is going the rounds in the political and religious papers, **is a base falsehood**, with regard to any private intercourse or unlawful conduct or conversation with me.

BRIGHAM YOUNG

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 27th day of August, A.D., 1842.

E. ROBINSON, J.P.

This affidavit was published in *Affidavits and Certificates, Disproving the Statements and Affidavits Contained in John C. Bennet[t]’s Letters*, Nauvoo, August 31, 1842. Also contained in this publication is a certificate by William Marks in which he stated:

Inasmuch as John C. Bennett has called upon me . . . to come out and confirm the statements which he has made concerning Joseph Smith and others, I take this opportunity of saying to the public, that I know many of his statements to be false. . . . I know of **no order in the Church which admits of a plurality of wives**, and do not believe that Joseph Smith ever taught such a doctrine, . . .

Time, of course, has shown that plural marriage was being taught, and although Brigham Young called Martha Brotherton’s affidavit a “base falsehood,” Stanley S. Ivins’ research in the “Endowment House Records” for August 16, 1869, to September 30, 1870, seems to show that there may have been a great deal of truth in her story. Brigham Young must have been in love with Martha Brotherton, for after her death he had her sealed to him for eternity. This “proxy” marriage took place on August 1, 1870. If the story that Martha Brotherton told was a “base falsehood” and if she was one of Bennett’s “mean harlots,” why did Brigham Young seal her to himself after her death?

## Nancy Rigdon

In his book *History of the Saints*, John C. Bennett relates the following:

Miss Rigdon is the eldest unmarried daughter of Sidney Rigdon, Esq., and is a beautiful girl, . . . Knowing that I had much influence with Mr. Rigdon’s family, Joe Smith said to me, one day last summer, when riding together over the lawn, in Nauvoo, “If you will assist me in procuring Nancy as one of my spiritual wives, I will give you five hundred dollars, or the best lot on Main street.” I replied, “I cannot agree to it. . . .” “But,” said Joe, “the Lord has given her to me to wife. . . . and there is no wickedness in it. It would be wicked to approach her, unless I had permission of the Lord; but, as it is, it is as correct as to have a legal wife, in a moral point of view.” . . . at the funeral of Mr. Ephraim R. Marks, Mrs. Hyde told Miss Rigdon that Joseph desired to see her at the printing office, where Mrs. Hyde and Dr. Richards resided, on special business. She said she would go, and accordingly did; but Joe was busily engaged at his store. . . . I then went to Colonel Higbee, and told him Joe’s designs, and requested him to go immediately and see Miss Rigdon, and tell her the infernal plot—that Joe would approach her in the name of the Lord, by special revelation, &c., and to put her on her guard, but advise her to go and see for herself what Joe would do. He did so, and she went down. Joe was there, took her into a private room, (his favorite assignation room,) and locked the door, . . .

Joe then swore her to secrecy, and told her that she had long been the idol of his affections, and that he had asked the Lord for her, and that it was his holy will that he should have her . . . that he had the blessings of Jacob granted to him—and that all was lawful and right before God. He then attempted to kiss her, and desired her to kiss him. . . . She told him she would alarm the neighbors if he did not open the door and let her out immediately. He did so; and, as she was much agitated, he requested Mrs. Hyde to explain matters to her; and, after agreeing to write her a doctrinal letter, left the house. Mrs. Hyde told her that these things looked strange to her at first, but that she would become more reconciled on mature reflection. Miss Rigdon replied, “I never shall,” left the house, and returned home. In a day or two, Dr. Richards, who is so notorious for Hyde-ing in these last days, handed her the following letter from the Prophet Joe, (written by Richards, by Joe’s dictation,) and requested her to burn it after reading, to wit: —

Happiness is the object and design of our existence, . . . That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. God said, Thou shalt not kill; at another time he said, Thou shalt utterly destroy. . . . Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, . . . If we seek first the kingdom of God, all good things will be added. So with Solomon; first he asked wisdom, and God gave it him, and with it every desire of his heart; even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of Heaven only in part, but which, in reality, were right. . . .



Our Heavenly Father is more liberal in his views, and boundless in his mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive, . . . he says, Ask and ye shall receive, . . . no good thing will I withhold from them who walk uprightly before me, and do my will in all things; who will listen to my voice and to the voice of **my servant** whom I have sent; for I delight in those who seek diligently to know my precepts, and abide by the laws of my kingdom; for all things shall be made known unto them in mine own due time, and in the end they shall have joy.

The original, of which the above is a literal copy, in the handwriting of Dr. Richards, is now in my possession. . . .

. . . On Tuesday, the 28th day of June last, Joe went to Mr. Rigdon's accompanied by his High Priest, George Miller, . . . for a witness for him that he had successfully confronted Miss Rigdon, and, by boisterous words and violent gestures, tried to deny the attempted seduction and alarm the girl; but, with daring bravery, she met the Monster of Iniquity, and told him he was a "cursed liar;" that all that she said of him was true to the letter, and dared him to face her to the contrary. Joe then **made a full acknowledgment of the whole affair**, in the presence of the family, and several other persons who were present. . . . George Miller, then groaned in the spirit, and cried aloud, "You must not harm the Lord's Anointed; the Lord will not suffer his Anointed to fall!!!" (*History of the Saints*, 1842, pp. 241-245)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde admitted that his wife had invited Nancy Rigdon to visit Joseph Smith, but he stated that Miss Rigdon was a wicked woman and that Joseph Smith desired the meeting to "reprove and reclaim her if possible":

Will the best and most blessed people on the earth have spiritual wives, and tolerate adultery? . . .

During my absence to Palestine, the conduct of his daughter, **Nancy**, became notorious in this city, according to common rumour, she was regarded generally, little, if any better, than a **public prostitute**. Joseph Smith knowing the conduct she was guilty of, felt anxious to **reprove and reclaim her** if possible. He, accordingly, requested my wife to invite her down to her house. He wished to speak with her, and show her the impropriety of being gallanted about by so many different men, many of whom were comparatively strangers to her. Her own parents could look upon it, and think that all was right; being blind to the faults of their daughter. There being so many of this kind of men visiting Mr. Rigdon's house . . . that Mr. Smith did not care to go there to see her. Miss Nancy, I presume, considered her dignity highly insulted at the plain and sharp reproofs she received from this servant of God. She ran home and told her father that Mr. Smith wanted her for a spiritual wife, and that he employed my wife to assist him in obtaining her. This was a good time for Miss Nancy and John C. Bennett to wreak vengeance on the victim of their hatred for his severe admonitions. . . . Miss Nancy is made, therefore, to attribute to Joseph Smith and to my wife, language which neither of them ever used. Thus must an innocent and unsuspecting female suffer for putting down a hand to help, as it is verily believed, a poor miserable girl out of the very slough of **prostitution**. . . .

Can Mr. Rigdon believe that Joseph Smith ever tried to seduce his daughter? Can he believe that he ever tried to get her for a spiritual wife? . . . if Mr. Smith had tried to get Miss Nancy for a carnal wife, he might, probably, have been successful. I do not, however, think Mr. Rigdon believes any such thing of Joseph Smith. But because he was rejected as the leader of this people, he now seeks to destroy us by the most cruel slanders—the most wicked misrepresentations and the foulest calumnies that ever proceeded from disappointed ambition. (Speech of Elder Orson Hyde, Delivered Before The High Priest's Quorum, In Nauvoo, April 27th, 1845, Liverpool, 1845, pp. 27-29)

In a letter to James Arlington Bennett (not to be confused with John C. Bennett), George W. Robinson made this statement:

Smith and Bennett have always been on very friendly terms, and

were together a great deal, and I have no doubt but that Bennett was Smith's confidant in nearly all things. It appears from General Bennett's story, that . . . Smith sent for Miss Rigdon . . . took her into another room, and locked the door, . . . She repulsed him, and was about to raise the neighbors if he did not unlock the door . . . she left . . . came home and told her father of the transaction; upon which Smith was sent for. He came. She told the tale in the presence of all the family, and to Smith's face. **I was present**. Smith attempted to deny it at first, and face her down with the lie; but she told the facts with so much earnestness, and the fact of a letter being present, which he had caused to be written to her, on the same subject, the day after the attempt made on her virtue, breathing the same spirit, and which he had fondly hoped was destroyed,—all came with such force that he could not withstand the testimony; and he then and there acknowledged that every word of Miss Rigdon's testimony was **true**. Now for his excuse, which he made for such a base attempt, and for using the name of the Lord in vain, on that occasion. **He wished to ascertain whether she was virtuous or not, and took that course to learn the facts!!!** I would say, sir, that I have reason to believe General Bennett's story in his disclosures of Smith's rasclity; although I am not a witness to all of the facts, yet I am to some. (*History of the Saints*, 1842, pp. 245-246)

In a footnote to an article published in *Dialogue*, we find the following:

One interesting event mentioned in the "Life Story" but not included here is the occasion when Joseph Smith proposed "spiritual marriage" to Rigdon's daughter Nancy in 1843, "promising her great exaltation in the world to come," the brother reports. She "resented" the proposal and "utterly refused" him. Sidney Rigdon was "very indignant at Joseph Smith to think he should make such a proposal . . ." This was the first the Rigdon family had heard of the doctrine of plural marriage. The son reports that Joseph Smith denied having proposed to the daughter, but Rigdon claims that he later got him to confess that it was true. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1966, p. 39, n. 57)

In an affidavit by John W. Rigdon, the brother of Nancy Rigdon, we find the following:

And deponent further says: Joseph the Prophet, at the City of Nauvoo . . . made a proposition to my sister, Nancy Rigdon, to become his wife. . . . Nancy flatly refused him, . . . The story got out and it became the talk of the town that Joseph had made a proposition to Nancy Rigdon to become his wife, and that she refused him. A few days after the occurrence Joseph Smith came to my father's house and talked the matter over with the family. . . . The feelings manifested by our family on this occasion were anything but brotherly or sisterly, more especially on the part of Nancy, as she felt that she had been insulted. A day or two later Joseph Smith returned to my father's house, when matters were satisfactorily adjusted between them, and there the matter ended. (Affidavit by John W. Rigdon, July 28, 1905, as quoted in *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 83-84)

In rebuttal to John C. Bennett's charges concerning Joseph Smith's conduct toward Miss Rigdon the Mormons claimed that the letter that Smith was supposed to have written to her was a fake. In *The Wasp* for August 27, 1842, we read the following:

BENNETT'S LETTERS. — We have read the fifth and sixth letters of Dr. Bennett, . . . The sixth letter is what purports to be a copy of a letter from Joseph Smith to Miss Nancy Rigdon, without date, name or proof, . . . we hope the community are not yet quite so far from a common course of Justice and propriety as to take Bennett's word for the truth or fallacy of the curious thing. **Joseph Smith is not the author**. — The fact is, candid people begin to see what Bennett's stuff, with his help meets of harlots' affidavits, . . . amounts to!

In a letter to the editor of *The Wasp*, Sidney Rigdon said: “I would further state that Mr. Smith **denied** to me the authorship of that letter” (*The Wasp*, September 3, 1842).

Strange as it may seem, definite proof that Joseph Smith was the author of the letter is now found in the *History of the Church*. The Mormon leaders who finished publishing Joseph Smith’s *History* after his death apparently found a copy of the letter among Smith’s private papers and included it in the *History of the Church*. Since the letter does not seem to have any date or name on it, the Mormon historians evidently did not realize its implications. It is now found in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, pages 134-136. Below is a comparison of a small portion of the letter as published by John C. Bennett and as printed in the *History of the Church*.

#### Bennett’s Book

Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; That which is wrong; under one circumstance, may be, and often is right under another Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, . . . even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of Heaven only in part, . . . (*History of the Saints*, by John C. Bennett, pp. 243-244)

#### History of the Church

Happiness is the object and design of our existence, and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, . . . even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 134-135)

We could publish the entire letter in parallel columns, but this should be sufficient to convince the reader that John C. Bennett’s reprint is completely accurate. Although Joseph Smith denied the authorship of the letter, the *History of the Church*, completed after his death, proves beyond all doubt that he was the author. The fact that Smith did write the letter goes a long way toward confirming Bennett’s story about the Nancy Rigdon affair. Apparently the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts was not aware of the implications of this document when he edited the *History of the Church*. In a footnote concerning this document he said:

It is not positively known what occasioned the writing of this essay; but when it is borne in mind that at this time the new law of marriage for the Church—marriage for eternity, including plur[al]ity of wives under some circumstances—was being introduced by the Prophet, it is **very likely** that the article was written with a view of **applying the principles** here expounded to the conditions created by **introducing said marriage system**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 134)

It is interesting to note that the Mormon writer John J. Stewart now admits that Joseph Smith did make a proposal to Nancy Rigdon, and that he did write the letter concerning happiness:

At about the time that the Bennett scandal broke, Joseph invited Nancy Rigdon, Sidney Rigdon’s nineteen-year-old daughter, to become his **wife** in patriarchal marriage. But Nancy, who had come under the influence of Dr. Bennett, rejected the Prophet’s proposal and reported it to her father. Rigdon, still not converted to the doctrine of plural marriage, was infuriated, and Joseph had a difficult time placating him. . . . neither he nor Joseph any longer had much confidence in the other. Rigdon felt that Joseph had fallen under Bennett’s vile influence, . . .

In a **friendly note** of explanation to **Nancy**, the Prophet argued that, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; . . . That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another . . . Everything that God gives us is lawful and right. . . .” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, pp. 170-171)

The reader will remember that Nancy Rigdon claimed that

Joseph Smith locked her in a room, and that Martha Brotherton made a similar charge against the Mormon leaders. Dr. W. Wyl gives this information:

Said a perfectly reliable witness, a lady, to me: “A Mrs. Ann Dawson went to Nauvoo . . . one of her daughters, Mary, got an invitation for ‘a special meeting.’ They brought her to that little sealing office; Joseph was there and told her that it was the Lord’s will concerning her that she should be sealed to Brother John Taylor without delay as his celestial wife; she refused. They (Joseph and Taylor) **bolted the door**, and wanted to force things, but she managed to get away from them. This event caused the whole Dawson family to apostatize and to leave Nauvoo.” (*Mormon Portraits*, 1886, p. 256)

Even before Martha Brotherton wrote her letter to Bennett, there was a rumor circulating that a woman had been locked in a room for the purpose of convincing her that polygamy was a correct doctrine. The Conference Minutes for April 7, 1842, contain the following:

President Hyrum Smith . . . spoke in contradiction of a report in circulation about Elders Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young, himself, and others of the Twelve, alleging that a **sister had been shut in a room** for several days, and that they had endeavored to induce her to believe in **having two wives**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 585)

That Joseph Smith had a habit of locking the door when he spoke of polygamy is verified in an affidavit by Joseph A. Kelting:

I heard rumors to the effect that Joseph Smith was practising polygamy; . . . the Prophet invited me into a room upstairs in his house called the Mansion. After we entered the room he **locked the door**, and then asked me if I had heard the rumors connecting him with polygamy. I told him I had. He then began a defense of the doctrine by referring to the Old Testament. . . . He expressed some doubts as to how I might receive it, and wanted to know what stand I would take if I should not believe what he had to say about it. I then pledged him my word that whether I believed his revelation or not I would not betray him. . . . He acknowledged to having married several wives. I told him that was all right. He said he would like a further pledge from me that I would not betray him. I asked him if he wanted me to accept the principle by marrying a plural wife. He answered yes. A short time after this I married two wives in that order of marriage. (Affidavit of Joseph A. Kelting, March 1, 1894, as printed in *The Juvenile Instructor*, Salt Lake City, May 1, 1894, pp. 289-290)

## Strange Marriages

On July 25, 1857, the following appeared in an article in the *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*:

Among ancient Israel, marriage was forbidden within certain degrees of consanguinity. . . .

The Polygamist was not only laid under the same restraints as the Monogamist, but placed under additional restraints in regard to the persons whom he should select as additional wives. He was not permitted by the law of Moses to marry the **sister** of his **wife**. (See Leviticus xviii. 18.) Neither was he permitted to marry a **mother and daughter**. “And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness; they shall be burnt with fire both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.” (See Leviticus xx. 14.) . . . the Polygamist Israelite was under a law restricting him within certain limits. Though he had a right to marry many wives, yet he had no right to marry a **mother and daughter** or **two sisters**. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 19, pp. 473-474)

In the year 1870 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt debated in the Mormon Tabernacle with Dr. John F. Newman concerning whether the Bible sanctions polygamy. Thomas Edgar Lyon made this comment concerning the debate:

During the three days Orson Pratt related numerous instances of plural marriage among ancient Israel, and argued that God sanctioned it, . . . Dr. Newman built his case entirely upon the marginal translation of Leviticus 18:18, in the King James version: “Neither shalt thou take



one wife to another . . . beside the other in her life time.” This he held was an absolute prohibition of any type of plural marriage. Orson Pratt then reverted to the Hebrew text to prove that the marginal translation was incorrect and that the regular translations “Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister . . .”—merely a prohibition against marrying sisters—was the literal and accurate rendering of the text. . . . With the collapse of Dr. Newman’s marginal rendering his case failed completely. (“Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader” p. 104)

Even though Orson Pratt may have won this point, he proved that the Mormon practice of polygamy was not even based upon the Old Testament, for Pratt himself was guilty of marrying two sisters. The Mormon writer T. Edgar Lyon admits that Orson Pratt was inconsistent:

This controversy also illustrates one of the **inconsistencies** of the Mormon contention that their polygamy was biblical. They did **not** abide by the rules of plural marriage as set forth in the Bible. **Pratt himself married two sisters.** Others had done the same thing and even **married mothers and daughters.** (*Ibid.*, p. 104)

Although the early Mormon leaders wanted to return to the Old Testament practice of putting adulterers to death, they did not want to accept Leviticus 20:14, which said that when a man married “a wife and her mother” they should be put to death. If they had accepted this, Joseph Smith would have been one of the first to die, for he had married a woman and her mother. Fawn Brodie stated:

The prophet married five pairs of sisters: Delcena and Almera Johnson, Eliza and Emily Partridge, Sarah and Maria Lawrence, Mary Ann and Olive Grey Frost, and Prescinda and Zina Huntington. Patty and Sylvia Sessions were **mother and daughter.** (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 336)

The fact that Patty and Sylvia Sessions were mother and daughter is verified by the Mormon writer Claire Noall:

Sylvia Lyon, Patty’s daughter and the **wife** of Windsor J. Lyon, was **already sealed to Joseph.** This afternoon she was to put **her mother’s had in the Prophet’s.** (*Intimate Disciple*, p. 317)

The sociologist Kimball Young stated:

Of our family records, 19 per cent of them report that the men married sisters. . . . Of these 30 cases all but one marriage were to full sisters; in this one it was to a half-sister. In one family a man married four sisters; in another he took twins as numbers one and two and a half-sister as wife number three. In still another a man married two sisters and their widowed mother! (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* 1954, p. 111)

Joseph Carey wanted to marry a certain widow, but she only consented if he would agree to also marry her two daughters when they grew up. They were then in their early teens. A few years after he wed the widow, she accompanied him to the temple where he married his two stepdaughters on the same day. (*Ibid.*, p. 142)

Fanny Stenhouse wrote the following:

It would be quite impossible, with any regard to propriety, to relate all the horrible results of this disgraceful system. . . . Marriages have been contracted between the nearest of relatives; and old men tottering on the brink of the grave have been united to little girls scarcely in their teens; while unnatural alliances of every description, which in any other community would be regarded with disgust and abhorrence, are here entered into in the name of God, . . .

It is quite a common thing in Utah for a man to marry two and even three sisters. . . . I know also another man who married a widow with several children; and when one of the girls had grown into her teens he insisted on marrying her also, having first by some means won her affections. The mother, however, was much opposed to this marriage, and finally gave up her husband entirely to her daughter; and to this very day the daughter bears children to her step-father, living as wife in the same house with her mother! (*Tell it All*, by Mrs. T.B.H. Stenhouse, 1874, pp. 468-469)

Stanley P. Hirshon states:

Some Utah matches were even more startling. A man named Winchester married his mother, and Young himself sealed a mother and daughter to their cousin, Luman A. Shurtliff. . . . He also sealed an elderly man to a fifty-seven-year-old woman and her fourteen-year-old granddaughter. (*The Lion of the Lord*, p. 126)

The anti-Mormon writer Joseph H. Jackson charged that Joseph Smith “feigned a revelation to have Mrs. Milliken, his own sister, married to him spiritually” (*The Adventures and Experience of Joseph H. Jackson: . . .*, 1846, p. 29). While this statement seems almost beyond belief, there is evidence that John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, promised his own **sister** that she could be sealed to him in the event that she could not be reconciled to continue with any of her husbands. L. John Nuttall, a very prominent Mormon, recorded the following:

Monday Feb 25/89.

. . . Agnes Schwartz & her daughter Mary called this morning to see Prest. Woodruff, on her family matters. which he promised to write to her about. She said that **her brother** John the late President John Taylor had told her some 30 years ago that if She could not be reconciled to continue with any of her husbands she might be sealed to his brother William **or himself** and she now wanted to be sealed to him. This is a very **curious** proceeding & which I dont understand. (*Journal of L. John Nuttall*, vol. 2, pp. 362-363 of typed copy at the Brigham Young University Library)

L. John Nuttall does not relate what happened, but if the sealing actually took place, John Taylor, according to Mormon doctrine, could find himself married to his own sister in the resurrection.

## Polygamy and Courtship

Kimball Young stated:

. . . married men in Mormondom were free to court any likely candidates among the fair and the young. As a four-time married man put it, “It was common enough for married men to spark around among the girls.” . . . Brother George MacKay was one of the more eager type. All his life, so a daughter of his sixth wife reports, he kept his eye open for prospective wives. He had seven. He usually got the consent of all his other wives before he took a new one, however. His chief technique was to get up large sleighride parties of young girls. Afterwards he would take the girls home for supper, for his wives to observe. . . .

Like Mackay, Elder Hyrum Stratton went through life with an eye out for a prospective mate. . . . His eldest daughter said that “Father was always acting silly around young girls” often to the embarrassment of his wives and children. (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* by Kimball Young, pp. 129-130)

Often enough the courtship was not so well accepted by the first wife. Making advances to a domestic, for example, right under the nose of the first wife might and often did produce strong negative attitudes. In the Roger Knight family the first wife was none too pleased when her husband, under the impress of preaching, began paying attention to the hired girl in the home. . . . he would bring the girl into their home nights and make love to her while his wife looked on. “I felt so ungainly and awkward at the time that it was more than I could endure to see the attractive young girl sitting on my husband’s lap, being kissed and fondled by him.” She hated the girl before she came into the home as a wife and the years did not much improve her first reactions. (*Ibid.*, pp. 132-133)

Sometimes the Mormon men would bring their prospective brides home to live with their families to see if they were compatible. Juanita Brooks states:

Lucretia Fisher **lived in the home two months before she was married to Stout.** This plan was sometimes followed to see if the two wives would be compatible, and also to determine whether or not the second was attracted to the husband sufficiently to become his wife. (*On The Mormon Frontier—The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, vol. 1, p. 21)



## Only 2%?

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement:

The practice of plural marriage . . . came to the Church by revelation and commandment from the Lord to Joseph Smith . . . He himself practised it as the wives who survived him have testified, . . . Yet **only about two or three per cent** of the male population ever practised it. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, 1951 ed., p. 233)

Lately this 2% figure has been criticized by both Mormon and non-Mormon writers. T. Edgar Lyon, a Mormon writer, criticized the book *Mormonism, Americanism, and Politics* for using, as he put it, the “worn-out theory” that but two percent of the men practiced plural marriage. Mr. Lyon stated:

Concerning the extent of the practice of plural marriage among the Mormons, this book repeats the worn-out theory that but two per cent of the men practiced this form of marriage. Research in recent years gives evidence that this is **false**. It was probably about **six or eight times that figure**. (*The Utah Alumnus*, book review by T. Edgar Lyon, Feb. 1962, p. 8)

In the July-August, 1962, issue of the *Utah Alumnus*, Mr. Lyon stated:

The extent to which plural marriage was practiced among the Mormons causes Mr. Vetterli again to betray both lack of correct information and failure to have done his elementary research. Sen. Wallace F. Bennett, in his *Why I am a Mormon* (p. 70), states the figure as being 8 to 10%, not the oft-quoted 2%. This figure was arrived at by Sen. Bennett after a bit of research in the U.S. Bureau of the Census. (*Utah Alumnus*, July-August 1962, p. 14)

Stanley S. Ivins made the following statement in the *Western Humanities Review*:

Curious visitors to Utah in the days when polygamy was flourishing were usually told that about one-tenth of the people actually practiced it. . . .

Of more than 6,000 Mormon families, sketches of which are found in a huge volume published in 1913, between fifteen and twenty per cent appear to have been polygamous. And a history of Sanpete and Emery counties contains biographical sketches of 722 men, of whom 12.6 per cent married more than one woman.

From information obtainable from all available sources, it appears that there may have been a time when fifteen, or possibly twenty, per cent of the Mormon families of Utah were polygamous. (*Western Humanities Review*, “Notes on Mormon Polygamy,” by Stanley S. Ivins, vol. 10, p. 230)

## One-Wife System Condemned

At the time the Mormon Church was practicing polygamy the leaders of the church became very bitter against the one-wife system. Heber C. Kimball, the First Counselor to Brigham Young, was reported by the *Deseret News* as saying:

I have noticed that a man who has **but one wife**, and is inclined to that doctrine, soon begins to **wither and dry up**, while a man who goes into **plurality** looks fresh, **young and sprightly**. Why is this? Because God loves that man, and because he honors his word. Some of you may not believe this, but I not only believe it but I also know it. **For a man of God to be confined to one woman is small business, . . . I do not know what we should do if we had only one wife apiece.** (*Deseret News*, April 22, 1857)

In a sermon reported in the *Deseret News*, Brigham Young stated:

Monogamy, or restrictions by law to **one wife, is no part of the economy of heaven among men**. Such a system was commenced by the founders of the Roman empire. . . . Rome became the mistress

of the world, and introduced this order of monogamy wherever her sway was acknowledged. Thus this **monogamic order of marriage**, so esteemed by modern Christians as a **holy sacrament and divine institution**, is nothing but a system established by a **set of robbers**. . . . Why do we believe in and practice polygamy? Because the Lord introduced it to his servants in a revelation given to Joseph Smith, and the Lord’s servants have always practised it. **“And is that religion popular in heaven?” It is the only popular religion there, . . .** (*The Deseret News*, August 6, 1862)

George A. Smith stated:

We breathe the free air, we have the best looking men and handsomest women, and if they envy us our position, well they may, for they are a poor, **narrow minded, pinch-backed race of men, who chain themselves down to the law of monogamy and live all their days under the dominion of one wife**. They ought to be **ashamed of such conduct**, and the still fouler channel which flows from their practices; and it is not to be wondered at that they should envy those who so much better understand the social relations. (*Deseret News*, April 16, 1856)

Brigham Young stated that the one-wife system was a “source of prostitution and whoredom”:

Since the founding of the Roman empire monogamy has prevailed more extensively than in times previous to that. The founders of that ancient empire were robbers and women stealers, and made laws favoring monogamy in consequence of the scarcity of women among them, and hence this **monogamic system** which now prevails throughout Christendom, and which had been so fruitful a source of **prostitution and whoredom** throughout all the Christian monogamic cities of the Old and New World, until rottenness and decay are at the root of their institutions both national and religious. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 128)

The following appeared in the Mormon Church paper, the *Millennial Star*:

. . . **The one-wife system not only degenerates the human family, both physically and intellectually**, but it is entirely incompatible with philosophical notions of immortality; **it is a lure to temptation, and has always proved a curse to a people.** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 15, p. 227)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

Some of the nations of Europe who believe in the one wife system have actually forbidden a plurality of wives by their laws; and the consequences are that the whole country among them is overrun with the most abomi[na]ble practices? adulteries and unlawful connections prevail through all their villages, towns, cities, and country places to a most fearful extent. (*The Seer*, p. 12)

What an immense amount of immorality, and consequent suffering would have been prevented, had the State governments not been influenced by the **corrupt** traditions of Apostate Christianity in prohibiting plurality and denouncing it criminal! . . . Plurality would also diminish greatly the temptations which beset the paths of married men, as well as those who are young; they would no longer be under the temptation to keep a mistress secretly, and to break the marriage covenant, and thus sin against their wives and against God. How many thousands there are who practice this great abomination. And why do they do it? **Because they are compelled by our bigoted State laws to confine themselves to one wife.** . . . Plurality, therefore, instead of injuring the morals of society, would have an effect directly the reverse; it would greatly purify society from the immoralities which now exist. . . . If plurality should be prohibited on account of jealousies which may arise, monogamy or the one-wife system should be prohibited on account of the still greater jealousies which may arise for fear the husband may keep his secret mistresses, as many thousands do. . . . If the great object be to put a



# DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1862.

VOL. XII.

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polygamist. And Paul says, "and if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Did Abraham believe in Presbyterianism? Not much. Did he believe in Quakerism? Not much. Each of the different sects of religion has some truth, and so far as they have the truth so far did Abraham believe. But is the religion of any one of the sects, as a whole, the religion of heaven? It is not. We all desire to join the popular party. Light, truth and intelligence are the side that is popular with the heavens, and the side that will rule, govern, and control the nations. If we join that society, we then all become popular with the popular party. Some people will render themselves ridiculous by conspicuous, on purpose to become popular. Their desire for popularity or notoriety is so great that they will not hesitate to do a mean act to gain it. The great majority want to be on the strongest, wealthiest, and most popular side, and to be connected with that family which is possessed of immense wealth, influence, and power. Many of my brethren of the Elders of Israel rise up here to speak to the people, and they cannot give utterance to their ideas. What is the matter? They are fearful of making a slight mistake in their language, which they think would make them unpopular. I wish they were as I am, in this respect, and did not care what people may think or say, but pour out what the Holy Ghost shall give them to say, regardless of consequences. We all want to be on the side that will produce the most safety, the most joy, and the most sterling happiness. I can say, without fear of successful contradiction, that the man or woman who believes that the religion of Jesus leads into a thorny path, does not understand nor enjoy the true religion of heaven.

We can say to all the world that the persecution which the Latter Day Saints have received, and the misery they may have suffered in consequence thereof, will not begin to compare with the misery and real suffering they are now receiving in the United States in consequence of war. In Missouri our bleeding feet stained the prairies, but now they are shedding each others blood to cudde and bake in the sun or to be licked up by dogs and wild animals, while their flesh is given to the vultures and wolves. We were invited to sign away our property to pay the expenses of our persecutors, and we were permitted, as a body, to take away as much of our moveable property as we could; but now the Secessionists are robbed and pilaged without mercy, their houses are burned over their heads, their barns are destroyed, their food and clothing are taken, and the women and children are left without anything to eat, drink, or wear, while their husbands, fathers, and brothers are either killed or taken prisoners. In the same manner the Secession party fall upon the Federals or Union men and whip them, rob them, and hang them up at their own doors and in the presence of their families. Then comes a third party who are called May-walkers or Jayhawkers, but more properly they are buccaners or land-pirates, and they rob everybody that is left after the Union and Secession parties have done their worst. Have we ever suffered like that? I think not. When they come across a small settlement of Secessionists they plunder and destroy it, and when they come across a hamlet of Unionists they serve it in the same manner. Did the Latter Day Saints

journey; doing everything he can to restore the sick to sound health, and giving them all possible comfort and aid. Is there the same care and fellow feeling manifested in the trains of emigrants who are passing over the country in search of gold? Each person is seeking to better his condition, and they have no interest that extends further than self. It is with them as with the man that prayed, "O Lord, bless me, my wife, my son John and his wife, we four, no more: Amen." They are for themselves, and not for the kingdom of God. They know that the world is going to destruction. They see the whole world in confusion—one party seeking to destroy another in the vain hope of building themselves up. The present government of the United States is self-destroying, as they are now proving.

If there is one class of persons on earth who need comfort more than another, it is both the poor and rich who will not serve God. Those who serve him are comforted all the day long; they walk in the light of his salvation, well under the smiles of his countenance, and the works of their hands are abundantly prospered. Still some apostatize from all this light—from this great salvation—to get gold. The reason of this is not because they have to suffer so much for their religion, but because they have not enough good common sense. What is the grace of God? Who can define it? You say it is the favor of God. If you had good common sense, you never would be out of his favor. He is the Father of our spirits—the great ruler of the universe. If we had enough common sense to understand things as they are, we certainly would choose to serve him, and be on the strongest side.

Do we intend to make our final abode in hell, or in heaven? If we mean it to be in heaven, we must become faithful Latter Day Saints; if in hell, we may be anything we please, no matter what. I profess to be a Latter Day Saint. I believe that the Old and New Testaments were given by the inspiration of God, and since such adulterated by uninspired translators, which makes it necessary for one to have the Spirit of revelation from God to read and understand them. I believe the doctrine that the Lord taught to Adam in the garden, and that Adam taught to his children, that Enoch taught to his city three hundred and sixty-five years, preparing a people to go into the presence of God the Father. I believe the doctrine taught by Noah, who was instructed of God to build an ark to save himself and family from destruction in the great flood. I believe the doctrine Abraham taught, that Isaac, Jacob and the patriarchs taught. I believe all the doctrine Moses taught to be the word of the Lord. I believe in the law of carnal commandments as he did; it was for them, and not for us. It was a yoke placed upon their necks because of their disobedience to the higher law of the gospel. Jesus Christ removed that yoke, and told them to follow the law of the gospel. Some Christians throw away all the Old Testament, except some portions of the prophets; but Moses had the gospel; Jethro had the gospel, and the house of Jacob were urged to receive it, but they would not; so the Lord told Moses to give them a law of carnal commandments that would be grievous for them to bear.

The people generally would not have the revelations which the Lord delivered to Joseph Smith, unless he would give them a law

David, and the prophets down to the days of the Apostles.

Monogamy, or restrictions by law to one wife, is no part of the economy of heaven among men. Such a system was commenced by the founders of the Roman empire. That empire was founded on the banks of the Tiber by wandering brigands. When these robbers founded the city of Rome, it was evident to them that their success in attaining a balance of power with their neighbors, depended upon introducing females into their body politic, so they stole them from the Sabines, who were near neighbors. The scarcity of women gave existence to laws restricting one wife to one man. Rome became the mistress of the world, and introduced this order of monogamy wherever her way was acknowledged. Thus this monogamic order of marriage, so esteemed by modern Christians as a holy sacrament and divine institution, is nothing but a system established by a set of robbers.

The Congress of the United States have lately passed a law to punish polygamy in the Territories of the United States and in other places over which they have exclusive jurisdiction. In doing this, they have undertaken to dictate the Almighty in his revelations to his people, and those who handle edged tools, unless they are skillful, are apt to cut their fingers; and those who hand out insult to the great I Am, in the end, are apt to get more than they have spoken for.

Why do we believe in and practise polygamy? Because the Lord introduced it to his servants in a revelation given to Joseph Smith, and the Lord's servants have always practised it. "And is that religion popular in heaven?" It is the only popular religion there, for this is the religion of Abraham, and, unless we do the works of Abraham, we are not Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise. We believe in Jesus Christ the Mediator of the new covenant, who has introduced the gospel for the benefit of the human family, to happy, exalt and glorify them in the presence of the Father, not to make them miserable, not to torture them, nor cause them to walk in the gloomy path of grief all their days. We rejoice in this gospel; it is all glory, hallelujah, peace and comfort. We believe in following the admonitions and instructions of the ancient Prophets and Apostles, and of all good men in this our day.

I do not make these remarks to cast reflections upon any being, but we should strive to know the mind and will of God and to be filled with his Spirit. I wish the Saints to be filled with the Spirit of understanding; and I never want to again hear a Saint say, "O, how we suffer for the religion of Jesus! We suffer more than the wicked," while at the same time, we are better clad, better fed and better looking, and our hearts are filled with joy, while the hearts of the wicked are filled with sorrow and mourning. All the cheerfulness, gladness, comfort, exuberance of spirit, joy, bliss, peace and brightness of expression that can be bestowed upon individuals are possessed and enjoyed by the sanctified in heaven, and if we are prepared by the principles of eternal life, the same halo will shine through our countenances and make our faces bright with glory.

Whatever leads to vanity, lightness, and worldly-mindedness is not the joy of heavenly beings, but the nonsense of the wicked world. There are men in this kingdom who cannot discriminate between that which is of God and who are at so and not so. I doubt upon your exactness, but I am sure which you are.

A photograph of the *Deseret News*, August 6, 1862. Brigham Young speaks against the one-wife system and declares that polygamy is the only "popular religion" in heaven.



stop by law to the evils arising from jealousies, let laws be enacted, requiring man to have a **plurality of wives**, or else none at all; **prohibit the one wife practice**, and you will accomplish much more than you do by prohibiting plurality. (*Ibid.*, pp. 124-125)

At length, through priestcraft and tradition the Church was made to believe that the Monogamy, established by the Roman civil law, was actually a part of Christianity. . . . and relinquished the Polygamic system. The one wife system did **not** originate in the Christian Church, but was adopted from the practice of the Roman nation by the Romish Priesthood, and by them palmed upon the nations as **originating in Christianity**. (*Ibid.*, p. 178)

George Q. Cannon stated:

It is a fact worthy of note that the shortest lived nations of which we have record have been monogamic. Rome . . . was a monogamic nation and the numerous evils attending that system early laid the foundation for the ruin which eventually overtook her. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 202)

Under the system of Patriarchal Marriage, the offspring besides being equally as bright and brighter intellectually, are much more healthy and strong. . . . But how is it under the monogamic system? Temptations are numerous on every hand and young men fall a prey to vice. (*Ibid.*, pp. 207-208)

Brigham Young made this interesting comment:

Talk about **polygamy**! There is no true philosopher on the face of the earth but what will admit that such a system, properly carried out according to the order of heaven, is **far superior to monogamy** for the raising of healthy, robust children! (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 317)

The Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

This law of **monogamy**, or the **monogamic system**, laid the foundation for prostitution and the evils and diseases of the most revolting nature and character under which modern Christendom groans, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 195)

### Adam a Polygamist

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

Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and Sinner! When **our father Adam** came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, **one of his wives with him**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 50)

Some of the Mormon people believed that the teaching that Adam was a polygamist actually originated with Joseph Smith. In a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle, in 1885, H. W. Naisbitt stated: “. . . it is said that Joseph Smith the Prophet taught that Adam had **two wives**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 26, p. 115).

### God and Christ Polygamists

Some of the leading authorities of the Mormon Church went so far as to proclaim that both the Father and the Son were polygamists. Jedediah M. Grant, Second Counselor to Brigham Young, said:

Celsus was a heathen philosopher; and what does he say upon the subject of Christ and his Apostles, and their belief? He says, “The grand reason why the Gentiles and philosophers of his school persecuted Jesus Christ, was, because **he had so many wives**; there were Elizabeth, and Mary, and a host of others that followed him.” After Jesus went from the stage of action, the Apostles followed the example of their master. . . .

The grand reason of the burst of public sentiment in anathemas upon Christ and his disciples, causing his crucifixion, was evidently

based on **polygamy**, . . . **a belief in the doctrine of a plurality of wives caused the persecution of Jesus** and his followers. We might almost think they were “Mormons.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 345-346)

The Apostle Orson Hyde made these statements:

It will be borne in mind that once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; . . . no less a person than **Jesus Christ was married** on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha, and the other Mary also whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper to say the least of it.

I will venture to say that if Jesus Christ were now to pass through the most pious countries in Christendom with a **train of women**, such as used to follow him, . . . he would be mobbed, tarred, and feathered, and rode not on an ass, but on a rail . . .

At this doctrine the long-faced hypocrite and the sanctimonious bigot will probably cry, blasphemy! . . . Object not, therefore, too strongly against the **marriage of Christ**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 259-260)

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

All that I have to say in reply to that charge is this—they worship a Savior that is too pure and holy to fulfil the commands of his Father. I worship one that is just pure and holy enough “to fulfil all righteousness;” not only the righteous law of baptism, but the still more righteous and important law “to multiply and replenish the earth.” (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 210)

When Mary of old came to the sepulchre . . . she saw two angels in white, “And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord,” **or husband**, “and I know not where they have laid him.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 81)

In 1853 the following appeared in the *Millennial Star*:

. . . we apprehend that even greater troubles than these may arise before mankind learn all the particulars of Christ’s incarnation—how and by whom he was begotten; the character of the relationships formed by that act; the **number of wives and children he had**, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 15, p. 825)

When the “gentiles” stated that polygamy was one of the “relics of barbarism,” Brigham Young replied: “Yes, one of the relics of Adam, of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, David, Solomon, the Prophets, **of Jesus, and his apostles**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 328).

On another occasion Brigham Young stated: “The Scripture says that He, the **Lord**, came walking in the Temple, with **his train**; I do not now who they were, unless **his wives and children**; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 309).

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

. . . it will be seen that the **Great Messiah** who was the founder of the Christian religion, **was a polygamist**, . . . the **Messiah** chose . . . by **marrying many** honorable **wives** himself, show to all future generations that **he** approbated the **plurality of wives** under the Christian dispensation, as well as under the dispensation in which His Polygamist ancestors lived.

We have now clearly shown that **God the Father had a plurality of wives**, one or more being in eternity, by whom He begat our spirits as well as the spirit of Jesus His first Born, and another being upon the earth by whom He begat the tabernacle of Jesus, as his only begotten in this world. We have also proved most clearly that the Son followed the example of his Father, and became the great Bridegroom to whom kings’ daughters and many honorable wives were to be married



We have also proved that both God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ inherit **their wives in eternity** as well as in time; . . . And then it would be so shocking to the modesty of the very pious ladies of Christendom to see Abraham and his wives, Jacob and his wives, **Jesus and his honorable wives**, all eating occasionally at the same table, and visiting one another, and conversing about their numerous children and their kingdoms. Oh, ye delicate ladies of Christendom how can you endure such a scene as this? . . . If you do not want your morals corrupted, and your delicate ears shocked, and your pious modesty put to the blush by the society of **polygamists** and their wives, do not venture near the New Earth; for **polygamists** will be honored there, and will be among the chief rulers in that Kingdom. (*The Seer*, p. 172)

If none but **Gods** will be permitted to multiply immortal children, it follows that **each God must have one or more wives**. (*Ibid.*, p. 158)

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: . . . 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 . . .

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 . . .

If the **father** of these spirits, **prior to his redemption**, had secured to himself, through the everlasting covenant of marriage, **many wives**, . . . the period required to people a world would be **shorter**, . . . **with a hundred wives**, this period would be reduced to only one thousand million of years. . . . While the Patriarch with his **hundred wives**, would multiply worlds on worlds, . . . the other, who had only secured to himself one wife, would in the same period, just barely have peopled one world. (*Ibid.*, pp. 38-39)

Fanny Stenhouse told of a woman who wanted to be sealed to Jesus Christ:

One of the wives of Brigham Young—Mrs. Augusta Cobb Young—a highly educated and intelligent Boston lady...requested of her Prophet husband a favor of a most extraordinary description. She had forsaken her lawful husband and family . . . to join the Saints, . . . when the lady of whom I speak asked him to place her at the head of his household, he refused: . . . finding that she could not be Brigham's "queen," and having been **taught by the highest Mormon authorities that our Savior had, and has, many wives, she requested to be "sealed" to him!** Brigham Young told her (for what reason I do not know) that it really was out of his power to do that, but that he would do "the next best thing" for her—he would "seal" her to Joseph Smith. So she was sealed to Joseph Smith, . . . in the resurrection she will leave him [Young] and go over to the original Prophet. (*Tell It All*, p. 255)

Stanley S. Ivins found evidence to show that Augusta Cobb Young was sealed to Joseph Smith as Mrs. Stenhouse indicated (see *Joseph Smith and Polygamy*, p. 46).

It is interesting to note that some members of the Mormon Church still maintain that God and Christ are polygamists. John J. Stewart, writing in 1961, made these comments:

Now, briefly, the reason that the Lord, through the Prophet Joseph, introduced the doctrine of **plural marriage**, and the reason that the Church . . . 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 . . . **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**. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 41)

**Plural marriage** was a common practice among God's chosen people. . . . Mary, Martha, Mary Magdalene and **many** other women were **beloved of Jesus**. For a person to say that he believes the Bible but does not believe the doctrine of **plural marriage** is something akin to saying that he accepts the Constitution but not the Bill of Rights. (*Ibid.*, p. 26)

Writing in 1966, John J. Stewart made the following statement:

**Plural marriage**, explained the Prophet, is the **patriarchal order of marriage lived by God** and others who reign in the Celestial Kingdom; therefore, **both** the eternity of the marriage covenant and the **plurality of wives** are contained in the revelation, . . . (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, page 69)

Although the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards admitted that "some of the older brethren" in the church taught that Jesus was a polygamist, he stated that it is not a doctrine of the church:

Your fifth question: "Was Jesus a polygamist?" We believe in the four standard Church works . . . we have no revelations from the Lord to indicate that Jesus was either married or a polygamist. There are some older brethren in the Church that like to philosophize, that have expressed the thought that he was. We have a little saying from one of the brethren who said, "Now brothers and sisters, I will now proceed to make very plain to you that which the Lord hath not yet seen fit to reveal." In that spirit, some have tried to express their own views with respect to this question, but as far as the Church is concerned, it does not teach that Jesus was married, or that he was a polygamist. (Letter from Apostle LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 11th, 1966)

## Essential to Salvation

After a special conference held in 1852, the Mormon Church leaders began to devote much of their time to the preaching of polygamy. During the period that the Mormon Church was openly practicing polygamy, the leaders of the church were declaring that it was absolutely necessary and essential for exaltation. One woman testified as follows in the *Temple Lot Case*:

Yes, sir, President Woodruff, President Young, and President John Taylor, taught me and all the rest of the ladies here in Salt Lake that a man in order to be exalted in the Celestial Kingdom must have more than one wife, that having more than one wife **was a means of exaltation**. (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 362)

The *Juvenile Instructor*, a Mormon publication, printed the following:

After I explained to him the nature of our belief in it and why we practiced it, how **it was interwoven with all our hope for exaltation** in the presence of God, and that it was **impossible** for us to renounce it without at the same time **renouncing the heaven** for which we were striving, . . . It is a **vital part of our religion**, . . . The law, therefore, was enacted by Congress against a law of God. It attempted to annul and make void that which He had commanded, and **that which He declared to be essential to exaltation** in His presence. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 20, p. 116)

Joseph F. Smith, who was the sixth President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

Some people have supposed that the doctrine of plural marriage was a sort of superfluity, or non-essential to the salvation of mankind. In other words, some of the Saints have said, and believe that a man with **one wife**, sealed to him by the authority of the Priesthood for time and eternity, will receive an exaltation as great and glorious, if he is faithful, as he possibly could with

the five virgins are actually virgins or females who are to be married to the Bridegroom, then all the rest of the saints would constitute the guests. Are not these five wise virgins the "honorable Wives" which the Psalmist represents the Son of God as having taken from among king's daughters?

From the passage in the forty-fifth Psalm, it will be seen that the great Messiah who was the founder of the Christian religion, was a Polygamist, as well as the Patriarch Jacob and the prophet David from whom He descended according to the flesh. Paul says concerning Jesus, "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. 2: 16.) Abraham the Polygamist, being a friend of God, the Messiah chose to take upon himself his seed; and by marrying many honorable wives himself, show to all future generations that he approbated the plurality of Wives under the Christian dispensation, as well as under the dispensations in which His Polygamist ancestors lived.

We have now clearly shown that God the Father had a plurality of wives, one or more being in eternity, by whom He begat our spirits as well as the spirit of Jesus His First Born, and another being upon the earth by whom He begat the tabernacle of Jesus, as His Only Begotten in this world. We have also proved most clearly that the Son followed the example of his Father, and became the great Bridegroom to whom kings' daughters and many honorable Wives were to be married. We have also proved that both God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ inherit their wives in eternity as well as in time; and that God the Father has already begotten many thousand millions of sons and daughters and sent them into this world to take tabernacles; and that God the Son has the promise that "of the increase of his government there shall be no end;" it being expressly declared that the children of one of His Queens should be made Princes in all the earth. (See Psalm 45: 16.)

Jesus says there shall be weeping

and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." (Luke 13: 28.) There are many in this generation so pious that they would consider themselves greatly disgraced to be obliged to associate with a man having a plurality of wives; would it not be well for such to desire a place separate from the kingdom of God, that they may not be contaminated with the society of these old Polygamists? And then it would be so shocking to the modesty of the very pious ladies of Christendom to see Abraham and his wives, Jacob and his wives, Jesus and his honorable wives, all eating occasionally at the same table, and visiting one another, and conversing about their numerous children and their kingdoms. Oh, ye delicate ladies of Christendom, how can you endure such a scene as this? Oh, what will you do, when you behold on the very gates of the holy Jerusalem the names of the Twelve sons of the four wives of the Polygamist Jacob? If you do not want your morals corrupted, and your delicate ears shocked, and your pious modesty put to the blush by the society of polygamists and their wives, do not venture near the holy Jerusalem, nor come near the New Earth; for Polygamists will be honored there, and will be among the chief rulers in that Kingdom.

Peter says, Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands, \* \* \* \* even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well." (1 Peter 3: 1, 6.) The females in the first age of Christianity considered it a great honor to become the daughters of Abraham, but now they have become so righteous that they think it a disgrace to be found in the society of a Polygamist; and no doubt they would think their characters ruined for ever, if any one should be so immodest as to call them the daughters of the Polygamist Abraham. But we will tell them how to avoid this deep disgrace; they can cease to do well; for Peter says that it is only on

A photograph of *The Seer*, page 172. The Apostle Orson Pratt states that God the Father was a polygamist.



and reputation here that it has in London, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, or Washington, then we might be comparatively silent while such vices carried the popular sway. But anything unusual, and of a corrupting character in our midst, excites in us an indignation that often finds vent in maledictions upon the heads of the demons that attempt to introduce it.

If there were none but Latter-day Saints living in Utah, we should have no occasion to speak upon this subject as we do; but being infested by those "*who profess the pure morality of the religion of Jesus,*" such as the *Charleston Mercury* endorses and eulogizes, we are constrained to speak in great plainness. I will now leave this subject, knowing that he or she that is righteous will be righteous still; and they who are filthy will be filthy still.

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

All that I have to say in reply to that charge is this—they worship a Savior that is too pure and holy to fulfil the commands of his Father. I worship one that is just pure and holy enough "to fulfil all righteousness;" not only the righteous law of baptism, but the still more righteous and important law "to multiply and replenish the earth." Startle not at this! for even the Father himself honored that law by coming down to Mary, without a natural body, and begetting a son; and if Jesus beget children, he only "did that which he had seen his Father do."

But to return to our subject—the fellowship of the world. Unite with them just as far as you require them to unite with you, and upon the same principle. If they are hungry, feed

them when in your power. If they are in distress, trouble, or difficulty, relieve them. Take them in when strangers, if they ask you. Be kind unto them and courteous; yet remember that God has given to you His Holy Spirit as a standard, to which the world should come. It is your duty to honor that standard, and to keep it erect. If the world have fellowship and union with you, let it be in the Spirit of the Lord. But if you allow that standard to fall in your own hearts, or to become recumbent, and you slide back into the spirit of the world and unite with them, you have virtually struck your colors to the enemy, and gone over to his side! The salt has lost its savor, and is become powerless to save. It is only fit to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

If you love and respect the welfare of the world, never allow yourselves to imbibe their spirit, or to become one with them. For if you do, you cannot be a savior, but need one as well as they; for you both stand upon one and the same level. The world hated the Savior before they hated us, and they killed him because he would never unite in heart and spirit with them. They will kill some of us for the same cause. But blessed are the man and the woman that are hated by the world because they will not be one with them. "Do them all the good you can, and as little harm as possible."

In conclusion, the present is an important era, an era in which the nations are becoming angry. They thirst for each other's blood; and who knows but that all nations will, respectively, file off under the heads of Greek and Roman, or "Gog and Magog," to fight the terrible battles spoken of in sacred writ?

Ye Saints of Latter-days, keep your lamps trimmed and burning, that you walk not in darkness. Ye virgins, wise and foolish, awake, for, behold, the



**more than one.** I want here to enter my protest against this idea, for I know it is **false** . . . Therefore, whoever has imagined that he could obtain the fullness of the blessings pertaining to this celestial law, by complying with only a **portion** of its conditions, **has deceived himself. He cannot do it.** When that principle was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he very naturally shrank, in his feelings, from the responsibilities thereby imposed upon him; . . . But he did not falter, although it was not until an angel of God, **with a drawn sword**, stood before him and commanded that he should enter into the practice of that principle, or he should be **utterly destroyed**, or rejected, . . . It need scarcely be said that the Prophet found no one any more willing to lead out in this matter in righteousness than he was himself . . . none excelled or even matched the courage of the Prophet himself.

If then, this principle was of such great importance that the Prophet himself **was threatened with destruction**, and the best men in the Church with being excluded from the favor of the Almighty, if they did not enter into and establish the practice of it on earth, it is useless to tell me that there is no blessing attached to obedience to the law, or that a man with **only one wife** can obtain as great a reward, glory or kingdom as he can with **more than one**, . . .

I understand the law of celestial marriage to mean that **every man** in this Church, who has the ability to obey and practice it in righteousness and **will not, shall be damned**, I say I understand it to mean this and nothing less, and I testify in the name of Jesus that it **does mean that.** (*Journal of Discourses*, Joseph F. Smith, vol. 20, pp. 28-31)

In 1891 the First Presidency and Apostles of the Mormon Church made the following statement in a petition to the President of the United States:

We, the **First Presidency** and apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, beg to respectfully represent to Your Excellency the following facts:

We **formerly taught** to our people that **polygamy** or **celestial marriage** as commanded by God through Joseph Smith was **right**; that it was a **necessity to man's highest exaltation** in the life to come.

That doctrine was publicly promulgated by our president, the late Brigham Young, forty years ago, and was steadily taught and impressed upon the Latter-Day Saints up to September, 1890. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 18)

The following statements appeared in the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*:

And we, the people who have done this, are believers in the principles of **plural marriage or polygamy**, not simply as an elevating social relationship, and a preventive of many terrible evils which afflict our race, but as a principle revealed by **God**, underlying **our every hope of eternal salvation** and happiness in heaven. . . . we cannot view **plural marriage** in any other light than as a **vital principle of our religion.** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 40, pp. 226-227)

Upwards of forty years ago the Lord revealed to His Church the principle of celestial marriage. . . . the **command of God** was before them in language which no faithful soul dare disobey.

For, behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye **damned**; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory. . . .

Damnation was the awful penalty affixed to a refusal to obey this law. It became an acknowledged doctrine of the Church; it was **indissolubly interwoven** in the minds of its members with their **hopes of eternal salvation and exaltation** in the presence of God . . . Who could suppose that...Congress would enact a law which would present the alternative to religious believers of being consigned to a penitentiary if they should attempt to obey a law of God which would deliver them from **damnation!** (*Ibid.*, vol. 47, p. 711)

Wilford Woodruff made this statement:

We have many bishops and elders who have **but one wife.** They are abundantly qualified to enter the higher law and take more, but their wives will not let them. Any man who will permit a woman to lead him and bind him down is but little account in the Church and Kingdom of God. (*Wilford Woodruff*, p. 542, Utah State Historical Society)

William Clayton stated:

“From him [Joseph Smith] I learned that the doctrine of **plural** and celestial marriage is the **most holy and important doctrine ever revealed to man** on the earth, and that **without** obedience to that principle **no man can ever** attain to the **fulness of exaltation** in the celestial glory.” (*Historical Record*, by Andrew Jenson, p. 226)

George Q. Cannon made this statement:

Now, I want to say for myself personally, if I had not obeyed that command of God, concerning **plural marriage**, I believe that I would have been **damned.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 23, p. 278)

John Taylor, who became the third president of the Mormon Church, made this statement in 1866:

Joseph Smith told others; he told me, and I can bear witness of it, “that if this principle was not introduced, this Church and kingdom **could not proceed.**” When this commandment was given, it was so far religious, and so far binding upon the Elders of this Church, that it was told them if they were not prepared to enter into it, and to stem the torrent of opposition that would come in consequence of it, the keys of the kingdom would be **taken from them.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 221)

Brigham Young made this statement on August 19, 1866:

The **only men who become Gods**, even the Sons of God, are those **who enter into polygamy.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 269)

Joseph Smith told Heber C. Kimball that if he didn't enter into polygamy “he would **lose his apostleship and be damned**” (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 336).

Jerome Sweet claimed that he “went to a special priesthood meeting where Joseph F. Smith [later President of the Church] was the speaker and he said that men holding positions in the priesthood should either **marry in polygamy** or they should step down and let someone who would marry have the position” (Statement by Jerome Sweet, quoted in *Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 107).

Kimball Young stated:

One man recalled a Stake conference in Southern Utah where the brethren were bluntly told to marry in **polygamy** or “resign their church offices.” . . . Dennis Gallagher's wife so completely believed in the Principle, and felt so strongly that her own glory would be lessened by her husband's flat refusal to follow her urgent pleas to take another wife, that she divorced him after two years. Shortly thereafter she married as a plural wife a man well along in years. (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 108)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart, writing in 1961, still upholds the idea that plural marriage leads to exaltation:

Plural marriage is a pattern of marriage designed by God as part of His plan of eternal progress to further His kingdom and exalt His children. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 71)



## Suppressed 1831 Revelation Revealed

As we indicated on page 203 of this book, for many years Mormon leaders have claimed that Joseph Smith gave a revelation concerning polygamy in 1831. Joseph Fielding Smith, who was LDS Church Historian and later became the tenth President of the Church, made this statement in a letter written to J.W.A. Bailey in 1935:

The exact date I cannot give you when this principle of plural marriage was first revealed to Joseph Smith, but I do know that there was a revelation given in July 1831, in the presence of Oliver Cowdery, W. W. Phelps and others in Missouri, in which the Lord made this principle known through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Whether the revelation as it appears in the *Doctrine and Covenants* [w]as first given July 12, 1843, or earlier, I care not. It is a fact, nevertheless, that this principle was revealed at an earlier date. (Letter dated September 5, 1935, typed copy)

In 1943 Joseph Fielding Smith told Fawn Brodie about this revelation, but he would not allow her to see it:

Joseph F. Smith, Jr., the present historian of the Utah church, asserted to me in 1943 that a revelation foreshadowing polygamy had been written in 1831, but that it had never been published. In conformity with the church policy, however, he would not permit the manuscript, which he acknowledged to be in possession of the church library, to be examined. (*No Man Knows My History*, 1971, p. 184, footnote)

Michael Marquardt, a student of Mormon history who became very disturbed with the church's policy of suppressing important records, became interested in this revelation. He found that some Mormon scholars had copies of the revelation, but had to promise not to make any additional copies. Finally, however, Mr. Marquardt learned what appears to be the real reason why the revelation was suppressed: it commanded the Mormons to marry the Indians to make them a "white" and "delightful" people!

Now, to a Christian who is familiar with the teachings of the Bible, the color of a man's skin makes no difference. In Mormon theology, however, a dark skin is a sign of God's displeasure. As we have already shown in the updated material for the chapter on the Book of Mormon (p. 96-A), this teaching comes directly from Joseph Smith's Book of Mormon. Speaking of the Indians, it says: "And the skins of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression . . ." (Alma 3:6). This same teaching is found in 1 Nephi 12:23 and 2 Nephi 5:21. Until the latter part of 1981, when the Book of Mormon was altered, it was taught that the Indians who were converted would become "a white and delightful people" (2 Nephi 30:6). The new Book of Mormon, of course, says that they will become "a pure and delightful people."

We have previously quoted the Mormon leader Spencer W. Kimball as saying that Indian converts "are fast becoming a white and delightful people" (*Improvement Era*, December 1960, pp. 922-23). Now, while President Kimball seems to have felt that the Indians were to be made white strictly by the power of God, Michael Marquardt learned that Joseph Smith's 1831 revelation says they are to be made "white" through intermarriage with the Mormons. Because of this fact Mormon leaders seemed to feel that it was necessary to suppress this revelation. Only the most trusted men, such as Dr. Hyrum Andrus, were allowed a copy of it. It was only after a great deal of research that Mr. Marquardt was able to obtain a typed copy of it. We printed

this revelation in its entirety in *Mormonism Like Watergate?* (pp. 7-8). The important part of the revelation reads as follows:

Verily, I say unto you, that the wisdom of man, in his fallen state, knoweth not the purposes and the privileges of my holy priesthood, but ye shall know when ye receive a fulness by reason of the anointing: For it is my will, that in time, ye should take unto you wives of the Lamanites and Nephites, that their posterity may become **white**, delightful and just, for even now their females are more virtuous than the gentiles.

After the contents of the revelation are given, the following appears:

Reported by W.W.P.

About three years after this was given, I asked brother Joseph, privately, how "we," that were mentioned in the revelation could take wives from the "natives" as we were all married men? He replied, instantly "In the same manner that Abraham took Hagar and Keturah; and Jacob took Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah; by revelation—the saints of the Lord are always directed by revelation."

According to what Mr. Marquardt could learn, the original revelation is preserved in a vault in the LDS Church Historical Department. The paper on which it is written has the appearance of being very old. There is also a second copy of the revelation in the Church Historical Department. This appears in a letter from W. W. Phelps to Brigham Young. The letter is dated August 12, 1861. Dr. Hyrum Andrus, of Brigham Young University, actually quoted part of this revelation as it appears in the letter, but he was very careful to suppress the fact that the wives to be taken were Lamanites:

The Prophet understood the principle of plural marriage as early as 1831. William W. Phelps stated that on Sunday morning, July 17, 1831, he and others were with Joseph Smith over the border west of Jackson County, Missouri, when the latter-day Seer received a revelation, the substance of which said in part: "Verily I say unto you, that the wisdom of man in his fallen state knoweth not the purposes and the privileges of my Holy Priesthood, but ye shall know when ye receive a fulness." According to Elder Phelps, the revelation then indicated that in due time the brethren would be required to take plural wives. (*Doctrines of the Kingdom*, by Hyrum L. Andrus, Salt Lake City, 1973, p. 450)

In 1976 we were able to examine a microfilm of the original revelation, but we found it difficult to determine when it was actually recorded. From Phelps' letter to Brigham Young we know that the revelation had to have been recorded by 1861. As we understand it, the first document—containing only the revelation and Phelps' comment—appears to be older than the letter dated August 12, 1861. It is possible that the revelation could have been recorded any time between 1831 and 1861.

Lawrence Foster feels that "The present copy of the revelation, in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps who was present on the occasion, dates from the 1850s or 1860s; . . ." (*Religion and Sexuality*, New York, 1981, page 134). On page 299 of the same book, Foster gives this information:

The most readily available source for copies of the two manuscript versions of this revelation is Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Mormonism Like Watergate?* pp. 7-8. According to scholars in the LDS Church Historical Department, the two extant manuscript copies are in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps, and both date from some time in the Utah period. . . . It is impossible to date the first copy, but the paper is definitely not of an 1830s vintage. The paper used for the first version is of



re deemed.

2. Verily, inasmuch as ye are united in calling upon my name, to know <sup>my</sup> will concerning who shall preach to the inhabitants ~~that~~ shall assemble this day to hear ~~the~~ doctrine, ye have to teach them, ye have done wisely, for so did the prophets anciently, even Enock, and Abraham, and others: and therefore, I will that my servant Oliver Cowdery should open the meeting with prayer, that my servant W. W. Phelps should preach the doctrine; and that <sup>my</sup> servants Joseph C. and Ziba Peterson should bear testimony; as they shall be moved by the Holy Spirit. This will be pleasing in the sight of your Lord.
3. Verily I say unto you, ye are laying the foundation of a great work for the salvation of as many as will believe and report, and obey the commandment of the gospel; and continue faithful to the end. For, as I live, I will the Lord, so shall they live.
4. Verily I say unto you ~~and ye ought to know~~ that the wisdom of man in his fallen state, knoweth not the purposes and the privileges of my holy priest hood, but ye ~~should know~~ <sup>shall know</sup> when I give a fulness by reason of the anointing: For it is my ~~will~~ <sup>will</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>times</sup>, ye should talk with you views of the Lamanites and Nephites, that their posterity may be ~~white~~ <sup>white</sup>, ~~delightful~~ <sup>delightful</sup>, and ~~fruitful~~ <sup>fruitful</sup>, for even now their families are more righteous than the gentiles.
5. Gird up your loins and be prepared for the mighty work of the Lord to meet the world for my second coming to meet the tribes of Israel, according to the predictions of all the <sup>well</sup> prophets since the beginning; For the fear of the Lord, and decrees upon Babylon: For, as the everlasting gospel is carried from this land, in love for peace, to gather mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, for Zion, - even so shall rebellion follow after

A photograph of the important part of W. W. Phelps' copy of the 1831 Revelation which commanded Mormons to marry Indians so that their posterity would become "white." The original is in the LDS Historical Department.



the same rule and size as that used for the 1861 letter, though considerably more worn and discolored. The original copy is marred by numerous corrections and changes. (*Ibid.*, p. 299, n. 29)

Regardless of when the revelation was actually written on paper, we have found definite historical proof that such a revelation was given in 1831. The proof is derived from a letter written by Ezra Booth and published in the *Ohio Star* only five months after the revelation was given! In this letter, Ezra Booth stated:

In addition to this, and to co-operate with it, it has been made known by **revelation**, that it will be pleasing to the Lord, should they form a matrimonial alliance with the Natives; and by this means the Elders, who comply with the thing so pleasing to the Lord, and for which the Lord has promised to bless those who do it abundantly, gain a residence in the Indian territory, independent of the agent. It has been made known to one, who has left his wife in the state of N.Y. that he is entirely free from his wife, and he is at liberty to take him a wife from among the Lamanites. It was easily perceived that this permission, was perfectly suited to his desires. I have frequently heard him state, that the Lord had made it known to him, that he is as free from his wife as from any other woman; and the only crime that I have ever heard alleged against her is, she is violently opposed to Mormonism. (*Ohio Star*, December 8, 1831)

This letter furnishes irrefutable proof that Joseph Smith gave the revelation commanding the Mormons to marry the Lamanite women. On March 6, 1885, S. F. Whitney, Newel K. Whitney's brother, made an affidavit which furnishes additional evidence that there was a revelation on this subject:

Martin Harris . . . claimed he had a revelation when he first came to Kirtland for him to go to Missouri, and obtain an Lamanite squaw for a wife to aid them in propagating Mormonism. Martin told me soon after Joseph, the prophet, left Kirtland, that, two years before, he had told him that as his wife had left him he needed a woman as other men. (*Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Oakland, California, January, 1888, p. 3)

It is interesting to note that Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, was one of "seven Elders" present when the 1831 revelation was given.

Like Joseph Smith, Brigham Young taught that the Indians would "become 'a white and delightsome people'" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 143). While Brigham Young never released the 1831 revelation, there is evidence that he was familiar with its teaching that the Indians should be made white through intermarriage. In a book published in 1852, William Hall commented:

About the time of the breaking up of the camp at Sugar Creek, the people were called together and several speeches delivered to them by Brigham Young, and others. The speech of Young was in substance as follows:

. . . We are now going to the Lamanites, to whom we intend to be messengers of instruction. . . . We will show them that in consequence of their transgressions a curse has been inflicted upon them—in the darkness of their skins. We will have intermarriages with them, they marrying our young women, and we taking their young squaws to wife. By these means it is the will of the Lord that the curse of their color shall be removed and they restored to their pristine beauty . . .

(*The Abominations of Mormonism Exposed*, Cincinnati, 1852, pp. 58-59)

Juanita Brooks gives the following information concerning the marriage of Mormons to Indians at the Salmon River Mission:

Very early, some of the Mormon leaders recommended that the missionaries marry Indian women as a means of cementing the friendship between the races. . . .

The Elders who were sent to the Salmon River Mission were given similar instructions by Brigham Young and his party, who visited them in May, 1857. At least three different missionaries tell of them, all under the date of Sunday, May 10, 1857. Milton G. Hammond says simply, "The president and members of the Twelve all spoke. Pres. Young spoke of Elders Marrying natives." . . .

As a result of these teachings, at least three of the brethren married Indian women. . . . As to the Indian women whom they had taken as wives the "L.D.S. Journal History" of April 9, 1858, records:

Two squaws who had married the brethren refused to come, fearing the soldiers would kill all the Mormons.

(*Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 12, pp. 28-30)

T.B.H. Stenhouse provides further information concerning the Salmon River Mission:

Before any of the married brethren could make love to a maiden with the view of making her a second, third, or tenth wife, he was expected to go and obtain Brigham's permission. . . . He sent at one time a mission to Fort Limhi, Salmon River. . . . When Brigham and Heber afterwards visited the missionaries to see how they were succeeding, Heber, in his quaint way, told them that he did not see how the modern predictions could well be fulfilled about the Indians becoming "a **white** and delightsome people" without extending **polygamy to the natives**. The approach of the United States army, in 1857, contributed to break up that mission, but not before Heber's hint had been clearly understood, and the prophecy half fulfilled! Heber was very practical, and believed that the people should never ask "the Lord" to do for them what they could do themselves, and, as all "Israel" had long prayed that the Indians might speedily become a "white and delightsome people," he thought it was the duty of the missionaries to assist "the Lord" in fulfilling his promises. This was not the first time that a Mormon prophet attempted to aid in bringing to pass the prophecies of "the Lord." More than one missionary appears to have thoroughly understood him! (*The Rocky Mountain Saints*, 1873, pp. 657-59)

In 1857 John Hyde, Jr., made the following comments:

. . . Brigham now teaches that "the way God has revealed for the purification of the Indians, and making them 'a white and delightsome people,' as Joseph prophesied, is by us taking the Indian squaws for wives!!" Accordingly several of these tawny beauties have been already "sealed" to some of the Mormon authorities. (*Mormonism: Its Leaders And Designs*, pp. 109-110)

William Hall claimed that "Brigham Young was married to two young squaws, . . . near Council Bluffs." So far we have been unable to find any additional documentation for his statement. If Hall's statement is correct, Brigham Young must have left these Indian women behind, because we do not find them mentioned as Young's wives in Utah. According to John D. Lee, on May 12, 1849, Brigham Young said that he did not want to take the Indians "in his arms until the curse is removed":

Pres. B.Y. Said that he did not apprehend any danger from the Indians. Neither did he feel, as Some of the Brethren do, he

does not want to live among them & take them in his arms until the curse is removed from off[f] them. . . . But we will take their children & school them & teach them to be clenly & to love morality & then raise up seed among them & in this way they will be brought back into the presance & knowledge of God . . . (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, vol. 1, p. 108)

It would appear, then, that Brigham Young would not follow Joseph Smith's revelation to take "wives of the Lamanites and Nephites, that their posterity may become white, delightsome and just." Even though the revelation said that "their females are more virtuous than the gentiles," Brigham Young built up his "kingdom" with women who were already "white" and "delightsome." If Brigham Young did not follow the 1831 revelation to marry the Lamanites, we must remember that he was only following Joseph Smith's example, for Smith also married "white" women. Even though Brigham Young suppressed Joseph Smith's 1831 revelation and chose "white" women in preference to the Lamanites, he did at least encourage others to marry them "that the curse of their color shall be removed and they restored to their pristine beauty."

For more information concerning marriage to Indians by the early Mormons see our publication *Mormonism Like Watergate?* pages 9-12.

Since Brigham Young's time the church has tended to frown upon interracial marriage with the Indians, even though there is no written rule against the practice. Apostle Mark E. Petersen has been especially vocal against interracial marriage. Apostle Petersen and other Mormon leaders who are opposed to intermarriage are probably very disturbed now that the 1831 revelation has come to light. The fact that they have suppressed this revelation could well mean that they do not really believe that it came from God. They have been involved in a cover-up to protect the image of Joseph Smith. Even after our publication of the revelation in 1974, the Mormon leaders continued to suppress it as much as they could. Robert N. Hullinger made these comments in his book:

Jerald and Sandra Tanner, . . . printed W. W. Phelps' version of a little-known 1831 revelation . . . Dr. Leonard Arrington, Church Historian of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, confirmed the existence of the Phelps copy. In a telephone conversation on June 13, 1975, he stated that the revelation may be released for scholarly study sometime in the future, but not yet. (*Mormon Answer to Skepticism, Why Joseph Smith Wrote the Book of Mormon*, 1980, p. 149, n. 24)

Three years after our publication of the revelation, the Mormon scholar Donna Hill, finally published the important part about the Indians (see *Joseph Smith—The First Mormon*, New York, 1977, p. 340). Finally, in 1979, Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington and his assistant Davis Bitton came to grips with the reality of the 1831 revelation:

A recently discovered document is a copy of a purported revelation of 1831 that instructed seven missionaries in Missouri as follows:

For it is my will, that in time, ye should take unto you wives of the Lamanites and Nephites that their posterity may become white, delightsome and just, for even now their females are more virtuous than the gentiles.

(*The Mormon Experience*, p. 195)

### More on Taking Other Men's Wives

On pages 213-216 of this book we demonstrated that both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young believed that it was alright for Mormon leaders to take other men's wives. Since printing this

material an unpublished sermon by Brigham Young which has been preserved in the Historical Department has come to light. In this speech, which was given October 8, 1861, Brigham Young revealed:

I will give you a few words of doctrine, upon which there has been much inquiry, and with regard to which considerable ignorance exists. Br Watt will write it, but it is not my intention to have it published; therefore pay good attention, and store it up in your memories. . . . Can a woman be freed from a man to whom she is sealed? Yes. But a bill of divorcement does not free her. . . . How can a woman be made free from a man to whom she has been sealed for time and all eternity? There are two ways. . . . The second way in which a wife can be seperated from her husband, while he continues to be faithful to his God and his priesthood, I have not revealed, except to a few persons in this Church, and a few have received it from Joseph the prophet as well as myself. If a woman can find a man holding the keys of the priesthood with **higher power and authority** than her husband, and he is disposed to take her he can do so, otherwise she has got to remain where she is. In either of these ways of seperation, you can discover, there is no need for a bill of divorcement. To recapitulate. First if a man forfeits his covenants with a wife, or wives, becoming unfaithful to his God, and his priesthood, that wife or wives are free from him without a bill of divorcement. Second. If a woman claims protection at the hands of a man, possessing **more power in the priesthood and higher keys**, if he is disposed to rescue her and has obtained the consent of her husband to make her his wife he can do so without a bill of divorcement. ("A few words of Doctrine," a speech given by President Brigham Young in the Tabernacle on October 8, 1861, Brigham Young Addresses, Ms/d/1234/Bx 49/fd 8; original in Church Historical Department, photocopy in our possession)

### Married to Their Sisters

On page 224 of this book we quoted Joseph H. Jackson as saying that Joseph Smith "feigned a revelation to have Mrs. Milligan, his own sister, married to him spiritually." That Smith believed that a man could be married for eternity to his own sister has been confirmed by an entry added to Joseph Smith's private diary after his death. It appears under the date of October 26, 1843, and reads as follows:

The following named deceased persons were sealed to me (John M. Bernhisel) on Oct. 26th, 1843, by Pres. Joseph Smith—

Maria Bernhisel, Sister—

Brother Samuel's wife, Catherine Kremer

Mary Shatto (Aunt) . . .

Recorded by Robt. L. Cambell

July 29, 1868 (*Joseph Smith's Diary*, October 26, 1843, Church Historical Department).

The reader will notice that Bernhisel claims that he was sealed to his own sister by Joseph Smith. Now, if the doctrine of Celestial Marriage were true, in the resurrection John Bernhisel would find himself married to his own sister, Maria Bernhisel!

### Limited to 999 Wives

On pages 212-213 of this book we demonstrated that the Mormon leaders had hundreds of dead women sealed to them for eternity. This startling entry was found in the Apostle Abraham Cannon's diary:

THURSDAY, APRIL 5th, 1894. . . . I met with the Quorum and Presidency in the temple . . . President Woodruff then spoke ". . . In searching out my genealogy I found about four hundred of my femal[e] kindred who were never married. I asked Pres. Young what I should do with them. He said for me to have

them sealed to me unless there were more that [than?] 999 of them. the doctrine startled me, but I had it done, . . .” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” April 5, 1894, vol. 18, pp. 66-67)

### More Than One Heavenly Mother?

On pages 227-28 of this book we demonstrate that the early Mormon leaders taught that God the Father has a plurality of wives and that some members of the church still maintain that this is the case. This unusual teaching is presenting a real problem for some Mormons. Linda Wilcox, for instance, wrote the following:

A recent cartoon shows a wife asking her husband, “What do you think Heavenly Mother’s attitudes are about polygamy, Frank?” to which the husband responds, “**Which** Heavenly Mother?” A question to which there is as yet no definite answer—but much speculation—is whether there is more than one Mother in Heaven. The Mormon church’s doctrinal commitment to plural marriage as well as the exigencies of producing at least billions of spirit children suggest that probability—some believe necessity—of more than one Mother in Heaven. A Department of Seminaries and Institutes student manual hints at the possibility of multiple heavenly mothers. In a diagram entitled “Becoming a Spirit Child of Heavenly Parents,” the individual person (male) is depicted with upward lines to his heavenly parents, the one parent labeled “Heavenly Father” (caps), the other labeled “A heavenly mother” (lower case). (*Sunstone*, September-October 1980, p. 14)

### Another Hidden Revelation Revealed and a Pretended Marriage

In 1842 Joseph Smith wanted to marry Newel K. Whitney’s daughter Sarah Ann Whitney. At that time he gave a special revelation concerning polygamy. Orson F. Whitney stated:

This girl was but seventeen years of age, but she had implicit faith in the doctrine of plural marriage. . . . The revelation commanding and consecrating this union, is in existence, though it has never been published. It bears the date of July 27, 1842, and was given through the Prophet to the writer’s grandfather, Newel K. Whitney, whose daughter Sarah, on that day, became the wedded wife of Joseph Smith for time and eternity. (*The Contributor*, vol. 6, no. 4, January 1885, p. 131)

This revelation was suppressed by Mormon leaders, but in 1973 Michael Marquardt obtained a typed copy and published it in his pamphlet *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney . . .*, page 23. In this revelation we find the following:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto my servant N. K. Whitney, the thing that my servant Joseph Smith has made known unto you and your family and which you have agreed upon is right in mine eyes. . . . These are the words which you shall pronounce upon my servant Joseph and your daughter S. A. Whitney. They shall take each other by the hand and you shall say, You both mutually agree, calling them by name, to be each other’s companion so long as you both shall live. . . . If you both agree to covenant and do this, I then give you, S. A. Whitney, my daughter, to Joseph Smith, to be his wife. . . . Let immortality and eternal life hereafter be sealed upon your heads forever and ever.

The reader will notice that this revelation on polygamy is dated a year earlier than the one published in the *Doctrine and Covenants*.

According to the Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson, Sarah Ann Whitney was married to Joseph Smith by her father,

Newel K. Whitney: “Sarah Ann Whitney, afterwards the wife of Pres. Heber C. Kimball, married to Joseph July 27, 1842, her father Newel K. Whitney officiating” (*Historical Record*, vol. 6, pp. 233-34).

Michael Marquardt also discovered photographs of a letter written by Joseph Smith himself and addressed to Bishop Newel K. Whitney and his wife. The letter is very interesting because Smith asks the “three” of them—presumably Mr. and Mrs. Whitney and their young daughter Sarah Ann, to whom he was secretly married—to come see him by night. In the letter, Joseph Smith makes it very clear that he does not want them to come when Emma, his first wife, would be present:

. . . all three of you can come and see me in the fore part of the night, . . . the only thing to be careful of, is to find out when Emma comes then you cannot be safe, but when she is not here, there is the most perfect safety: . . . I think Emma wont come tonight if she dont dont fail to come tonight, I subscribe myself your obedient and affectionate, companion, and friend. Joseph Smith

Below is a photograph of the last few lines of the letter. The reader will notice Joseph Smith’s signature.

Since finding photographs of this important letter in the George Albert Smith Collection at the University of Utah Library, Michael Marquardt has completed some very important research concerning this whole affair. He has published his findings in his pamphlet, *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney to Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball*. Among other things that Mr. Marquardt discovered is the fact that Joseph Smith actually performed a “pretended” marriage ceremony between Sarah Ann Whitney and Joseph C. Kingsbury so that his own relationship with her would not be noticed. Mr. Marquardt cites the following from “The History of Joseph C. Kingsbury,” a document that is now in the Western Americana section of the University of Utah Library:

. . . on 29th of April 1843 I according to President Joseph Smith Couscil & others agreed to Stand by Sarah Ann Whitney as supposed to be her husband & had a prete[n]ded marriage for the purpose of Bringing about the purposes of God in these last days as spoken by the mouth of the Prophets Isiah Jeremiah Ezekiel and also Joseph Smith, & Sarah Ann Should Recd a Great Glory Honor, & eternal lives and I Also Sould Recd a Great Glory, Honor & eternal lives to the full desire of my heart in having my Companion Caroline in the first Resurrection to claim her & no one have power to take her from me & we both shall be Crowned & enthroned together in the Celestial Kingdom of God. . . .

Mr. Marquardt has also found that Joseph Smith signed a document in which he stated: “I hereby certify, that I have upon this the 29th day of April 1843, joined together in Marriage Joseph C. Kingsbury and Sarah Ann Whitney, in the City of Nauvoo, Illinois.” That a man professing to be a



prophet of God would perform a “pretended” marriage to cover up his own iniquity is almost beyond belief.

In his pamphlet, Mr. Marquardt goes on to show that after Joseph Smith’s death, Sarah Ann Whitney continued to live with Joseph C. Kingsbury in this “pretended” marriage—he referred to her as “Sarah my Supposed wife.” While still living with Kingsbury, she married the Apostle Heber C. Kimball. She was married to Kimball for time and sealed to Joseph Smith for eternity in the Nauvoo Temple on January 12, 1846. Mormon scholar Stanley B. Kimball claims that there is evidence of a

secret marriage to Kimball before the ceremony in the temple was performed. He gives the date as March 17, 1845 (*Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer*, p. 315). In any case, she became pregnant with Apostle Kimball’s child but continued to live with Kingsbury until after the child was born. For more information on these marriages see Michael Marquardt’s pamphlet, *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney, to Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball*. Mr. Marquardt’s research has brought into focus the total disregard Joseph Smith had for the sacred vows of marriage.



## 17. The Manifesto

John Taylor, the Third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in 1879:

I remember being asked in court here some three or four years ago . . . “Do you believe in obeying the laws of the United States?” “Yes I do, in all **except one**”—in fact I had not broken that. “What law is that?” “The law in relation to **polygamy**.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 317)

Thomas G. Alexander, Assistant Professor of History at Brigham Young University, admits that members of the Mormon Church openly defied the law:

Some maintain that because Mormons were law abiding they gave up plural marriage after the Supreme Court declared the anti-polygamy acts constitutional. But long after the 1879 Reynolds decision, Church members brought to bar for sentencing told federal judges that the law of God was higher than the law of the land and deserved prior obedience. The Manifesto officially ending polygamy as Church practice was not issued until 1890, and excommunication for practicing plural marriage did not come until 1904. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, p. 128)

The Mormons continued to openly preach polygamy until the year 1890. During this time the leaders of the church taught that plural marriage was going to be a permanent part of the church and that it would never be stopped. Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor to Brigham Young, made these statements:

If you oppose what is called the “spiritual wife doctrine,” the patriarchal order, which is of God, that course will corrode you with a spirit of apostasy, and you will go overboard; . . .

The principle of plurality of wives **never will be done away**, although some sisters have had revelations that, when this time passes away and they go through the veil, every woman will have a husband to herself. (*Deseret News*, November 7, 1855)

Some quietly listen to those who speak against the Lord’s servants, against his anointed, against the **plurality of wives**, and against almost every principle that God has revealed. Such persons have half-a-dozen devils with them all the time. **You might as well deny “Mormonism,”** and turn away from it, as to **oppose the plurality of wives**. Let the Presidency of this Church, and the Twelve Apostles, and all the authorities unite and say with one voice that they will oppose the doctrine, and the **whole of them will be damned**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 203)

I speak of **plurality of wives** as one of the **most holy principles** that God ever revealed to man, and all those who exercise an influence against it, unto whom it is taught, man or woman, **will be damned**, and they, and all who will be influenced by them, will suffer the buffetings of Satan in the flesh; for the **curse of God** will be upon them, and poverty, and distress, and vexation of spirit will be their portion; . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 11, p. 211)

It would be as easy for the United States to **build a tower to remove the sun, as to remove polygamy**, or the Church and kingdom of God. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 28, p. 190)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, made these statements:

Where did this commandment come from in relation to polygamy? It also came from God . . . Joseph Smith told others; he told me, and I can bear witness of it, “that if this principle was not introduced, this Church and kingdom could not proceed” . . . When I see any of our people, men or women, opposing a principle of this kind, I have years ago set them down as on the high road to apostasy, and I do today; **I consider them apostates**, and not interested in this Church and kingdom. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 221)

God has given us a revelation in regard to celestial marriage. I did not make it. He has told us certain things pertaining to this matter, and they would like us to tone that principle down and **change it** and make it applicable to the views of the day. **This we cannot do**; nor can we interfere with any of the commands of God to meet the persuasions or behests of men. **I cannot do it, and will not do it**.

I find some men try to twist round the principle in any way and every way they can. **They want to sneak out of it** in some way. Now God don’t want any kind of sycophancy like that. . . . We have also been told that “it is not mete that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my Priesthood.” . . . He has told us what to do, we will do it, in the name of Israel’s God—and all who sanction it say Amen . . . If God has introduced something for our glory and exaltation, **we are not going to have that kicked over** by any improper influence, either inside or outside of the Church of the living God. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 25, pp. 309-310)

The Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

God has told us Latter-day Saints that **we shall be condemned if we do not enter into that principle**; and yet I have heard now and then . . . a brother or sister say, “I am a Latter-day Saint, but I do not believe in polygamy.” Oh, what an absurd expression! What an absurd idea! A person might as well say, “I am a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I do not believe in him.” One is just as constant as the other . . . If the doctrine of **polygamy**, as revealed to the Latter-day Saints, **is not true, I would not give a fig for all your other revelations that came through Joseph Smith the Prophet; I would renounce the whole of them**, because it is utterly impossible, according to the revelations that are contained in these books, to believe a part of them to be divine—from God—and a part of them to be from the devil; . . . I did hope there was more intelligence among the Latter-day Saints, and a greater understanding of principle than to suppose that any one can be a member of this Church in good standing, and yet reject polygamy. The Lord has said, that **those who reject this principle reject their salvation, they shall be damned**, saith the Lord; . . .

Now I want to prophecy a little . . . I want to prophecy that **all men and women who oppose the revelation which God has given in relation to polygamy**

**will find themselves in darkness**; the Spirit of God will withdraw from them the very moment of their opposition to that principle, **until they will finally go down to hell and be damned**, if they do not repent. . . .

Now, if you want to get into darkness, brethren and sisters, begin to oppose this revelation. Sisters, you begin to say before your husbands, or husbands you begin to say before your wives, “I do not believe in the principle of polygamy, and I intend to instruct my children against it.” Oppose it in this way, and teach your children to do the same, and if you **do not become as dark as midnight there is no truth in Mormonism**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, pp. 224-225)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

Now if any of you will **deny the plurality of wives** and continue to do so, I promise that you will be **damned**; and I will go still further, and say, take this revelation, or any other revelation that the Lord has given, and deny it in your feelings, and I promise that **you will be damned**. (*Deseret News*, November 14, 1855)

I heard the revelation on polygamy, and I believed it with all my heart, and I know it is from God—. . . “Do you think that we shall ever be admitted as a State into the Union without **denying** the principle of **polygamy**?” **If we are not admitted until then, we shall never be admitted**. (*Deseret News*, October 10, 1866)

We are told that if we give up **polygamy**—which we know to be a doctrine revealed from heaven, and it is God and the world for it—but suppose this church should **give up** this holy order of marriage, then would the **devil**, and all who are in league with him against the cause of God, **rejoice** that they had **prevailed upon the Saints to refuse to obey one of the revelations and commandments of God** to them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 239)

George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency, made these statements:

There has been some agitation in years past respecting **plural marriage**, and some people, calling themselves Latter-day Saints, have been almost ready to go into the open market, and bid for a State government, at the price of conceding this principle of our religion, for the privilege of becoming a State of the Union. . . . They are ready **to sell out their belief** as Latter-day Saints, and their veneration and reverence for that power which God has restored, for the sake of obtaining a little recognition of their rights as citizens, . . . When a man is ready to **barter any principle of salvation** for worldly advantage, that man certainly has reached the position that he esteems worldly advantage above eternal salvation. Can such persons retain the Spirit of God, and take such a course as this? No, they cannot. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 26, pp. 7-8)

**If plural marriage be divine, as the Latter-day Saints say it is, no power on earth can suppress it**, unless you crush and destroy the entire people. . . . A man that enters this Church ought to be able to die for its principles if necessary, and certainly should be able to go to prison for them without crying about the matter. If you are sentenced to prison for marrying more wives than one, round up your shoulders and bear it; prepare yourselves to take the consequences. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 276)

As the principle of patriarchal marriage is the one now so savagely attacked, this is the one such persons are preparing themselves to yield. I view such men as **apostates** already in heart. They are more dangerous than our open enemies. . . .

There are men who say: “Yield this practice for the present; perhaps public opinion may soften and then this principle may be taught and practiced.”

I look upon such a suggestion as from the devil. It would be quite as proper to propose apostasy for a short season until public opinion would become more favorable to us. If there are any in the Church

who cannot stand the pressure instead of talking **compromise**, let them **withdraw quietly from the Church**. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 20, p. 156)

The Apostle George Teasdale bore this testimony concerning plural marriage:

I believe in **plural marriage as a part of the gospel**, just as much as I believe in baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. The same being who taught me baptism for the remission of sins, taught me plural marriage, and its **necessity** and glory. Can I afford to **give up** a single principle? **I can not. If I had to give up one principle I would have to give up my religion**. . . . I bear my solemn testimony that **plural marriage** is as true as any principle that has been revealed from the heavens. I bear my testimony that it is a **necessity, and that the Church of Christ in its fulness never existed without it**. Where you have the eternity of marriage you are bound to have **plural marriage**; bound to; and it is one of the marks of the Church of Jesus Christ in its sealing ordinances. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 25, p. 21)

The Apostle Orson Hyde said that “polygamy” is the “very principle that **will break in pieces the power that would set it aside**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 183).

Wilford Woodruff, who later became the fourth President of the Church and issued the Manifesto which was supposed to stop the practice of polygamy, made this statement in 1869:

If we were to **do away with polygamy**, it would only be one feather in the bird, one ordinance in the Church and kingdom. Do away with that, then we must do away with prophets and Apostles, with revelation and the gifts and graces of the Gospel, and finally give up **our religion altogether** and turn sectarians and do as the world does, . . . **We just can't do that**, for God has commanded us to build up his kingdom . . . and we shall **obey** him in days to come as we have in days past. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 166)

F. D. Richards stated:

Now, in our case, the government has determined that polygamy shall be abolished, but the government of heaven had previously determined **that polygamy should be established**. . . . Jehovah will hold a contention with this nation, and will show them which is **the higher and eternal law, and which is the lesser, and more recent law**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, pp. 314-315)

In the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* the following was printed:

. . . the God of Israel knowing these things, commanded Joseph Smith, the prophet, and the Latter-day Saints, to obey this law, “or you shall be damned,” saith the Lord. Now, after having obeyed the law for many years, the Congress of the United States, and the supreme judges of the nation, stand forth and say, “You shall be damned if you do obey it.” Now Latter-day Saints, what are we going to do under the circumstances? **God says, We shall be damned if we do not obey the law**. Congress says, “We shall be damned if we do.” It places us precisely in the. . . position that it did the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the den of lions. . . . Now **who shall we obey? God or man? My voice is that we obey God**. . . . The Congress of 1862, and the supreme judges of 1879, in their acts and decisions, have taken a dangerous and fearful step; their acts will **sap the very foundation of our government, and it will be rent asunder**, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 41, pp. 242-243)

The Mormons did everything they could to escape the federal deputies. Kimball Young gives this information:

In addition to **false names**, disguises, and ruses, a **whole system** of information gathering, signaling, and spotting informers was developed. For example, the **Church authorities** would pass the word down to the



smaller communities of movements of federal deputies out of Salt Lake City in the direction of any particular town. There are a variety of stories about the lookouts and warning systems. John Read tells that elaborate systems had been established along the border of Idaho and Utah and relates one instance. . . . A watch would be stationed on the road with a shotgun which he was to fire three times when he saw the officers coming. . . . He fired the gun and shortly the church bells started to ring. The alarm was successful and the police returned empty-handed. (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* 1954, p. 396)

At very early ages children were introduced into conspiratorial operations. Not talking to strangers, being part of a warning system, and being taught outright falsification were all elements in their training during those years which would certainly not be considered normal today. (*Ibid.*, p. 402)

Most of the Saints were loyal and patriotic Americans, yet they were forced into hiding and obliged to lie and engage in all kinds of deceit in order to protect themselves in the name of their religion. (*Ibid.*, pp. 406-407)

Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, had an armed guard to protect him. In a letter written in 1887, Wilford Woodruff wrote:

I have a large stout man who goes with me every \_\_\_\_ [where?] night and day carries 2 pistols & a double barrel shot gun and sayes he will shoot the marshals if they come to take me (Dont tell anybody this) so I am \_\_\_\_\_ well garded. . . . (Letter from Wilford Woodruff to Miss Nellie Atkin, dated September 3, 1887, microfilm copy of the original)

In an article published in the *Millennial Star*, October 28, 1865, the Mormon people were told that they could not give up polygamy and that there would not be a revelation to suppress the practice:

It is time that members of the Government and the public at large should understand the true state of the question, and the real issues involved in these propositions. The doctrine of polygamy with the "Mormons," is not one of that kind that in the religious world is classed with "non-essentials." **It is not an item of doctrine that can be yielded, and faith in the system remain.** "Mormonism" is that kind of religion **the entire divinity of which is invalidated, and its truth utterly rejected, the moment that any one of its leading principles is acknowledged to be false, . . .**

The whole question, therefore, narrows itself to this in the "Mormon" mind. **Polygamy was revealed by God, or, the entire fabric of their faith is false.** To ask them to give up such an item of belief, is to ask them to relinquish the whole, to acknowledge their Priesthood a lie, their ordinances a deception, and all that they have toiled for, lived for, bled for, prayed for, or hoped for, a miserable failure and a waste of life.

All this Congress demands of the people of Utah. It asks the repudiation of their entire religious practice to-day; and inasmuch as **polygamy is, in "Mormon" belief, the basis of the condition of a future life, it asks them to give up their hopes of salvation hereafter. . . .**

To return to our starting point, the great question of what Congress demands. We have shown that in requiring the relinquishment of polygamy, they ask, the renunciation of the entire faith of this people. No sophistry can get out of this. "Mormonism" is true in every leading doctrine, or it is false as a system altogether. . . .

There is no half way house. **The childish babble about another revelation is only an evidence how half informed men can talk.** The "Mormons" have either to spurn their religion and their God, and sink self-damned in the eyes of all civilization at the moment when most blest in the practice of their faith, or go calmly on to the same issue which they have always had—"Mormonism" in its entirety the revelation of God, or nothing at all. . . . those who so unwisely seek

to stir up the Government to wrath, will yet learn there is but one solution of the "Mormon" problem—**"Mormonism" allowed in its entirety, or "Mormonism" wiped out in blood.** (*Millennial Star*, October 28, 1865)

The government increased the pressure against polygamy, but the Mormons were determined to continue the practice. Under the date of April 6, 1884, Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

At a Priesthood meeting . . . the strongest language in regard to Plural Marriage was used that I ever heard, and among other things it was stated that all men in position who would not observe and fulfill that law should be removed from their places.

By the year 1888 many people were suggesting that the church have a new revelation which would suppress the practice of polygamy. Some friends of the church went so far as to write an epistle stating that polygamy would no longer be practiced, and they wanted the Mormon leaders to submit it to the people as if they had written it themselves. The Mormon leaders rejected this proposal, but the fact that Wilford Woodruff had the epistle read before the "council of apostles" shows that he was desperate for a solution to the church's predicament. L. John Nuttall recorded the following in his journal under the date of December 19, 1888:

Bro Jos. F Smith went home this evening Pres Woodruff & myself spent the evening together. he handed me a communication which had been sent to him for action by friends in the East. and which he purposes laying before the apostles to-morrow night It purports to be an epistle from the authorities to the Saints. and reiterates the passage of the anti-Polygamy laws. the rigid enforcement of the same, quotes from the *Book of Doctrine & Covenants*. and endeavors to show forth reasons why the church should openly renounce the practice of Polygamy in the future, and until the time comes when the Saints can again practice that principle of their religion unmolested. I did not see how such a (page 295) thing could be done consistently with our covenants. did not think that would satisfy our enemies These are the same ideas that were advanced by Dr. Miller of Omaha some 3 years ago & which Prest Taylor & Cannon could not accept. (Journal of L. John Nuttall, vol. 2, p. 329 of typed copy at Brigham Young University)

The next day (December 20, 1888) L. John Nuttall wrote:

This evening I attended a meeting of the Council of Apostles at the Presidents office. . . . The communication which Prest Woodruff handed to me last night was presented by Bro Woodruff who asked me to read it. which I did, then by request read it again. The youngest member was then asked to speak his views in brief and as continued until all had spoken. the brethren were very emphatic in opposing or accepting such a measure, they felt it had not come from the right source. did not offer even as much as a mess of potage for the relinquishment of our religion. If we gave up one portion we would be required to give up all. could not accept any such documents nor their propositions. I felt glad that I was of the same mind. (page 296) (Journal of L. John Nuttall, vol. 2, p. 331 of typed copy)

Abraham H. Cannon made this comment in his journal under the date of June 12, 1890:

He [George Q. Cannon] also showed me a paper which Secretary of State Blaine had prepared for the leading authorities of the Church to sign in which they make a virtual renunciation of plural marriage. My feelings revolt at signing such a document. (Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, June 12, 1890, Brigham Young University Library)

Shortly before the revelation known as the Manifesto (which put a stop to the practice of polygamy) was given, Lorenzo Snow, who later became President of the Mormon

Church, was declaring that no such revelation would ever come. When Lorenzo Snow was on trial for practicing polygamy, Mr. Bierbower (the prosecuting attorney) predicted that if he was convicted, “a new revelation would soon follow, changing the divine law of celestial marriage.” To this Mr. Snow replied:

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

Though I go to prison, **God will not change his law of celestial marriage**. But the man, the people, the nation, that oppose and fight against this doctrine and the Church of God, **will be overthrown**. (*Historical Record*, vol. 6, 1887, p. 144)

Although Lorenzo Snow said that the “severest prosecutions have never been followed by revelations changing a divine law,” Wilford Woodruff, fourth President of the Mormon Church, issued the Manifesto in 1890. He claimed the Manifesto was given to stop the persecution the church would have to go through if they continued to practice polygamy. He stated:

The Lord showed me by vision and revelation exactly what would happen if we did not stop this practice. . . . all ordinances would be stopped. . . . many men **would be made prisoners**. . . . I went before the Lord, and I wrote **what the Lord told me to write**. . . . (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, by John A. Widtsoe, 3 volume edition, pp. 105-106)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart made this statement: “. . . due to the extremely bitter persecution against the Church because of it [plural marriage], President Wilford Woodruff issued the manifesto, . . . suspending the general practice of it in the Church, while still retaining it as a **doctrine**” (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, pp. 29-30).

Before Wilford Woodruff became President of the Mormon Church he had stated that the church could not give up polygamy (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 166). After he became President he even claimed to receive a revelation that he should not yield to the pressure of the government. Under the date of December 19, 1889, the Apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

During our meeting a **revelation** was read which Pres. Woodruff received Sunday evening, Nov'r 24th. Propositions had been made for the Church to make some concessions to the Courts in regard to its principles. Both of Pres. Woodruff's counselors refused to advise him as to the course he should pursue, and he therefore laid the matter before the Lord. The answer came quick and strong. The **word of the Lord** was for us **not to yield one particle** of that which he had revealed and established. He had done and would continue to care for His work and those of the Saints who were faithful, and we need have no fear of our enemies when we were in the line of our duty. We are promised redemption and deliverance if we will trust in God and not in the arm of flesh. . . . The whole revelation was filled with words of the greatest encouragement and comfort, and my heart was filled with joy and peace during the entire reading. It sets all doubts at rest concerning the course to pursue. (*Journal of Abraham H. Cannon*, December, 19, 1889)

Because of the fact that Wilford Woodruff had previously taught that polygamy could not be discontinued and had even claimed to receive revelation to that effect, the other leaders of the Mormon Church were confused by his Manifesto. That there was division among the highest leaders of the Mormon Church at the time the Manifesto was issued is evident from the journal of the Apostle Abraham H. Cannon. Under the dates of Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 1890, he recorded the following:

. . . Pres. Snow [President of the Quorum of the Twelve] said: . . . God has a right to suspend His law, as he has done in the inspiration

under which Pres. Woodruff wrote the manifesto, and as the Savior did when He suspended the law of Moses and permitted the disciples to pluck corn on the Sabbath day . . . John W. Taylor [an Apostle]: When I first heard of this manifesto I felt to say “Damn it,” but on further thought I felt it was not right to be so impulsive. I do not yet feel quite right about it. My father when President of the Church sought to find a way to evade the conflict between the Saints and government on the question of plural marriage, but the Lord said it was an eternal and **unchangeable law and must stand**. Pres. Woodruff lately received an encouraging revelation in regard to this principle, and now I ask myself, “Is the Lord a child that He thus changes?” Yet I feel that the Lord giveth a law and He can also take it away.— . . . F. M. Lyman [an Apostle]: “I endorse the manifesto, and feel it will do good. I design to live with and have children by my wives, using the wisdom which God gives me to avoid being captured by the officers of the law.” . . .—John H. Smith [an Apostle]: I cannot feel to say that the manifesto is **quite right or wrong**. It may be that the people are unworthy of the principle and hence the Lord has withdrawn it. I cannot consent to cease living with my wives unless I am imprisoned. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 1890)

Many members of the church were very upset over the Manifesto. The plural wife of Samuel Spaulding made this statement:

“I was there in the tabernacle the day of the Manifesto, and I tell you it was an awful feeling. There President Woodruff read the Manifesto that made me **no longer a wife** and might make me homeless. I sat there by my mother and she looked at me and said, ‘How can you stand this?’ **But I voted for it because it was the only thing to do**. I raised my hand and voted a thing that would make me an unlawful wife.” (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 411)

Kimball Young quotes another Mormon as saying:

“I will say that when polygamy was done away with it was a great blow to me, . . . the thing that bothered me was that the Lord had said to the Prophet Joseph **that it should be a standing law** and not it was **done away**, (sic)

“Could it be that the Lord has made a mistake? This question bothered me for a long time but it came to me all at once. That it is still a standing law and will be so forever, but we are not allowed to practice it for a while. I can now rest easy about it.” (*Ibid.*, p. 411)

## After the Manifesto

Russell R. Rich made this statement:

When the statement called “The Manifesto,” which was signed by President Wilford Woodruff, was voted upon for acceptance by the membership of the LDS Church . . . it appeared that there was a unanimous vote of support for abandonment of the practice of plural marriage. As time passed, however, it became apparent that **not even among the general authorities of the Church was there unanimous support for abolishing the practice**. (*Brigham Young University Week, Those Who Would Be Leaders*, by Russell R. Rich, [1959] p. 71)

In October, 1891, Wilford Woodruff testified that the Manifesto not only prohibited any more plural marriages, but that it also forbid the unlawful cohabitation of those who were already married in polygamy:

Q. Did you intend to confine your declaration and advice to the church solely to the question of forming **new** marriages, without reference to those that were existing—plural marriages? A. The intention of the proclamation was to obey the law myself—**all the laws** of the land on that subject, and expecting the church would do the same. . . .

Q. In the concluding portion of your statement you say: “I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land.” Do you understand that that language was to be expanded and to include the further statement of **living or associating** in plural marriage

by those already in the status? A. **Yes, sir**; I intended the proclamation to cover the ground—to keep the laws—to obey the law myself and expect the people to obey the law. . . .

Q. Your attention was called to the fact that nothing was said in that manifesto about the dissolution of existing polygamous relations. I want to ask you, President Woodruff, whether in your advice to the church officials, and the people of the church, you have advised them that your intention was, and that the requirement of the church was, that the polygamous relations already formed before that should not be continued; that is, there should be no association with plural wives; in other words, that unlawful cohabitation as it is named and spoken of should also stop, as well as future polygamous marriages? A. **Yes, sir**; that has been the intention. (Testimony of Wilford Woodruff, as quoted in *Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R.N. Baskin, Salt Lake City, 1914, p. 246)

While Wilford Woodruff and other Mormon leaders were publicly stating that members of the church should observe the law, they were secretly teaching that it was alright to break the law concerning unlawful cohabitation. This is evident from a number of entries in the journal of the Apostle Abraham H. Cannon. For instance, on October 2, 1890, he wrote:

It was, however, resolved that “we use our **private influence** at present to prevent our brethren from going into Court and promising to obey the law; and as soon as possible we take steps to get some favors from the government for those who already have more wives than one.”

Under the date of October 7, 1890, the Apostle Abraham H. Cannon records some of the statements by the Mormon Church leaders:

Geo. Q. Cannon [a member of the First Presidency]: “I feel like saying ‘**damn the law.**’ We can expect neither justice nor mercy in the administration of the law with the present corrupt administrators. Women should be encouraged, for some feel as though they had been betrayed, and a man who will act the coward and shield himself behind the manifesto for deserting his plural wives, would be damned. . . . If it were not for my public duties I would not live a day in my present condition, but my family understand that my liberty depends on refraining from visiting them in their homes, and they are contented.” W. Woodruff [President of the Church]: “This manifesto only refers to **future** marriages, and does not affect past conditions. I did not, could not and would not promise that you would desert your wives and children. This you cannot do in honor.” . . . Angus M. Cannon: “Because of the manifesto many will feel justified in promising to obey the law when brought into Court. I would not feel justified in such a course, but many may.” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, October 7, 1890)

Under the dates of October 17 and 18, 1890, the Apostle Cannon recorded the following in his journal:

Uncle David came in about noon and told me that he had a conversation with Lindsey Sprague, a deputy marshal, who told him that there were papers out for my arrest, . . . I got Chas H Wilcken to investigate the matter for me and he learned that it was indeed a fact that a warrant was issued and in Doyle’s hands for my arrest. . . .

Saturday, Oct. 18th, 1890. . . . Bro. Wilcken came and informed me that he had **bought Doyle off**, and had got his promise that I should not be molested, nor should any other person without sufficient notice being given for them to escape, and to get witnesses out of the way. He gave Bro. Wilcken the names of some 51 persons whose arrest he intended to try and effect on a trip he and another deputy intended to undertake today, through Utah and Emery counties. A messenger was therefore despatched to give these people warning. Thus with a little **money** a channel of communication is kept open between the government offices and the suffering and persecuted Church members. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” October 17 and 18, 1890)

Although the leaders of the Mormon Church had promised to obey the law of the land, many of them broke their promises, but very few people realized to what extent until they were called to testify in the “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.” Frank J. Cannon made the following statement concerning this matter:

The first oracular disclosure made by the Prophets, on the witness stand, came as a shock even to Utah. They testified that they had **resumed polygamous cohabitation to an extent unsuspected by either gentiles or Mormons**. President Joseph F. Smith admitted that he had had eleven children borne to him by his five wives, since pledging himself to obey the “revealed” manifesto of 1890 forbidding polygamous relations. Apostle Francis Marion Lyman, who was next in succession to the Presidency, made a similar admission of guilt, though in a lesser degree. So did John Henry Smith and Charles W. Penrose, apostles. So did Brigham H. Roberts and George Reynolds, Presidents of Seventies. So did a score of others among the lesser authorities. And they **confessed that they were living in polygamy in violation of their pledges to the nation** and the terms of their amnesty, against the laws and the constitution of the state, and **contrary to the “revelation of God”** by which the doctrine of polygamy had been withdrawn from practice in the Church! . . . Bishop Chas. E. Merrill, the son of an **apostle**, testified that his father had married him to a **plural wife** in 1891, and that he had been living with both wives ever since. A Mrs. Clara Kennedy testified that she had been married to a polygamist in 1896, in Juarez, Mexico, by **Apostle Brigham Young, Jr.**, . . . There was testimony to show that Apostle George Teasdale had taken a **plural wife six years after the “Manifesto”**. . . . It was testified that **Apostle John W. Taylor** had taken two plural wives within four years, and that **Apostle M. F. Cowley had taken one**; and both these men **fled** from the country in order to **escape a summons to appear before the Senate Committee**. (*Under the Prophet in Utah*, 1911, pp. 268-270)

Joseph F. Smith, who was the sixth President of the Mormon Church, testified as follows in the *Reed Smoot Case*:

The CHAIRMAN. Do you obey the law in having five wives at this time, and having them bear to you eleven children since the manifesto of 1890?

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, I have **not** claimed that in that case I have obeyed the law of the land.

The CHAIRMAN. That is all.

Mr. SMITH. I do not claim so, and I have said before that **I prefer to stand my chances against the law**. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 197)

Mr. TAYLER. You say there is a State law forbidding unlawful cohabitation?

Mr. SMITH. That is my understanding.

Mr. TAYLER. And ever since that law was passed **you have been violating it?**

Mr. SMITH. I think likely I have been practicing the same thing even before the law was passed. (*Ibid.*, p. 130)

The CHAIRMAN. And in not doing it, **you are violating the law?**

Mr. SMITH. The law of my State?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. **Yes, sir.**

Senator OVERMAN. Is there not a revelation published in the Book of Covenants here that you shall abide by the law of the State?

Mr. SMITH. It includes both unlawful cohabitation and polygamy.

Senator OVERMAN. Is there not a revelation that you shall abide by the laws of the State and of the land?

Mr. SMITH. **Yes, sir.**



Senator OVERMAN. If that is a revelation, **are you not violating the laws of God?**

Mr. SMITH. **I have admitted that, Mr. Senator, a great many times here.** (*Ibid.*, pp. 334-335)

When Senator Hoar was questioning Joseph F. Smith concerning polygamy, Smith finally stated: **“I presume I am the greatest culprit”** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 312).

B. H. Roberts, the Mormon historian, testified as follows in the “Reed Smoot Case”:

The CHAIRMAN. In living in polygamous cohabitation you are living in defiance of the manifesto of 1890, are you not?

Mr. ROBERTS. **Yes, sir; in defiance of the action of the church** on the subject.

The CHAIRMAN. And that was divinely inspired, as you understand?

Mr. ROBERTS. **I think so.**

The CHAIRMAN. And you are living in **defiance of the law of the land?**

Mr. ROBERTS. **Yes, sir.**

The CHAIRMAN. Then you are **disregarding both the law of God and of man?**

Mr. ROBERTS. **I suppose I am.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 718)

Francis M. Lyman, one of the twelve Apostles, testified:

Senator HOAR. Do you not understand that the revelation requiring you to abstain from polygamy comes from God?

Mr. LYMAN Yes, sir.

....

Senator HOAR. . . . You have said more than once that in living in polygamous relations with your wives, which you do and intend to do, you knew that you were **disobeying this revelation?**

Mr. LYMAN. **Yes, sir.**

Senator HOAR. And that in disobeying this revelation you were disobeying the **law of God?**

Mr. LYMAN. **Yes, sir.**

Senator HOAR. Very well. So that you say that you, an apostle of your church, expecting to succeed, if you survive Mr. Smith, to the office in which you will be the person to be the medium of Divine revelations, are living and are known to your people **to live in disobedience of the law of the land and of the law of God?**

Mr. LYMAN. **Yes, sir.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 430)

Charles E. Merrill, the son of the Apostle Marriner W. Merrill, testified that he took a plural wife after the Manifesto and that his father performed the ceremony:

Mr. TAYLER. Let me understand. When was it you married your second wife; that is, the second wife you now have?

Mr. MERRILL. In the fall of 1888.

....

Mr. TAYLER. And the next marriage took place in 1891?

Mr. MERRILL. **Yes, sir.**

Mr. TAYLER. Who married you in 1891?

Mr. MERRILL. **My father.**

Mr. TAYLER. When were you married?

Mr. MERRILL. I could not give you the exact date, but it was in March.

Mr. TAYLER 1891?

Mr. MERRILL. **Yes, sir.**

Mr. TAYLER. Was your father **then an apostle?**

Mr. MERRILL. **Yes, sir.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 408-409)

Walter M. Wolfe, who was at one time professor of geology at Brigham Young College, claimed that the Apostle John Henry Smith made this statement to him: **“Brother Wolfe, don’t you know that the Manifesto is only a trick to beat the devil at his own game?”** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, p. 13).

Kimball Young, the sociologist, gives us the following information:

And the daughter of Edward Gilbert, . . . admitted that **there were some marriages after the Manifesto and that it seemed to be all right with the Church** until the “second warning” in 1904. (*Isn’t One Wife Enough?* p. 411)

Workman had trouble in getting permission to marry Joan, . . . Arrangements had been made to marry her in late 1890 but before they could do so, Woodruff had issued the Manifesto. When Workman finally got to see President Woodruff, the latter simply said, “You know about the Manifesto.” . . . He was told to wait. Woodruff retired into his inner office and Workman never saw him again.

A little later George Q. Cannon came out of the inner office and talked over the situation, telling him how distressed Woodruff was, that the Church stood to lose all its property by confiscation, and that Woodruff had issued the Manifesto to save the Church for the people. Workman still persisted in his plea but got no decision, neither approval nor disapproval. He then said he would go to Mexico where he could live openly. He did not want to be a lawbreaker.

Workman later got **verbal approval from a particular Apostle**, . . . He was married in the St. George Temple and he left shortly thereafter for Mexico. . . .

We have just seen that although the Church officially withdrew its approval of plural marriages in 1890, there were sporadic instances of polygamous marriages later. Apparently in most instances the ceremony was performed secretly by some **high official, usually an Apostle** . . . As a rule a man who had married a plural wife under these circumstances would take her later to a Mormon temple and have her “properly sealed” to him. (*Ibid.*, pp. 419-22)

The Apostle Abraham H. Cannon tells of a man being refused permission to enter polygamy in Mexico because another man had obtained permission to do this and had not kept the matter secret:

In relation to S. F. Ball who desires to go to Mexico and get a fourth wife Father said it could not be done, as such things had ceased to occur even there. One young man who recently had thus **had this privilege**, came back and allowed the knowledge of it to go out, and thus put the Church in danger. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” November 2, 1890)

B. Harvey Allred gives this interesting information:

By special appointment, my father met the First Presidency in their office. President Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith were all present. Father presented his case, and was told by Wilford Woodruff, that because of the agreement entered into by the approval of the manifesto, no more plural marriages would be sanctioned or solemnized by the Church in the **United States**. However, inasmuch as that agreement had reference to no other lands where the practice of plural marriage was not prohibited by law, if father wished to obey the law now he would have to go where it could be done without violating the law. Joseph F. Smith then informed father that many Saints had already moved to **Mexico** for that very purpose, and others were going, that there were at that time several small colonies of the Saints established in that land.

At great sacrifice my father with his families moved to Mexico and there lived, with hundreds of other Saints, the law of plural marriage. (*A Leaf In Review*, by B. Harvey Allred, 1968 edition, p. 199)

Anthony W. Ivins, who later became a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, was appointed by the Church leaders to perform plural marriages in Mexico after the Manifesto. Stanley S. Ivins, the son of Anthony W. Ivins, told us that his father received instructions after the Manifesto to perform marriages for time and all eternity outside of the Mormon temples. He received a ceremony for these marriages (which Stanley S. Ivins had in his possession). He was sent to Mexico and

was told that when the First Presidency wanted a plural marriage performed they would send a letter with the couple who were to be married. Whenever he received these letters from the First Presidency, he knew that it was alright to perform the ceremony. He performed regular marriages as well as plural marriages and kept a record of each marriage in a book. After his father's death Stanley S. Ivins copied the names of those who had been married in polygamy into another book and then gave the original book to the Mormon leaders.

Wallace Turner relates the following:

In Salt Lake City I talked to . . . Stanley S. Ivins, one of the great authorities on Mormon polygamy. His father was Anthony W. Ivins, who was an apostle and was first counselor to President Heber J. Grant.

Anthony Ivins was an elder in the church in the mid-1890s when he was called in and told to go to Mexico to be president of the stake there. He was told that he was to have authority to perform plural marriages for those who were sent to him for that purpose. He would be able to identify them from the letters of introduction they would present, he was told.

After Anthony Ivins died in 1934 at eighty-two years of age, his family found the records of these marriages among his papers. They were turned over to the LDS church. More than fifty polygamous marriages were easily identifiable, beginning in June, 1897, when three men from Utah were married at Juarez, just across from El Paso. They had crossed over into Mexico just for the marriage ceremony, then went back into the United States. However, Ivins refused to perform marriages for the regular population of the Mormon colonies because the men lacked the letters from Salt Lake City which he considered to be his authority for the ceremony. However, by 1898 polygamous marriages were being performed routinely in Mexico by other Mormon leaders. (*The Mormon Establishment*, by Wallace Turner, 1966, p. 187)

According to Stanley S. Ivins, his father was very conscientious about the letters which those who wished to enter into polygamy were supposed to obtain from the First Presidency. Once a very prominent Mormon, who was already married, came to Mexico with another woman and asked to be married in polygamy. Anthony Ivins asked for the letter from the First Presidency. The man stated that he did not have a letter. Mr. Ivins stated that he could not perform the ceremony unless he received a letter from the First Presidency. The man then asked for a place to stay. Anthony Ivins told him that he had only one extra room but that it had two beds. The man replied that that was alright for he and the woman had been living as husband and wife since they started their journey to Mexico. This answer made Mr. Ivins angry, and he asked them to stay elsewhere.

Another man who was living in Mexico came to Anthony Ivins and asked him to marry a plural wife to him. Mr. Ivins asked for the letter. The reply was that he didn't have one. Because he did not have the letter Mr. Ivins refused to perform the marriage. Later two of the Mormon apostles came down to Mexico and asked Anthony Ivins to perform the plural marriage for the man. He still refused to perform the ceremony without a letter from the First Presidency. After the apostles left the man and woman commenced living together as husband and wife. From then on the special letters were not required. Stanley Ivins claims that his father continued to perform plural marriages for the church until the year 1904.

In the *Reed Smoot Case* Walter M. Wolfe testified as follows:

Mr. WOLFE. In the summer of 1897 I was in Colorado. On my return, at the beginning of the school year, I found that Ovena Jorgensen was not in attendance. She returned to school some time during the month of October. Shortly after her return, she came to my house and asked

to see me privately. She said: "Brother Wolfe, I have something that I must tell you, the reason why I have been late in coming back to school. I have been married." I said, "Not in polygamy." She said: "Yes, sir; in polygamy. I have married Brother Okey."

The CHAIRMAN. What year was that, professor.

Mr. WOLFE. This was in October, 1897.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. That she told you this?

Mr. WOLFE. This is her story to me.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. I say, it was in October, 1897, that she told you?

Mr. WOLFE. Yes, sir. I asked her how it had happened, and she said that some years before she had gone into service at the house of this man Okey; that he had loved her and she loved him. He had asked her to marry him and she had declined, saying that it was impossible on account of the manifesto, but she had promised that she would marry no one else. Mr. Okey visited President Woodruff several times, I should judge from her conversation, and each time was refused his request that he marry the girl. In August, 1897, Okey and the girl went together to see President Wilford Woodruff, and they laid the case before him. He brushed them aside with a wave of his hand and said he would have nothing to do with the matter, but referred them to President George Q. Cannon. George Q. Cannon asked if the girl had been through the Temple and received her endowments. They told him no. He said that that must be done first and then he would see as to the rest of it. They went through the Temple and the girl received her endowments. Then they were **given a letter by President George Q. Cannon to President Ivins, of the Juarez Stake**, and they went to Mexico.

The CHAIRMAN. Who was this letter to?

Mr. WOLFE. **President A. W. Ivins, of the Juarez Stake.**

The CHAIRMAN. Mexico?

Mr. WOLFE. Mexico; yes, sir. They went to Mexico, and there the girl told me the marriage ceremony was performed, and they returned to Utah.

Mr. CARLISLE. This statement that you have made is the statement she made to you?

Mr. WOLFE. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. You say they were given a letter to the president. What do you mean by that? What president?

Mr. WOLFE. **President Ivins.** The Mormon Church geographically is divided into stakes very much as the States of the Union are divided into counties. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, 1906, vol. 4, pp. 10-11)

Stanley S. Ivins confirmed the fact that his father, Anthony W. Ivins, performed the marriage ceremony, and his father recorded this fact in his record book.

Stanley Ivins stated that Walter Wolfe's testimony concerning this marriage hurt the church's image so much that the **First Presidency** of the church sent Anthony Ivins a letter requesting him to go back to Washington, D.C. and give **false testimony** before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate. The First Presidency of the Mormon Church actually wanted him to **lie under oath** and state that he did **not** perform the ceremony. Stanley Ivins stated that his father refused to go back to Washington, D. C. and lie about the marriage, even if Walter Wolfe's testimony did damage the image of the church.

Frank J. Cannon, the son of George Q. Cannon and formerly United States Senator from Utah, gives this important information:

Late in July, 1896, when I was in New York on business for the Presidency, I received a telegram announcing the death of my brother, **Apostle Abraham H. Cannon**. . . . I realized that my father would have a greater stroke of sorrow to bear than I; . . .

I found him and **Joseph F. Smith** in the office of the Presidency, . . . He rose and put his hand on my shoulder with a tenderness that it was his habit to conceal. "I know how you feel his loss," he said hoarsely, "but when I think what he would have had to pass through if he had lived—I cannot regret his death." . . .

With a sweep of his hand toward Smith at his desk—a gesture and a look the most unkind I ever saw him

use—he answered: “A few weeks ago, **Abraham took a plural wife**, Lillian Hamlin. **It became known**. He would have had to face a prosecution in Court. His death has saved us from a calamity that would have been dreadful for the Church—and for the state.”

“Father!” I cried. “Has this thing come back again! And the ink hardly dry on the bill that restored your church property on the pledge of honor that there would never be another case—” I had caught the look on **Smith’s face, and it was a look of sullen defiance**. “How did it happen?”

My father replied: “I know—it’s awful. I would have prevented it if I could. I was asked for my consent, and I refused it. **President Smith obtained the acquiescence of President Woodruff**, on the plea that it wasn’t an ordinary case of polygamy but merely a fulfilment of the biblical instruction that a man should take his dead brother’s wife. Lillian was betrothed to David, and had been sealed to him in eternity after his death. I understand that President Woodruff told Abraham he would leave the matter with them if he wished to take the responsibility—and **President Smith performed the ceremony**.”

Smith could hear every word that was said. My father had included him in the conversation, and he was listening. He not only did not deny his guilt; he accepted it in silence, with an expression of sulky disrespect.

He did not deny it later, when the whole community had learned of it. He went with Apostle John Henry Smith to see Mr. P. H. Lannan, proprietor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, to ask him not to attack the Church for this new and shocking violation of its covenant. . . . I do not know all that the Smiths said to him; but I know that the conversation assumed that Joseph F. Smith had performed the marriage ceremony; I know that neither of the Smiths made any attempt to deny the assumption; and I know that Joseph F. Smith sought to placate Mr. Lannan by promising “it shall not occur again.” . . .

All of which did not prevent Joseph F. Smith from testifying—in the Smoot investigation at Washington in 1904—that he did not marry Abraham Cannon and Lillian Hamlin, that he did not have any conversation with my father about the marriage, . . .

If this first polygamous marriage had been the last—if it were an isolated and peculiar incident as the Smiths then claimed it was and promised it should be—it might be forgiven as generously now as Mr. Lannan then forgave it. But, about the same time there became public another case—that of Apostle Teasdale—and as this narrative shall prove, here was the beginning of a policy of treachery which the present church leaders, under Joseph F. Smith, have since consistently practised, in defiance of the laws of the state and the “revelation of God,” with **lies and evasions**, with **perjury** and its subornation, in **violation** of the most solemn pledges to the country, and through the agency of a **political tyranny** that makes serious prosecution impossible and immunity a **public boast**. (*Under the Prophet in Utah*, pp. 176-179)

John Henry Hamlin, the brother of Lillian Hamlin, testified as follows in the “Reed Smoot Case”:

Mr. TAYLER. What relation are you to **Lillian Hamlin**?

Mr. HAMLIN. **Brother**.

Mr. TAYLER. And whom did she marry?

Mr. HAMLIN. I only know what I heard.

Mr. TAYLER. What was your family conviction and understanding about that?

Mr. HAMLIN. That she was married to a Mr. **Cannon**.

Mr. TAYLER. What was his first name?

Mr. HAMLIN. **Abram**.

Mr. TAYLER. An apostle of the church?

Mr. HAMLIN. I believe so. I understand so.

Mr. TAYLER. That was in the summer of 1896, was it not?

Mr. HAMLIN. Yes, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. And where did you understand she was married?

Mr. HAMLIN. On the Pacific coast.

Mr. TAYLER. By whom?

Mr. HAMLIN. Well, our understanding was that **President Joseph F. Smith married her**. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 67-68)

Mrs. Wilhelmina C. Ellis, who had been a plural wife of the Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon, testified:

Mr. TAYLER. How old were you when you married Abraham Cannon?

Mrs. ELLIS. Nineteen.

Mr. TAYLER. You were a plural wife?

Mrs. ELLIS. Yes, sir.

. . . .

Mr. TAYLER. When did he marry **Lillian Hamlin**?

Mrs. ELLIS. I do not know the date.

Mr. TAYLER. I do not care about the exact date.

Mrs. ELLIS. After June 12 and before July 2.

Mr. TAYLER. Of what year?

Mrs. ELLIS. 1896.

Mr. TAYLER. He was at that time an **Apostle**?

Mrs. ELLIS. Yes, sir.

. . . .

Mr. TAYLER. Did he say he was going away that day, or that evening, to California?

Mrs. ELLIS. He told me to pack his grip or his satchel and told me he was going on this trip.

Mr. TAYLER. What did he say about Miss Hamlin?

Mrs. ELLIS. Of course I understood, in fact he said **she was going with him and President Smith**.

Mr. TAYLER. **And President Smith**?

Mrs. ELLIS. **Yes, sir**.

Mr. TAYLER. And that they were going to be **married**?

Mrs. ELLIS. **Yes, sir**.

Mr. TAYLER. . . . What did Mr. Cannon say to you shortly before his death about his having married Miss Hamlin?

Mrs. ELLIS. He told me **he had married her and asked my forgiveness**.

Mr. TAYLER. What else did he say about it?

Mrs. ELLIS. He said he had never had a well day since he had married her. I think it killed him.

Mr. TAYLER. You have stated, have you not, Mrs. Ellis, to several of your relatives and acquaintances in Salt Lake that he also told you that Joseph F. Smith married him?

Mrs. ELLIS. No, sir; I have never said that.

Mr. TAYLER. You have never said that?

Mrs. ELLIS. No, sir; not that he told me.

Mr. TAYLER. You have stated frequently that **Joseph F. Smith did marry them**?

Mrs. ELLIS. **Yes, sir**.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you not know they were married on the high sea?

Mrs. ELLIS. Only from reports.

Mr. TAYLER. That is not an essential part of the inquiry. [To the witness.] It was an inference from the fact that your husband said he was going to marry her, and went away to California for that purpose, and that **Joseph F. Smith** went along with them. From that you inferred that **Joseph F. Smith had married them**?

Mrs. ELLIS. **Yes, sir**.

(*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 141-144)

### “Manifesto a Deception”

The Committee on Privileges and Elections submitted a report in which the following was stated:

A sufficient number of specific instances of the taking of **plural wives since the manifesto** of 1890, so called, have been shown by the testimony as having taken place among **officials of the Mormon Church** to demonstrate the fact that the leaders in this church, the first presidency and the twelve apostles, **connive at the practice of taking plural wives and**



have done so ever since the manifesto was issued which purported to put an end to the practice. It has been shown by the testimony, so clearly as to leave no doubt of the fact, that **as late as 1896** one Lillian Hamlin became the **plural wife** of Abraham H. Cannon, who was then **an apostle** of the Mormon Church. . . . it was generally reputed in the community and understood by the families of both Abraham H. Cannon and Lillian Hamlin that a marriage had taken place between them; that they had been married on the high seas **by Joseph F. Smith**. Lillian Hamlin assumed the name of Cannon, and a child to which she afterwards gave birth bears the **name of Cannon** and inherited a share of the estate of Abraham H. Cannon. The prominence of Abraham H. Cannon in the church, the publicity given to the fact of his taking Lillian Hamlin as a plural wife, render it practically impossible that this should have been done without the knowledge, the consent, and the connivance of the headship of that Church.

**George Teasdale, another apostle of the Mormon Church, contracted a plural marriage with Marion Scholes since the manifesto of 1890.** The president of the Mormon Church endeavors to excuse this act upon the pretext that the first marriage of George Teasdale was not a legal marriage, but the testimony taken from the divorce proceedings which separated George Teasdale from his lawful wife, wholly controverts this assertion on the part of President Smith.

It is also in evidence that Walter Steed, a prominent Mormon, contracted a plural marriage after the manifesto of 1890. Charles E. Merrill, a **bishop** of the Mormon Church, took a **plural wife** in 1891, more than a year after the issuing of the manifesto. The ceremony . . . was performed by **his father**, who was then and until the time of his death **an apostle** in the Mormon Church. It is also shown that **John W. Taylor**, another **apostle** of the Mormon Church, has been married to **two plural wives** since the issuing of the so-called manifesto.

**Matthias F. Cowley**, another of the twelve **apostles**, has also taken **one or more plural wives since the manifesto**. . . . **Apostles Taylor and Cowley**, instead of appearing before the committee and denying the allegation, **evade** service of process issued by the committee for their appearance, and **refuse to appear** after being requested to do so, warrant the conclusion that the allegation is true and that said **Taylor and Cowley have taken plural wives since the manifesto**. . . .

It is also proved that about the year 1896 James Francis Johnson was **married to a plural wife**, Clara Mabel Barber, the ceremony in this instance being performed by **an apostle** of the Mormon Church. To these cases must be added that of Marriner W. Merrill, another **apostle**; J. M. Tanner, **Superintendent of Church Schools**; Benjamin Cluff, jr., **President** of Brigham Young University; Thomas Chamberlain, counselor to the president of a stake; Bishop Rathall, John Silver, Winslow Farr, Heber Benion, Samuel S. Newton, a man named Okey, who contracted a plural marriage with Ovena Jorgensen in the year 1897, and Morris Michelson about the year 1902. In the case of Benjamin Cluff, jr., before referred to, the polygamous marriage was tacitly sanctioned by President Joseph F. Smith when he "referred to Sister Cluff and the work she had been doing among the children in Colonial Diaz, Mexico."

It is morally impossible that **all these violations of the laws** of the State of Utah by the contracting of plural marriages could have been committed **without** the knowledge of the **first presidency and the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church**. In two of the above cases, that of George Teasdale and that of Benjamin Cluff, jr., the fact of the plural marriage was directly communicated to the president of the church, **Joseph F. Smith**, . . . Furthermore, it was shown by the testimony of one of the twelve apostles and of other witnesses that "under the established law of the church no person could secure a plural wife except by consent of the president of the church."

#### SUPPRESSION OF TESTIMONY BY MORMON LEADERS.

It is a fact of no little significance in itself, bearing on the question whether polygamous marriages have been recently contracted in Utah by the connivance of the **first presidency** and twelve apostles of the Mormon Church, that the authorities of said church have endeavored to **suppress, and have succeeded in suppressing, a great deal of testimony** by which the fact of plural marriages contracted by those who were high in the councils of the church might have been established beyond the shadow of a doubt. Before the investigation had begun it was well known in Salt Lake City that it was expected to show on the part of the protestants that Apostles George Teasdale, John W. Taylor, and M. F. Cowley, and also Prof. J. M. Tanner, Samuel Newton and others who were all high officials of the Mormon Church had recently taken plural wives, and that in 1896 Lillian Hamlin was sealed to Apostle Abraham H. Cannon as a plural wife by one of the first presidency and twelve apostles of the Mormon Church. All, or nearly all, of these persons except Abraham H. Cannon, who was deceased, were then within reach of service of process from the committee. But shortly before the investigation began all these witnesses went out of the country.

Subpoenas were issued for each one of the witnesses named, but in the case of Samuel Newton only could the process of the committee be served. Mr. Newton refused to obey the order of the committee, alleging no reason or excuse for not appearing. It is shown that John W. Taylor was sent out of the country by Joseph F. Smith on a real or pretended mission for the church. And it is undeniably true that not only the apostles, but also all other officials of the Mormon Church, are at all times subject to the orders of the governing authorities of the church.

It would be nothing short of self-stultification for one to believe that all these most important witnesses chanced to leave the United States at about the same time and without reference to the investigation. **All the facts and circumstances surrounding the transaction point to the conclusion that every one of the witnesses named left the country at the instance of the rulers of the Mormon Church and to avoid testifying before the committee.** It is, furthermore, a fact which can not be questioned that every one of these witnesses is under the direction and control of the first presidency and twelve apostles of the Mormon Church. **Had those officials seen fit to direct the witnesses named to return to the United States and give their testimony before the committee, they would have been obliged to do so.** The reason why the said witnesses left the country and have refused to come before the committee is easy to understand, in view of the testimony showing the contracting of plural marriages by prominent officials of the Mormon Church within the past few years.

It was claimed by the protestants that the records kept in the Mormon temple at Salt Lake City and Logan would disclose the fact that plural marriages have been contracted in Utah since the manifesto with the sanction of the officials of the church. A witness who was required to bring the records in the temple at Salt Lake City **refused to do so after consulting with President Smith**. . . .

The witness who was required to bring the records kept in the temple at Logan excused himself from attending on the plea of ill health. **But the important part of the mandate of the committee—the production of the records—was not obeyed by sending the records, which could easily have been done.**

In the case of other witnesses who were believed to have contracted plural marriages since the year 1890 all sorts of shifts, tricks, and evasions were resorted to in order to avoid service of a subpoena to appear before the committee and testify.

These instances of the suppression of testimony by the direct order or tacit consent of the ruling authorities

of the Mormon Church warrant the committee in believing that the suppressed testimony would, if produced, strongly corroborate the testimony which was given, showing that those who direct the affairs of the Mormon Church countenance and encourage polygamous marriages, as well as polygamous cohabitation, and that the allegations of the protestants in that regard **are true**.

Aside from this it was shown by the testimony, and in such a way that the fact could not possibly be controverted, that a **majority of those who give the law to the Mormon Church are now, and have been for years, living in open, notorious, and shameless polygamous cohabitation. The list of those who are thus guilty of violating the laws of the state and the rules of public decency is headed by Joseph F. Smith, the first president, “prophet, seer, and revelator” of the Mormon Church**, who testified in regard to that subject . . .

The list also includes George Teasdale, an **apostle**; John Henry Smith, an **apostle**; Marriner W. Merrill, also an **apostle**; Heber J. Grant, an **apostle**; M. F. Cowley, an **apostle**; Charles W. Penrose, an **apostle**; and Francis M. Lyman, who is not only an **apostle**, but the probable successor of Joseph F. Smith as president of the church. Thus it appears that the **first president and eight of the twelve apostles**, a considerable majority of the ruling authorities of the Mormon Church, are **noted polygamists**.

In addition to these, the list includes Brigham H. Roberts, who is one of the **presidents of seventies** and a leading official of the church; J. M. Tanner, **Superintendent of the Church Schools**; Andrew Jenson, **assistant historian** of the church; Thomas H. Merrill, a bishop of the church; Alma Merrill, one of the presidency of a church stake; Angus M. Cannon, patriarch of the Mormon Church; a man named Greenwald, who is at the head of a church school; George Reynolds, one of the **first seven presidents of seventies** and first assistant superintendent of Sunday schools of the world; George H. Brimhall, **President of Brigham Young University**; and Joseph Hickman, teacher in Brigham Young University. All the officials named were appointed, either directly or indirectly, by the first presidency and twelve apostles; and in the case of J. M. Tanner, his appointment to his present office was made after he had been compelled to **resign** his position as president of the agricultural college because of the fact that he was a **polygamist**.

These facts abundantly justify the assertion made in the protest that “the supreme authorities in the church, of whom Senator-elect Reed Smoot is one, to wit, the first presidency and twelve apostles, **not only connive at violation of, but protect and honor the violators of the laws against polygamy and polygamous cohabitation.**”

It will be seen by the foregoing that not only do the first presidency and twelve apostles encourage polygamy by precept and teaching, but that a majority of the members of that body of rulers of the Mormon people give the practice of polygamy still further and greater encouragement by **living the lives of polygamists, and this openly and in the sight of all their followers** in the Mormon Church. It can not be doubted that this method of encouraging polygamy is much more efficacious than the teaching of that crime by means of the writings and publications of the leaders of the church, and this upon the familiar principle that “actions speak louder than words.”

And not only do the president and a majority of the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church practice polygamy, but in the case of each and every one guilty of this crime who testified before the committee, the determination was expressed openly and defiantly to **continue** the commission of this crime **without regard** to the mandates of the **law** or the **prohibition contained in the manifesto**. And it is in evidence that the said first president, addressing a large concourse of the members of the Mormon Church at the tabernacle in Salt Lake City

in the month of June, 1904, declared that if he were to **discontinue the polygamous relation** with his plural wives **he should be forever damned, and forever deprived of the companionship of God** and those most dear to him throughout eternity. Thus it appears that the “prophet, seer, and revelator” of the Mormon Church pronounces a decree of **eternal condemnation** throughout all eternity upon all members of the Mormon Church who, having taken plural wives, fail to continue the polygamous relation. So that the testimony upon that subject, taken as a whole, can leave no doubt upon any reasonable mind that the allegations in the protest are true, and that those who are in authority in the Mormon Church, of whom Mr. Smoot is one, are encouraging the practice of polygamy among the members of that church, and that polygamy is being practiced to such an extent as to call for the **severest condemnation in all legitimate ways**.

#### THE MANIFESTO A DECEPTION.

Against these facts the authorities of the Mormon Church urge that in the year 1890 what is generally termed a manifesto was issued by the first presidency of that church, suspending the practice of polygamy among the members of that church. It may be said in the first place that this manifesto misstates the facts in regard to the solemnization of plural marriages within a short period preceding the issuing of the manifesto. It now appears that in a number of instances **plural marriages** had been solemnized in the Mormon Church, and, in the case of those high in authority in that church, within a **very few months preceding the issuing of the manifesto**. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 476-482)

Frank J. Cannon made this interesting statement:

Some few years ago, Irving Sayford, . . . asked Mr. P. H. Lannan, of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, why someone did not swear out warrants against President Smith for his offences against the law. Mr. Lannan said:

You mean why don't I do it? . . . Well, I'll tell you why. . . . I don't make a complaint, because neither the district attorney nor the prosecuting attorney would entertain it. If he did entertain it and issued a warrant, the sheriff would refuse to serve the warrant. If the sheriff served the warrant, there would be no witnesses unless I got them. If I could get the witnesses, they wouldn't testify to the facts on the stand. If they did testify to the facts, the jury wouldn't bring in a verdict of guilty. If the jury did bring in a verdict of guilty, the judge would suspend sentence. If the judge did not suspend sentence, he would merely fine President Smith, three hundred dollars. And within twenty-four hours there would be a procession of Mormons and Gentiles crawling on their hands and knees to Church headquarters to offer to pay that three hundred dollar fine at a dime apiece.

Mr. Lannan's statement of the case was later substantiated by an action of the Salt Lake District Court. Upon the birth of the twelfth child that had been borne to President Smith in plural marriage since the manifesto of 1890, Charles Mostyn Owen made complaint in the District Court at Salt Lake, charging Mr. Smith with a statutory offence. The District Attorney reduced the charge to “unlawful cohabitation” (a misdemeanor), without the complainant's consent or knowledge. All the preliminaries were then graciously arranged and President Smith appeared in the District Court by appointment. He pleaded guilty. The judge in sentencing him remarked that as this was the first time he had appeared before the court, he would be fined three hundred dollars, but that should he again appear, the penalty might be different. Smith had already testified in Washington, before the Senate Committee, to the birth of eleven children in plural marriage since he had given his covenant to the country to cease living in polygamy; he had practically defied the Senate and the United States to punish him; he had said that he would “stand his chances” before the law and

courts of his own state. All of this was well known to the judge who fined him three hundred dollars—a sum of money scarcely equal to the amount of Smith's official income for the time he was in court! (*Under the Prophet in Utah*, pp. 354-356)

It was sixteen years after the Manifesto was issued when Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, was finally brought to trial for unlawful cohabitation. The following appeared in the *Deseret News*:

... **President Smith** appeared forthwith and entered a plea of **guilty** and was fined three hundred dollars. The fine was promptly paid and the defendant discharged. (*Deseret Evening News*, November 23, 1906)

Heber J. Grant, who served as the seventh President of the Mormon Church from 1918 until 1945, was also convicted of unlawful cohabitation after the manifesto was issued. This occurred in 1899—nine years after Woodruff issued the Manifesto (see the *Daily Tribune*, September 9, 1899). In 1903 Heber J. Grant fled from the country to avoid being arrested. Charles Mostyn Owen testified as follows:

The CHAIRMAN. Where did you say Grant was?

Mr. OWEN. Grant is in England.

The CHAIRMAN. When did he go to England?

Mr. OWEN. He left **suddenly** on the night of the 10th of November last year—1903.

...

Mr. OWEN. About the 5th or 6th of November he made a statement before the students of the State University at Salt Lake City, in which he held out in a very objectionable manner his association with two women **as his wives**. I was absent from the city on that day, but on my return I immediately went to work to find if I could get evidence of these statements as printed in the paper. I got the evidence in a shape which was satisfactory to me, and I went before the county attorney and swore to an information for him, and **a warrant was issued** on that information. **Before** Mr. Grant was served, however, **he left the country**.

The CHAIRMAN. When did he leave as to the time of the issuing of the warrant?

Mr. OWEN. When I next heard of him he was in Salt Lake—that afternoon, I understood—but he got on the train at Provo that night about midnight.

The CHAIRMAN. Where were those statements made to the students of the university?

Mr. OWEN. In an assembly organized or called together for the purpose of organizing or helping an alumni association.

The CHAIRMAN. What were the statements?

Mr. OWEN. That he regretted that the rules of the association were such that no single subscription of greater than \$50 could be received, but to show his interest in the association he would give them \$50 for himself and \$50 for "each of my wives; and I have got two wives, and I would have a third, if it were not for the law."

...

The CHAIRMAN. Has he returned since that time?

Mr. OWEN. **No, sir**.

Senator PETTUS. Is he still an **apostle**?

Mr. OWEN. **Yes, sir**. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 401-402)

## Polygamy in Utah Today

Because of the insincerity of the Mormon leaders after the Manifesto thousands of people in Utah are still living in polygamy. Russell R. Rich stated:

... it appears that it was difficult to convince all members of the Church that the Church leaders were sincere in their efforts to halt this practice. (*Brigham Young University Leadership Week, Those Who Would Be Leaders*, p. 71)

Kimball Young made this statement concerning the fact that polygamy is still being practiced:

It may well be that the Short Creek community will be liquidated. Yet it is a reasonable guess that undercover preaching and practicing of plural marriage will continue among such dissident Mormon groups. There is evidence that polygamy is being practiced in Mormon settlements in Canada and Mexico. Moreover, there is more than mere rumor to the stories that the system is secretly in operation even in Salt Lake City and other cities in Utah. (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 438)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart gives us the following information regarding current polygamist groups:

Secondly, Satan is exploiting the doctrine and history of plural marriage in our Church by persuading many men and women to rebel against current Church policy on the matter, and thus forfeit their membership in the Church and Kingdom of God. More than seventy years after the first Manifesto was issued, as a step in suspending the practice of plural marriage, apostate sects are mushrooming throughout Mormondom in **greater numbers than ever before, with the basic doctrine that plural marriage must be lived** regardless of what the Church policy is. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 15)

The following appeared in *Newsweek Magazine* in 1955:

The Mormons officially abandoned polygamy as a doctrine. But a fundamentalist sect continues to believe in and practice plural marriage. In 1944, a Federal-State drive against the Fundamentalists resulted in 50 arrests. About a year ago, officials arrested most of the male population of the little town of Short Creek. The drives had little effect; men served their jail terms and returned to their wives and children.

This week, state and county officials in Salt Lake City, in nearby Bountiful, and in most of Utah's major urban spots were off on another polyg crackdown but were not faring very well. In three weeks they had rounded up only four men: . . .

The polyg hunters were getting little cooperation from sympathetic Utahans. Citizens were irked by the fact that the drive against the Fundamentalist sect was being financed by a \$20,000 appropriation made by the 1954 legislature—a secret appropriation never revealed to press and public. Secondly, many a Utah Mormon takes quiet pride in his polygamous forebears and is inclined to be lenient toward the Fundamentalists.

Furthermore, reasonable estimates of the male Fundamentalists run as high as 2,000. Adding in the average number of wives and children, **Utah polygamists may well number 20,000**. As State Attorney General, E. R. Callister admitted last week: "**Utah's jails aren't big enough to hold them all.**" (*Newsweek*, November 21, 1955, pp. 98-99)

Wallace Turner, writing for the *New York Times*, stated:

The problem of polygamy—for half a century a cardinal principle of Mormonism—has taken a number of members out of the church. One expert estimates that as many as 30,000 men, women and children live in families in which polygamy is practiced. . . .

Many live in and near Salt Lake City. Hundreds are concentrated in an isolated Arizona town, Colorado City. Others are scattered through the mountain West and in Mexico. (*The New York Times*, December 27, 1965, p. 18)

The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington claims that the estimate of 30,000 people living in polygamous families is a "far-fetched estimate" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1966, p. 121). Ben Merson, on the other hand, seems to feel that more than 30,000 people are involved:

In Utah . . . the practice of polygamy has never ceased. It is more widespread than ever. And increasing year by year.

In metropolitan Salt Lake City alone, 10,000 are living in plural marriage. . . .

"Today in Utah," declares William M. Rogers, former special assistant to the State Attorney General, "there are more polygamous families than in the days of Brigham Young. At least 30,000 men, women and children in this state are now living in plural households and the number



is rapidly increasing.” Thousands more live in the adjoining states of Idaho, Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona—plus sizable populations in Oregon, California, Canada and Mexico.

The majority live in Utah. And, says Rogers, neither the state law, which punishes polygamy with a one- to four-year prison term, nor the Mormon church, which prohibits it on pain of excommunication, has been able to stem the rising tide of plural marriage. . . .

Strangely, it also remains the chief obstacle to law enforcement. For 72 percent of Utah’s 900,000 citizens are Mormon. And while most practice monogamy, they are aware of their polygamous heritage. Many are descendants of plural families. “This, coupled with the Mormon history of persecution,” says Rogers, “makes them sympathetic toward the Fundamentalists. They feel that prison—and excommunication—is too harsh a penalty. And they refuse to testify against their polygamous neighbors.”

So do the non-Mormons, who are referred to as Gentiles. . . .

More common are excommunications. But not because of any official witch-hunting by the L.D.S. church. It acts only when offenses are brought to its attention. (*Ladies’ Home Journal*, June 1967, p. 78)

Those who believe in practicing polygamy today are usually known as “Fundamentalists,” because they claim to go back to the fundamental doctrines of Mormonism.

### Taylor’s 1886 Revelation

The “Fundamentalists” claim that John Taylor, the third president of the Mormon Church, gave a revelation on September 27, 1886, which stated that the Lord would not revoke the law concerning polygamy. In this revelation the Lord supposedly stated:

My son John. You have asked me concerning the new & everlasting covenant how far it is binding upon my peop[le]

Thus saith the Lord All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name unless they are revoked by me or by my authority, and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant; for I the Lord am everlasting & my everlasting covenants cannot be abrogated nor done away with; but they stand for ever. Have I not given my word in great plainness on this subject? Yet have not great numbers of my people been negligent in the observance of my law & the keeping of my commandment and yet have I borne with them these many years & this because of their weakness because of the perilous times & furthermore, it is more pleasing to me that men should use their free agency in regard to these matters. Nevertheless I the Lord do not change & my word & my covenants & my law do not & as I have heretofore said by my servant Joseph All those who would enter into my glory must & shall obey my law & have I not commanded men that if they were Abraham’s seed & would enter into my glory, they must do the works of Abraham. I have not revoked this law nor will I for it is everlasting & those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof, even so Amen. (A revelation given by John Taylor, dated September 27, 1886, photocopy of the original appears in *1886 Revelation—A Revelation of the Lord to John Taylor*, published by the “Fundamentalists.”)

Although the present-day Mormon leaders reject the revelation, one of the Mormon apostles, Melvin J. Ballard, admitted, in a letter dated December 31, 1934, that there was such a revelation and that it was undoubtedly in the handwriting of John Taylor:

The pretended revelation of President John Taylor never had his signature added to it but was written in the form of a revelation and **undoubtedly was in his handwriting**; nevertheless it was never submitted to his own associates in the Presidency and the Twelve nor to the Church and consequently does not bind the Church in any sense. But still **there is nothing in the revelation that the Church disputes** because the correctness of that principle is set forth with emphasis, and the Church has never disputed the truthfulness of the

132nd Section when the right to practice that principle has been sanctioned by the Lord and the Church.

And if the Lord had wanted plural marriage to continue according to the interpretations some give of President Taylor’s revelation, he would have allowed President Taylor to have lived and enforced it but He took him and raised up President Wilford Woodruff who was inspired to give the Manifesto that stopped the practice of plural marriage. (Letter from L.D.S. Apostle Melvin J. Ballard to Mr. Eslie D. Jenson, December 31, 1934, quoted in *The Star of Truth*, July, 1955, p. 227)

If the Mormon Church leaders were to use the same reasoning with regard to Joseph Smith’s revelation on polygamy (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 132), they would have to reject it, for it does not have his signature at the bottom, neither was it presented to the church in his lifetime. If this revelation is “undoubtedly” in the handwriting of John Taylor, as Apostle Ballard claims, then it should be considered even more binding than section 132, since that revelation is only a copy (not in the handwriting of Joseph Smith) of the original that Emma Smith burned.

While Apostle Ballard does not attempt to deny that the revelation is in the handwriting of John Taylor, the First Presidency of the Mormon Church at one time issued an “Official Statement” which claimed that “no such a revelation exists”:

As to this pretended revelation it should be said that the archives of the Church contain no such a revelation; the archives contain no record of any such a revelation, nor any evidence justifying a belief that any such a revelation was ever given. From the personal knowledge of some of us, from the uniform and common recollection of the presiding quorums of the Church, from the absence in the Church archives of any evidence whatsoever justifying any belief that such a revelation was given, we are justified in affirming that no such a revelation exists. (As quoted in *1886 Revelation—A Revelation of the Lord to John Taylor*)

This statement was signed by Heber J. Grant, A. W. Ivins and J. Reuben Clark, Jr. The “Fundamentalists” have printed what is purported to be “excerpts taken from the trial minutes of special meetings of the Twelve Apostles held in the Salt Lake Temple, February 22nd, and March 1st, 1911.” These “excerpts” seem to show that the Mormon leaders were well aware of the revelation and that the statement by the First Presidency was completely false:

Apostle John W. Taylor: My father received a revelation which however was never presented to the Church, and I refer to this not because it was a revelation to my father; I don’t think a revelation because it came through him was any greater than one received through any other president of the Church, but because it seems to pertain to this question.

Apostle John W. Taylor: There are two things I am drawing your attention to. I am not in politics and very little in the Church, but I do this as a matter of privilege. This revelation is either true or false. Assuming that it is true, it seems to me that it would be better to offer leniency on the side of the Lord if you are going to offer any leniency, than on the side of politics. . . . Brother Lyman what do you think of the revelation to my father?

President Francis M. Lyman: If you ask me if I believe in the plurality of wives, I would say that I believe it is true and will always be so, but the Lord may suspend the practice of it, . . . I am living with my wives now all the time, . . . I have no fault to find with the revelation.

President Francis M. Lyman: When did you find this revelation?

Apostle John W. Taylor: I found it on his desk immediately after his death, when I was appointed administrator of his estate . . .

President Francis M. Lyman: Do you think anyone can solemnize plural marriages with authority now?

Apostle John W. Taylor: I feel under certain circumstances

they could, but it would depend on the circumstances.

.....  
Apostle Charles W. Penrose: What are your views with regard to that revelation?

Apostle John W. Taylor: I am not the one to pass upon that revelation. I think you are the ones to do that.

.....  
Apostle Anthony W. Ivins: Do you know how extensively this revelation has been circulated in times past and has guided people in their actions in this regard?

Apostle John W. Taylor: Brother Joseph Robinson came to me and asked for a copy of it upon the suggestion of Brother Cowley and he got it from Brother Cowley and he got it from Brother Badger. Brother Joseph F. Smith Jr. also got a copy but I don't know how many have got copies from these.

.....  
President Francis M. Lyman: The date of this revelation is September 1886, four years before the manifesto of President Woodruff and I remember at that time that President Taylor and all his brethren were very strongly entrenched in the principle of plural marriage. From 1880 to 1890 men were almost commanded to enter it, especially the officials of the Church. We were all pretty well engaged in this question. . . . I would like to ask if you have encouraged others to take plural wives, or taken them yourself or if you think these brethren who have copies of this revelation have taken it as an encouragement, for instance Brother Robinson.

Apostle John W. Taylor: I will answer that by asking if anyone you have had here before you has ever said that I encouraged him.

President Francis M. Lyman: No one except Wolff, and you admit having encouraged him under the direction of a superior officer.

Apostle David O. McKay: I would like to know who the man is that directed you to instruct Brother Wolff to marry a certain party.

Apostle John W. Taylor: I would not wish to take issue with the President of the Church. . . . I went to President Smith's office the other day..and he said that he had never authorized anyone to perform a plural marriage. I am not saying that he is the one to whom I refer, but I do not want to say any more on this point.

Apostle Hyrum M. Smith: I would like Brother Taylor to feel that we are not persuading him or any other man to do them harm but simply to get at the bottom of these matters. I feel that you are responsible for the circulation of that revelation.

Apostle John W. Taylor: I am willing to put in a supplemental answer to the effect that I have never married anyone without the endorsement and authority of the President of the Church and, if you desire, I will give the names of those I have married, but I think this would be unwise. . . . (1886 Revelation—A Revelation of the Lord to John Taylor)

That the First Presidency was not telling the truth when it claimed the revelation didn't exist can be shown by the diary of the Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon, for he shows that the Mormon leaders were well aware of the revelation in the 1890's. Under the date of April 1, 1892, he recorded:

John W. Taylor [an Apostle] spoke in relation to the Manifesto: "I do not know that that thing was right, though I voted to sustain it, and will assist to maintain it; but **among my father's papers I found a revelation given him of the Lord, and which is now in my possession, in which the Lord told him that the principle of plural marriage would never be overcome.** Pres. Taylor desired to have it suspended, but the Lord would not permit it to be done.—At the close of John W's. remarks our meeting adjourned till tomorrow . . . (Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, April 1, 1892, original at the Brigham Young University)

Apostle John W. Taylor seems to have referred to this revelation on September 30, 1890. Abraham H. Cannon quotes him as saying:

My father when President of the Church sought to find a way to evade the conflict between the Saints and government on the question of plural marriage, but the Lord said it was an eternal and unchangeable law and must stand. (Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, September 30, 1890)

From these statements in Cannon's journal, we can only conclude that the First Presidency were not telling the truth with regard to this revelation when they issued their "Official Statement." The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey stated:

The family of John Taylor claims that the revelation referred to above was found in the prophet-leader's papers and the original given to the Church historian. Since that time it has not been available to the public and the Church Historian allegedly has declared that it is not in the Church Historian's Library. However Dean Jessee concluded in his study that it is highly probable that such a revelation does exist. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1970, p. 15, n. 10)

The "Fundamentalists" state that John Taylor set apart a number of men, gave them authority to perform marriages and told them to continue the practice of plural marriage. The Mormon Apostle John Henry Smith was willing to admit that John Taylor might have "authorized men to do sealing or marrying of wives to men" outside of the temple, but he claimed that these were only "single marriages" (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 295-296). However this may be, the "Fundamentalists" claim that they have authority today to perform plural marriages, and so the practice of polygamy continues in Utah.

## The Dilemma

The Mormon leaders find themselves in a rather strange situation. On the one hand, they have to uphold polygamy as a righteous principle, but on the other, they have to discourage the members of the church from actually entering into its practice. If they repudiated the doctrine of polygamy they would be admitting that Joseph Smith was a deceiver, and that the church was founded on fraud. If, however, they openly preached and defended the doctrine many people would probably enter into the practice and bring disgrace upon the church. Their position is about the same as a person saying "My church believes in water baptism, but we are not allowed to practice it." Because of this peculiar dilemma the church leaders prefer that there is not much discussion of polygamy. Kimball Young stated: "Today the official Church wants to **forget** that it is a unique and different people. . . . Among other items that they want to forget is the plural marriage system. The general authorities do not like members to talk about polygamy if they can avoid doing so" (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 456).

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen made this statement:

Admittedly, descendants of polygamous families still proudly acknowledge their heritage; but many Mormons clearly wish it had never happened. A leading historian at the leading state university in Utah for years avoided **any mention** of the subject; references to it in graduate theses were eradicated with the remark, "**Too Controversial!**" Preston Nibley, it will be remembered, wrote **an entire book on Brigham Young without mentioning the dread word once.** (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, p. 107)

To show the confusion of the Mormon leaders in regard to polygamy we have only to quote from a statement made by Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy. In the same statement he says that millions of people have gained eternal exaltation by the practice of polygamy, that Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders entered the practice in virtue and purity of heart, that polygamy will be practiced after the Second Coming of Christ, yet he states that anyone who enters polygamy today is living in adultery, has sold his soul to Satan and will be damned in eternity:

. . . the Lord frequently did command his ancient saints to practice plural marriage. . . . the whole history

of ancient Israel was one in which plurality of wives was the divinely accepted and approved order of matrimony. **Millions** of those who entered this order have, **in and through it**, gained for themselves **eternal exaltation in the highest heaven of the celestial world**. . . . the Lord revealed the principle of **plural marriage** to the Prophet. Later the Prophet and leading brethren were commanded to enter into the practice, which they did in **all virtue and purity of heart** . . . 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. . . .

**Any** who pretend or assume to **engage in plural marriage in this day**, when the one holding the keys had withdrawn the power by which they are performed, are **guilty of gross wickedness**. They are living in **adultery, have already sold their souls to Satan, and** (whether their acts are based on ignorance or lust or both) **they will be damned in eternity**. (*Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1958, pp. 522-523)

Is it any wonder that many Mormon people are confused over the practice of polygamy? They are taught that Joseph Smith entered polygamy in “virtue and purity of heart,” yet they are taught that if they follow his example they are living in “adultery.”

The Mormon people are taught that plural marriage is still practiced in heaven and will be practiced in the millennium. John J. Stewart stated:

. . . 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. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 73)

B. H. Roberts, the famous Mormon historian, apparently understood the Manifesto as only a temporary restriction of plural marriage:

If the labors and sufferings of the church of Christ for this principle have done nothing more, this much at least has been accomplished—the Saints have borne testimony to the truth. And it is for God to vindicate his own law and **open the way for its establishment on the earth, which doubtless he will do** when his kingdom shall come in power, and when his will shall be done in earth as it is in heaven. (*Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, p. 441)

The Apostle Orson Pratt once stated:

Does not everything that is consistent and reasonable, and everything that agrees with the Bible show that **plurality of wives must exist after the resurrection? It does**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, pp. 244- 245)

Since the Mormon people are taught that polygamy was right in Joseph Smith’s time and that it will be practiced in heaven, is it any wonder that many of them are entering into the practice today? As a polygamist interviewed by a reporter from the *New York Times* expressed it:

“We believe it was all revealed by God to Joseph Smith, and plural marriage was a part of it as you can see just by reading the book [*The Doctrine and Covenants*]. If they want to leave it out, **why don’t they tear it out of the book?**” (*New York Times*, December 27, 1965, p. 18)

As long as the Mormon leaders continue to publish Joseph Smith’s revelation on polygamy (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 132), there will, no doubt, be many people who will enter into the practice. They cannot completely repudiate this revelation, however, without repudiating their doctrine concerning temple marriage as the two doctrines are found in the same revelation.

Although the Mormon leaders will not give up the idea that this revelation is from God, they have already repudiated many of the teachings of the earlier leaders. For instance, Brigham Young taught: “**The only men who become Gods**, even the Sons of God, **are those who enter into polygamy**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 269). The *Millennial Star*, vol. 15, p. 226, contained this statement: “The order of plurality of wives is an **everlasting and ceaseless order**, designed to **exalt** the choicest men and women to the most superlative excellence, dominion, and glory.”

Today, however, the Mormon leaders teach that polygamy is not essential for exaltation: Bruce R. McConkie stated: “Plural marriage is **not essential** to salvation or **exaltation**” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 523).

Brigham Young once became so zealous to establish polygamy that he declared that a man who would not enter into polygamy would have his wife taken from him in the resurrection and given to another:

Now, where a man in this church says, “**I don’t want but one wife**, I will live my religion with **one**.” He will perhaps be saved in the Celestial kingdom; **but when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all**. He has had a talent that he has hid up. He will come forward and say, “Here is that which thou gavest me, I have not wasted it, and here is the one talent,” and he will not enjoy it, but **it will be taken and given to those who have improved** the talents they received, and he will find himself **without any wife, and he will remain single forever and ever**. . . . I recollect a sister conversing with Joseph Smith on this subject. She told him: “Now don’t talk to me; when I get into the celestial kingdom, if I ever do get there, I shall request the privilege of being a ministering angel; that is the labor that I wish to perform. I don’t want any companion in that world; and if the Lord will make me a ministering angel, it is all I want.” Joseph said, “Sister, you talk very foolishly, you do not know what you will want.” He then said to me: “Here **Brother Brigham, you seal this lady to me**.” I sealed her to him. This was my own sister according to the flesh. (*Deseret News*, September 17, 1873)

The Mormon leaders today would not think of teaching that a man with only one wife would have her taken from him and given to a man who had taken more. Bruce R. McConkie stated: “In our day, the Lord summarized by revelation the whole doctrine of exaltation and predicated it upon the marriage of one man to one woman” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 523).

Although the Mormon leaders have changed many of the teachings concerning polygamy, they still teach that it was a righteous practice in Joseph Smith’s time. John J. Stewart makes it very clear that it is still an “integral part of LDS scripture”:

. . . the Church’s strictness in excommunicating those advocating and practicing plural marriage today has apparently been misconstrued by not a few loyal Church members as an acknowledgement that the evil falsehoods... and other misconceptions about plural marriage, are true, and that the Church’s near silence on the doctrine today is further evidence that it regrets and is embarrassed by the whole matter of plural marriage. Such an inference is, of course, unjustified and unrealistic. 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. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, 1961, pp. 13-14)





## More on Marriages After the Manifesto and a Plan for Secret Concubines

On pages 237-238 of this book, we proved beyond all doubt that Apostle Abraham H. Cannon took a plural wife by the name of Lillian Hamlin in 1896—six years after the Manifesto was issued. We presented evidence which seems to indicate that Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, married the couple “on the high sea” just off the coast of California. President Smith denied that he performed the marriage ceremony, but he acknowledged that he did go on a trip with Lillian Hamlin and the Apostle Cannon at the time when the marriage was supposed to have taken place. In the *Reed Smoot Case* we find the following testimony by Joseph F. Smith:

Mr. SMITH. . . . The first time I ever saw her [Lillian Hamlin], . . . was some time in June—I do not remember the date—1896. I was at that time president of the Sterling Mining and Milling Company. . . . I was asked by the board of directors to accompany Abraham H. Cannon to Los Angeles, . . . I accompanied Abraham H. Cannon and his wife on that trip, and had one of my wives with me on that trip.

Mr. TAYLER. When did you first learn that Lillian Hamlin was his wife?

Mr. SMITH. The first that I suspected anything of the kind was on that trip, because I never knew the lady before. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 111)

Mr. TAYLER. Prior to June, 1896, you had never heard of Lillian Hamlin being his wife?

Mr. SMITH. No, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you see them at Los Angeles?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. Were you out in a boat from there?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, Sir.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you have any talk on that journey or after you left Salt Lake—after you first heard or learned that Lillian Hamlin was the wife of Abraham Cannon—as to when they were married?

Mr. SMITH. No, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you have any talk with either of them?

Mr. SMITH. Not in the least.

Mr. SMITH. Not in the least, sir; and no one ever mentioned to me that they were or were not married. I simply judged they were married because they were living together as husband and wife.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you say anything by way of criticism to Abraham Cannon?

Mr. SMITH. No, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. For going about with this wife?

Mr. SMITH. No, sir; I did not. (*Ibid.*, pp. 127-128)

Mr. TAYLER. Now, the church—I gather from your statement the officials of the church have been ever since 1890, and are now, very sensitive as to the charge that plural marriages have been solemnized.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. Since the manifesto?

Mr. TAYLER. Since the manifesto.

Mr. SMITH. Yes; I think we have been very sensitive about that.

Mr. TAYLER. Very sensitive?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, sir.

Mr. TAYLER. What inquiry did you make to find out whether Abraham H. Cannon, one of the twelve apostles of the church, had made a plural marriage?

Mr. SMITH. I made no inquiry at all.

Mr. TAYLER. Did you have any interest in finding out whether there had been—

Mr. SMITH. Not the least. (*Ibid.*, pp. 476-477)

The reader will remember that Mrs. Wilhelmina C. Ellis, one of Abraham H. Cannon’s wives, testified that Lillian Hamlin and Abraham H. Cannon were married while on this trip with Joseph F. Smith. Frank J. Cannon claimed that his father, George Q. Cannon, told him that “President Smith performed the ceremony” (see pages 237-238 of this book).

In the *Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, page 265, Abraham H. Cannon’s widow, Mrs. Ellis, was questioned about his diary. She replied: “I have seen it, but not since his death.” As we pointed out earlier, many diaries belonging to the Apostle Cannon have recently come to light. Unfortunately, however, if Cannon kept a diary at the time of his marriage in 1896, it has not been made public.

Even though we do not have Apostle Cannon’s diary for June of 1896, Michael Marquardt has pointed out some references in his diary for 1894 which throw important light on this marriage and on the attitude of the Mormon leaders concerning polygamy after the Manifesto. The reader will remember that Frank J. Cannon quoted his father George Q. Cannon as saying:

“. . . President Smith obtained the acquiescence of President Woodruff, on the plea that it wasn’t an ordinary case of polygamy but merely a fulfilment of the biblical instruction that a man should take his dead brother’s wife. Lillian was betrothed to David, and had been sealed to him in eternity after his death. . . .”

According to the diary of Abraham H. Cannon, his father, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, lamented the fact that his sons could not raise up seed to David through polygamy: “My son David died without seed, and his brothers cannot do a work for him, in rearing children to bear his name because of the manifesto” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” April 5, 1894, vol. 18, p. 70).

From an entry in Apostle Cannon’s diary for October 24, 1894, it would appear that the Mormon leaders had decided that a plural marriage could be performed in Mexico to raise up seed to David. Although the diary has been damaged at this point and a few words are missing, the remaining portion shows that the Mormon leaders did not take the Manifesto seriously:

After meeting I went to the President’s Office and \_\_\_\_\_ Father [George Q. Cannon] about taking a wife for David. I told him David had taken Anni[e] \_\_\_\_\_ cousin, through the vail in life, and suggested she might be a good pe \_\_\_\_\_ sealed to him for eternity. The suggestion pleased Father very much, and \_\_\_\_\_ Angus was there, He spoke to him about it in the presence of the Presidency. \_\_\_\_\_ not object providing Annie is willing. The Presidents Woodruff and Smith both sa[id] they were willing for such a ceremony to occur, if done in Mexico, and Pres. Woodruff[f] promised the Lord’s blessing to follow such an act.” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” October 24, 1894, vol. 18, p. 170)

We may never know if Annie was “willing” to enter into this plural marriage, but we do know that less than two years later Lillian Hamlin was married to Apostle Cannon. Mrs. Wilhelmina C. Ellis, who had been one of Cannon’s plural wives testified:

Mrs. ELLIS. He said he could marry her out of the State—out of the United States.

Mr. TAYLER. What conversation did you have with him then about his going away and about his getting married again? What did he say first about going?

Mrs. ELLIS. He told me he was going to marry her for time, and that she would be David’s wife for eternity. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 142-143)

The Apostle Abraham H. Cannon's journal not only reveals that the Mormon leaders approved of polygamy after the Manifesto, but it shows they were considering the idea of a secret system of concubinage wherein men and women could live together without actually being married:

Father [George Q. Cannon] now spoke of the unfortunate condition of the people at present in regard to marriage. . . . I believe in **concubinage**, or some plan whereby men and women can live together under sacred ordinances and vows until they can be married. . . . such a condition would have to be kept secret, until the laws of our government change to permit the holy order of wedlock which God has revealed, which will undoubtedly occur at no distant day, in order to correct the social evil. . . . —President Snow. "I have no doubt but concubinage will yet be practiced in this church, but I had not thought of it in this connection. When the nations are troubled good women will come here for safety and blessing, and men will accept them as concubines." —Pres. Woodruff: "If men enter into some practice of this character to raise a righteous posterity, they will be justified in it. . . ." ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," April 5, 1894, vol. 18, p. 70)

As we have shown earlier in this book, Joseph Smith's revelation on polygamy also said that concubinage was justifiable in God's sight: "Abraham received concubines and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, . . ." (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 132:37).

At any rate, the diaries of Apostle Abraham H. Cannon reveal devastating evidence against the Mormon Church, and this evidence cannot be easily dismissed. The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey feels that the Apostle Abraham Cannon's diaries present an accurate picture of what was being said by the Mormon leaders in private: ". . . what were the Mormon leaders saying in private? With the recent acquisition of the Abraham H. Cannon diaries it is now possible to accurately report what was taking place in meetings of the Council of the Twelve Apostles" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1970, p. 22).

### A "Lie of Expediency" on 1886 Revelation

On pages 242-243 of this book we show that in 1886 John Taylor, the third President of the Church, gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have told him that the church could never give up the practice of plural marriage. Just four years later, however, the church issued the Manifesto which was supposed to put a stop to its practice. Since both the Manifesto and John Taylor's 1886 revelation could not possibly have come from the same God, the Mormon leaders decided to suppress the revelation. At one time the First Presidency of the Mormon Church issued an "**Official Statement**" which claimed that "**no such a revelation exists.**"

In his unpublished study, "The New Mormon History," pages 76-77, Richard Stephen Marshall quotes both Reed Durham and Max Parkin, of the LDS Institute of Religion in Salt Lake City, as saying that the leaders of the church have not told the truth about the 1886 revelation:

The official Church position on the 1886 revelation is that it never was given and does not exist. . . . [Mark E.] Petersen's book calls the 1886 revelation spurious. Historical evidence would seem to indicate, in contradiction to the book, that the revelation was given and is at present moment contained in the Church archives.

Reed Durham told this writer that it is "an out and out lie" to say that the 1886 revelation does not exist. He said, "I could stand before

the Bar of God and prove that revelation was given. I have minutes of the meetings of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles referring to it."

While Durham calls it an "out and out lie" to deny the revelation was given, Max Parkin, one of his colleagues calls it a "lie of expediency." He says that the mandate to carry the gospel, as taught by the Church, to all the nations of the world, is compelling to the degree that historical doctrines which could prove embarrassing to the Church, and thus hinder missionary work, are better covered or disavowed.

### The Great Prostitution Conspiracy

On pages 231-233 of this book, we told of the animosity that existed between the Mormon Church and the United States government just before the Manifesto was issued. Because of their hatred towards those who were trying to do away with polygamy, the Mormons entered into a conspiracy to entrap the Gentiles in Salt Lake City. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts frankly admitted that in 1885 the Mormons used "a system of secret espionage" to entrap federal officials who were trying to enforce the laws against polygamy:

Another regrettable thing done on the part of the Latter-day Saints, and growing out of the sense of unfairness attending upon the administration of the federal laws by the federal officials, led some overzealous men, **officers of the city government**, then entirely in "**Mormon**" hands, to arrange by a system of secret espionage on such characters in the city as resorted to places of prostitution, and by prosecution of them make, at least, public exposure of their crimes. It was believed that many prominent in **prosecutions** of polygamy and unlawful cohabitation cases would be **entrapped**.

Great consternation prevailed in certain quarters. It was rumored, and was matter of press comment, that "the anti-'Mormon' element had become wild with excitement, and wondered where the lightning would strike next. Many vague rumors were afloat, as to a list of from four to six hundred offenders being in the hands of the city officers, and there were more blanched cheeks and shaking knees than Salt Lake has ever before contained, notwithstanding the assertion regarding the anti-'Mormon' purity." (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 158)

C. S. Varian, who served as assistant United States attorney in Utah, made these comments about the prostitution conspiracy:

The thought seems to have been that if it should be ascertained that others of the non-Mormon population were found to be guilty of offenses against the law, it would be a sufficient answer to the prosecutions which were being brought by the government. In this view, certain prominent and influential Mormon citizens of Salt Lake City conceived the idea of opening houses of ill-fame in certain localities of the municipality for the purpose of enticing prominent government officials and others into the commission of offenses, in order that they might be detected and publicity be given to their crimes. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R.N. Baskin, 1914, p. 224)

It is very interesting to note that in December, 1885, the grand jury for the third judicial district of the Territory issued a very revealing report concerning the conspiracy. It was printed by the *Daily Tribune* in Salt Lake City on December 8, 1885, and finally by the *Deseret News* on December 23, 1885. Since the *Deseret News* is owned by the Mormon Church we cite the following from the grand jury report which appeared in its pages:

Your Grand Jury herewith returns two indictments for conspiracy, four indictments for keeping houses of ill-fame, under the Territorial laws, . . .

Some time in April or May last an officer of the city government, not connected with the police, with others

unknown at present to the grand jury, entered into a conspiracy to open houses of assignation and ill-fame within the city limits, for the avowed purpose of entrapping weak and vicious persons into the commission of offenses against chastity and morality, in order that all such might be exposed and punished in the courts. This scheme involved the renting and fitting up of houses for the purpose, the employment of public and private prostitutes, the conversion of the police bureau into a nest of spotters and spies, and the expenditure of a large sum of money.

For years there have been well-known houses of prostitution in Salt Lake, which have been under police surveillance. . . . We do not understand that the scheme above mentioned contemplated the investigation of these places, nor the enforcement of the law against those who reside therein or resort thereto for purposes of prostitution or lewdness. On the contrary, as appears by the evidence before us, the plan was conceived and carried into effect without reference to the suppression of existing nuisances, but with the design of using the criminal law as a snare for the weak and immoral, and with the object in part, at least, of creating a great public scandal. In pursuance of this scheme, houses were rented and furnished on West Temple Street, and women placed in possession thereof. These houses were so altered and arranged in their interior that persons could be placed to observe all that transpired within, and every member of the police force of Salt Lake City, with two honorable exceptions, John Y. Smith and Wm. Calder, volunteered his services as a spy and informer in all of the conspiracy. The women were hired to perform their parts, and their exertions stimulated by the promise of exorbitant sums for their success in entrapping high officials. One of these creatures was promised \$1,000 in the event of her being able to draw the Governor of the Territory into her tolls. In the course of their operations, these women conveyed notes of invitation to many prominent officials and citizens, requesting interviews on business at the places designated. The following, leaving the names blank, is a sample of these notes, delivered by messenger boys:

Salt Lake City,  
July 25, 1885.

Dear Sir—If convenient, I would be pleased to have you call and see me this afternoon or about dusk this evening. I want to see you on particular business. Please send answer by messenger boy when you will call.

Respectfully.

We are informed by persons engaged in this infamous plot, that from their **secret posts of observation** they, from time to time, personally witnessed all that took place in apartments in these houses visited by men and women, who were weak and depraved enough to respond to the opportunities presented to them. Their names were taken and the evidence noted for future reference and use.

When the exposure of this conspiracy was at hand the houses were closed. One woman was sent to California upon a ticket furnished her. Another was driven to Francklyn by a police officer who had previously purchased her a ticket, and then took the train for Denver under an assumed name.

One of these women was paid by the city official above referred to \$300 or \$400 and the other \$700 for her services. . . . The money employed in this scheme, we are told by its prime mover, was paid by one of the high officials of Salt Lake County. It is claimed that the money was raised by private subscription. We have been unable to ascertain that any part of it came from the public treasury. Neither the Mayor, Chief of Police, nor other city official, except as herein stated, so far as we can learn, were advised of the proceeding until the plot was ripe. **All of the police officers engaged in it.** It is claimed

performed the services required when off duty. One of them states that his services were rendered “for the good of the cause.” . . . a great crime has been perpetrated. . . . The law is humane and considerate, and has for its object the prevention of crime, and the reformation as well as the punishment of offenders. It does not, we think, contemplate the commission of crimes. In order that additional crimes may be committed, and the last offenders exposed and punished. . . .

MORRIS R. EVANS,

Foreman of the Grand Jury.

(*The Deseret News*, December 23, 1885)

The publishers of the *Daily Tribune*, which was not controlled by the Mormon Church, were incensed by this conspiracy. On November 24, 1885, the *Tribune* reported:

Bishop Speirs’s court at the City Hall presented a scene of unusual activity yesterday morning. The announcement that the defenders of the holy church had prepared a long list of **Gentiles** and fallen Saints who were to be dragged into the court on charges of lascivious conduct and that Deputy Marshal Vandercook had been selected as the first victim, was sufficient to attract the riff raff of the streets, . . . the crowd extending out into the hallway. Among the first to arrive were Cut-throat Crow and a corps of church spotters who were given favored seats within the sacred precincts set apart for witnesses and attorneys. The official reporter of the church was also present for the purpose of recording, for the use of the church historian, all of the obscenity and filth, which it was expected the witnesses who had been detailed for the occasion would relate. . . .

The complaints were sworn to by B. Y. Hampton and attested by Bishop Spiers. . . . The police and spotters propose to testify that they saw the alleged acts committed. . . . two houses were rented on West Temple street, and notes began to be sent to prominent officials and Gentiles. . . . and one of the women engaged in the business was free to inform her intended visitors that there was no danger of any arrests in her house—meaning that she had an understanding with the police that she should not be disturbed. . . .

Circumstances are rapidly coming to light which show conclusively that several assination houses have been opened and conducted with **the money of the church, or of the city.** It is believed, with good reason, that the prostitutes of these houses, as well as Mormon girls of loose character, were in the employ of the police, who were either admitted to the houses and allowed to watch proceedings, or were given the dates upon which certain individuals visited them. (*The Daily Tribune*, November 24, 1885)

The next day *The Daily Tribune* carried these statements:

Nothing shows the innate degradation of the Mormon Church more clearly than the present conspiracy and raid. Think of the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, and Catholic or any other Christian churches bending to make an assignation with prostitutes for the sole purpose of proving that some outside men, in secret, practice a vice. . . . It is a church matter, every policeman who stands ready to swear, who has kept watch in secret with prostitutes, every man who has been engaged in the business in any way—except one Hebrew agent who acted under orders from a big Mormon—pays one-tenth of his salary to our “holy church.” . . . The final outcome will be a boomerang. The Saints believed that the lowering of the flag would awaken sympathy for them. They do not think so any more. So it will be with this. When the country understands that **the emissaries of the church** went to San Francisco and Denver and hired prostitutes to come here to decoy men, the fine point of the intention will be lost, and the question will be: “What kind of a thing is it which in the name of a church stoops to the use of such instruments as those?” (*The Daily Tribune*, November 25, 1885)



The Mormon Church's newspaper, *The Deseret News*, defended the "police" and launched an attack on the *Tribune*:

The organ of the prostitutes and apologist for lechery, as "one of the common vices of humanity," is working hard to divert attention from the official and private persons who are charged with beastly crimes, by reckless and whole-cloth lying—its usual tactics. . . .

Its story is that the "Mormon" Church has hired prostitutes to lead away the poor, innocent deputy marshals, *Tribune* supporters, merchants, ex-U.S. Commissioners and other persons addicted to "one of the common vices of humanity," . . .

Was ever a more senseless idea evolved from a softened brain, muddled with the fumes of cheap cigars and "forty-rod" whisky? Using its own elegant language, the *Tribune* must have "carried its folly to the point of putting a half idiot and half lunatic to the chair," for the purpose of shielding its friends, the male prostitutes, and voiding more of its venom against the "Mormon" Church . . . to what desperate straits must the organ of the prostitutes be driven in defending its friends, to print such stuff as now occupies its columns! . . . The courts, the Federal officials, the anti-"Mormon" press and all their little echoes, have pretended that "sexual crimes should be punished by the local laws and authorities." And now if they have any regard for consistency they ought to support the police in their enforcement of city ordinances, instead of rallying to the aid of the lecherous law-breakers, and raving like madmen against a Church that has no more to do with the matter than righteousness has with roguery or Truth has with the *Tribune*.

Let the light shine, even if it comes from the policeman's lantern. Let the strokes fall where they belong, even if they come from the policeman's club. Let the guilty be exposed, even though they be found in the ranks of those sacred officials whom courts appear bound to protect. Go on with the music. (*The Deseret News*, November 25, 1885)

The following day the *Daily Tribune* printed the following:

Salt Lake now enjoys the distinction of being the only city in the world in which houses of prostitution were established by the **city authorities**; the only city that ever hired its official prostitutes and paid them a premium for every man they enticed. This city also has the only newspapers in the world that are vile enough to defend such infamy. (*The Daily Tribune*, November 26, 1885)

On November 27, 1885, the *Tribune* made this statement about the conspiracy:

But Salt Lake is a peculiar place, and when the fact is made transparent that a certain course is being pursued, not with a view of arresting a wrong but to make [make?] a justification for committing another wrong, and that to carry out a conspiracy a direct crime under the Territorial statutes and against this city's ordinance was committed, why, certainly, the facts should be as plainly stated as decency will permit. It has been made clear that to execute a **revenge** upon certain men, the **Mormon Church**—through the city authorities, who are but creatures of the church and who do nothing except through the advice and consent of the chiefs of the church—entered into contracts with common prostitutes, paying them large sums and furnishing them with means to rent houses, over which they further extended the protection of the police, and from which they withdrew all the restrictions which attach to ordinary houses of ill fame. . . .

The *Tribune* is called upon by the Mormon press to endorse this business as altogether praiseworthy and noble. It can not very well do that.

The same evening the church's *Deseret News* reported the following:

The truth is that some dirty men, among them persons who have been prominent in urging the persecution of "Mormons" for living with their wives, have been consorting with lewd women in violation of the city ordinances, the police have made some arrests, the whole crew who have been crying out against "Mormon" immorality have rushed to the rescue, . . .

The morning organ of the prostitutes raves through nearly another column of idiocy about the "Mormon" Church and thinks this will be a sufficient apology for the lecherous doings of the libertines whose cause it fights for. But all its romances and epithets amount to nothing on the main question; which is, shall those guilty of sexual crimes which the courts here say are left to the police to prosecute, be punished for their bestiality, which the *Tribune* apologises for as "one of the common vices of humanity?" (*The Deseret News*, November 27, 1885)

The *Deseret News* for December 1, 1885, published an article entitled "PROSECUTE THE DEBAUCHEES" in which the following appeared:

It is true that a barrier has been placed in the way of the officers by the ruling of Judge Zane. . . . it is not expected that the municipal officers will be "bluffed" off by one failure of a technical character. The prosecution of these offenders is confidently looked for, and the community demand that the prosecutions shall go on . . . If the police do not continue the work they have begun, because they have met with a rebuff where they ought to have received assistance, they will become a public laughing stock and the municipal authorities will be subject to well-deserved reproach. Prosecute the debauchees.

On December 2, 1885, the church's *Deseret News* called the "police" conspiracy a "good work":

The arrest of Deputy Marshal Vandercook, U.S. Commissioner Pearson, Assistant U.S. Attorney S. H. Lewis and W. H. Yearian Esq., charged with lewd and lascivious conduct has caused quite a commotion in different circles of Utah society. The voice of the general public is, "Let the municipal ordinances be enforced, no matter whom they pinch; and if some persons who have been particularly active and venomous in spotting and arresting "Mormon" polygamists, and others who have been very urgent for the enforcement of the Edmunds law, happen to be among the corrupt and lustful violators of the local laws, no good citizen will be sorry if they "come to grief." But the vile crew who endorse prostitution or wink at occasional vice and excuse "sporadic cases," while they are rampart against plural marriage, rally to the support of the accused and have no good word for the police in their endeavors to enforce the city ordinances.

As might be expected, the morning organ of the prostitutes, in its Sunday issue, cries out "A Church move!"—"Church Spotters!"—"The ignominy will fall on themselves!" and hastens to acquit the accused before the evidence is heard. . . .

It has been argued and officially announced that Congress has left the passage and enforcement of laws against sexual sins to the local authorities, and that it is for the police to see to such ordinary and common vices. Well, the police it appears have been endeavoring to perform this duty, and have made a commencement in a proper direction. That is to say that instead of simply arresting and fining the unfortunate creatures who are ministers to masculine passion, they are carrying out the provisions of local law for the punishment of the active criminals, the male prostitutes, the really guilty principals in the degrading crime of which the culprits in charge are accused. . . . Let the work of cleansing go on and be made thorough. We want the help of the Lord and the power of His might. . . .

We hope the **police** will go on with their **good work**, no matter where the fur flies. Never mind the curses of anti-“Mormons,” the threatening of officials, the bluster of hired scribes or the consequences to pretended “Mormons.” The corrupt cannot injure those who faithfully perform their duty, and the **Church** will not flinch at the exposure of the hypocrites who have made it a cloak for their infamy.

The efforts of the police to enforce the city ordinances against sexual immorality, which ought to receive the support of all who desire social order and the public welfare, are denounced, defied and hindered by those who have figured for some time past as the champions of morality. **The loudest clamorers against polygamy are the most vehement defenders of the parties charged with debauchery.** It has been so from the beginning. The unvirtuous of both sexes are and have always been the bitterest enemies of plural marriage . . . the police, whose duty it is to do so have made some arrests; and what is the consequence? Instead of receiving the support of officials and others, who have been posing as the upholders of law and the defenders of society, the police are maligned and the ordinance under which they are acting is sought to be made inoperative. . . .

The honest performance of police duty is called “**A Mormon Plot.**” Without the shadow of a reason for the libel, police proceedings against reputed whoremongers are represented as “plans adopted by the Mormon Church.” . . . every effort is made to slander all who are engaged in the performance of a sworn duty by the prosecution of persons accused of debasing crime. . . . the law-and-order shriekers who are seeking to bring the ‘Mormons’ into bondage because of a distinctive feature or religion, care no more for law and order and decency than the most depraved of criminals, and that all their virtuous (?) declarations are but the shuffling pretenses of canting and lecherous hypocrites. (*The Deseret News*: Weekly, December 2, 1885)

The following day the church’s newspaper continued to defend the conspiracy:

Supposing the “traps” to have been laid. Why should those paragons of propriety, the **Federal officials** alluded to, walk into them? If lewd women “hired” or not, have been visited by those officials and others, and become the principal actors in scenes of debauchery, obscenity and filthiness too vile for description, why lay all the blame upon the “traps” set to catch them in their lechery and say not a word against the criminals?

We do not know which to denounce as the viler case of depravity, the low-lived, persecutors of decent men and women who have been overseen in their secret deeds of shame, or the scandalous journalists who strive to screen them from exposure and save them from punishment, by putting the blame on the police who detected their crimes, and by feeding the popular maw for the marvelous with the monstrous falsehood about the “**Mormon hierarchy.**” (*The Deseret News*, December 3, 1885)

Although the Mormon police sent the prostitutes away from Utah, their whereabouts was discovered and they were returned. The *Tribune* for December 4, 1885, indicates that this caused the conspirators a great deal of trouble:

The commotion that the return of Fanny Davenport and Mrs. Fields created in the prostitution circle at the City Hall, would be sufficient proof, if any were needed, that certain of the **city officials** had been in collusion with these females in corrupting the morals of the people. Their too apparent anxiety lest the women should tell all about their dealings with the city officials, was manifested in various ways. On the day that they returned a policeman was sent down the road as far as Provo to meet them, but was not given an opportunity to talk to them and “fix things.” . . .

In the meantime, Brig Hampton was doing some pretty tall rustling on the streets for bondsmen for the prostitutes. . . .

The examination of Fanny Davenport came up... The complaint in the case...alleges that Fanny Davenport, . . . at Salt Lake City, on May 1, 1885, and on divers other days and times until November 15th, did then and there unlawfully keep and maintain a certain house of ill fame, . . .

Considerable curiosity was manifested on the part of the spectators to see whether the gang of Church conspirators would give themselves away by **bringing the brethren in** as bondsmen. A good deal of surprise was created by the appearance of Alfred Soloman, a **good saint**, who offered himself as one of the sureties, and the astonishment was greater when Royal B. Young, **the indicted polygamist**, appeared as the other, Watson having backed out. The ready manner in which the brethren came to the front and helped their prostitute out was the subject of a good deal of comment, and was regarded as a complete “give away” of the infamous conspiracy. . . .

Brig. Hampton, wearing a wish-I-were-far-away expression on his countenance, came into the room, and the defendant greeted her old partner in corruption with a smile of recognition. The pair were soon afterward engaged in confidential chat . . . Deputy Marshal Vandercook entered soon afterward, and drawing a paper from his pocket walked up to Hampton and said: “Here is a subpoena, summoning you to appear as a witness in this case.” . . .

It is pretty safe to say that Brig Hampton and his whole gang of prostitution agents are feeling very uneasy over the unexpected turn of events and are heartily sick of the scheme they entered into with these prostitutes. That they should be called on as witnesses against their own hired women was something in their stupidity they never dreamed of. (*The Daily Tribune*, December 4, 1885)

The next day the *Tribune* reported the following:

It is reported on good authority that Fanny Davenport is an honored guest at the city jail boarding house, situated in the rear of the City Hall. A carriage is waiting whenever she wishes to go out, and anything she asks for is given. She fully realizes that she has the city ring under her thumb and is evidently making the most of her opportunities. (*The Daily Tribune*, December 5, 1885)

After printing the report of the Grand Jury concerning the prostitution scandal, the *Tribune* made this statement:

As might readily be surmised from the tenor of the above report, Brig. Hampton was the city official referred to as one of the prime movers in this infamous intrigue and was one of the men indicted. The grand jury dealt very kindly with him, considering the outrageous nature of his offense, and only presented four indictments against him. Two of them charged him with keeping houses of ill fame, . . . The other two charge him with conspiracy, by entering into the disgraceful compact with these prostitutes. (*The Daily Tribune*, December 8, 1885)

The Mormon leaders were very upset over the whole matter. The *Deseret News* for December 14 contained these statements:

Oscar Vandercook, charged with resorting to a house of ill-fame for lewdness, the charge backed by testimony conclusive and complete, is protected by **Federal authority**, turned loose without trial and immediately granted an appeal to the highest court, . . .

In order to put into effect the **local laws** against sexual crimes, noted frequenters of houses of ill-fame, who had been seen to enter those haunts of iniquity, were watched at their lewd and lascivious practices, in order that they might be prosecuted. It was the only way by which their guilt could be

proven beyond question. It was disgusting business, no doubt. But which was the most disgusting, the detection of their bestiality or the acts which were witnessed? But mark the course of those who are waging the moral crusade against the “Mormons.” In order to cripple the prosecution of those lechers by the **local laws**, the machinery of the **Federal court** is set at work to punish the detector of crime so that the criminals may go free? The men who planned to expose and punish by **local law** the supporters of prostitution are indicted for “conspiracy,” while the befouled cohabiters with harlots, the polluted divers into the slime of base lust are shielded from the penalty of their guilt.

Say, priests and editors who are urging this crusade against the “Mormons” on moral grounds, what do you think of this kind of morality? **Stamp out polygamy, cherish prostitution!** No mercy for a “Mormon” who conscientiously marries and supports two or three wives and their children, but protection and relief and freedom for the libertine and the lecher. . . . The public prosecutor refuses to prosecute. Why? Is the evidence faulty? Cannot the facts be proved? Is there any doubt at all of the guilt of the accused? No. But a man who set himself to work to expose and bring to punishment the bestial debauchees of this city is indicted by the grand jury for doing that detective work, and the attorney prefers to prosecute him rather than the persons detected and proven guilty on testimony direct and unimpeachable enough to convict beyond question. . . .

The facts in these cases, barring the indecent details, should be telegraphed all over the country. It ought to be known how debauchery is protected and vice is encouraged. . . .

The organ of the lechers, like the counsel for Vandercook, wants to intimidate the officers who are engaged in the prosecution of the male prostitutes. . . .

No man who has “never done anything he is willing all the world should know,” is in any danger from the police prosecutions. It is only those who have been frequenting houses of ill fame and have been seen in their vile deeds who have occasion to fear. . . . for the beasts who have been detected we want no concealment. The proceedings to stop their exposure ought not to prevail. They should be prosecuted as the law requires, in the Justice’s Court; and if the Federal courts like to set them free, and would rather punish the detectives than the detected, let the responsibility lie with them. . . . Let the lechers be exposed, and let all those who threaten and bluster understand that no one cares a cent for all they can say or do. The arrests should go on. (*The Deseret News*, December 14, 1885)

Andrew Jenson, who was Assistant Church Historian, says that Brigham Y. Hampton was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment for his part in the conspiracy:

Thurs. 24. — After three days’ trial the jury in the Third District Court brought in a verdict of guilty against Brigham Y. Hampton for conspiracy.

Wed. 30. — In the Third District Court, Judge Zane sentenced Brigham Y. Hampton to one year’s imprisonment in the Salt Lake County jail. (*Church Chronology*, p. 127)

It is very difficult to determine how many Mormons were involved in this conspiracy. The Grand Jury report said that “every member of the police force of Salt Lake City, with two honorable exceptions, John Y. Smith and Wm. Calder, volunteered his services as a spy and informer in aid of the conspiracy” (*Deseret News*: Weekly, December 23, 1885, p. 3). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts says that at this time the “city government” was “entirely in ‘Mormon’ hands” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 158). Roberts also frankly admits that this was a “regrettable thing done on the part of the Latter-day Saints” (*Ibid.*). How much the Mormon leaders knew about the conspiracy before it came to light is difficult to say, but they certainly gave full support to it when it was revealed. As we have shown, the church’s own *Deseret News*, December 2, 1885, claimed that the conspiracy was a “good work.”

After the Mormon leaders began to obey the law, the relationship with federal authorities began to normalize. The church which had previously encouraged disobedience to the law against polygamy began to demand that its members obey it. Heber J. Grant, the seventh President of the Church, who had himself been convicted of unlawful cohabitation in 1899, announced in 1931 that the church would give legal assistance so that polygamists could be prosecuted by the law. The Mormon leaders had previously made scathing denunciations against those who had spied on them when they were practicing polygamy. Now the situation was reversed: the Mormon leaders were using spies against members of the church who continued to advocate plural marriage. The *Ogden Standard-Examiner* for October 7, 1944, reported the following:

Meanwhile, the Mormon Church, which has been excommunicating polygamists ever since the 1890 manifesto, revealed that it has appointed investigators to “search out the cultists, turning over such information as they gather to the prosecution.”

The statement cited by the *Ogden Standard-Examiner* is a direct quote from a letter written by the Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen. It was sent to Murray Moler, Bureau Manager United Press, later became part of the Court files, and was finally printed in *Truth*, vol. 10, pages 207-208. We cite the following from this remarkable letter by Apostle Mark E. Petersen:

3—The Church has actively assisted federal and state authorities in obtaining evidence against the cultists and helping to prosecute them, under the law.

4—Among witnesses for the prosecution are men who have been appointed by the Church to search out the cultists, turning over such information as they gather to the prosecution for their use; these men have also been appointed by the Church to do all they can to fight the spread of polygamy.

5—The Church has opposed the practice and teaching of plural marriage since the adoption of a Manifesto in an official conference of the Church held in Salt Lake City October 6, 1890, and has excommunicated members since that time who have either taught or practiced it.





## 18. Mormonism and Truth

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made the following statement: “The Church ever operates in **full light**. There is **no secrecy about its doctrine**, aim, or work” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, single volume edition, p. 282). On page 226 of the same book, Apostle Widtsoe said: “From the beginning of its history the Church has opposed unsupported beliefs. It has fought **half-truth and untruth**” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, p. 226).

John A. Widtsoe’s claim that the Mormon Church operates in full light and has from the beginning fought half-truth and untruth can hardly be supported by existing facts. Actually, untruth and secrecy were used by the church leaders to cover up the doctrine of polygamy. The Mormon writer William E. Berrett stated:

In 1840 the doctrine was taught to a few leading brethren who, with the Prophet, **secretly married additional wives** in the following year. . . . Only the **secrecy** surrounding its practice prevented a wholesale apostasy from the Church in 1844. (*The Restored Church*, 1958, pp. 247, 249)

As we have already shown (see page 202), the early editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* contained an article which condemned the practice of polygamy. Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders used this article as a shield to hide behind. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

The marriage article, in Oliver Cowdery’s handwriting, sustains monogamous marriage and **denies any LDS practice of plural marriage**. Joseph was not yet ready to **publicly** acknowledge this doctrine, even though he had spoken of it in confidence to a few close friends. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 103)

The May, 1837, issue of the *Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate* stated that the “Presidents of the Seventies met in council” and adopted the following resolution: “1st.—That we will have **no fellowship** whatever with **any Elder** belonging to the quorums of the Seventies who is guilty of **polygamy** or any offence of the kind, . . .” (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 3, p. 511).

In 1838 Joseph Smith answered some questions for the *Elders’ Journal*. Question number seven appears below:

Seventh— “Do the Mormons believe in having more wives than one?”

“No, not at the same time.” (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 3, p. 28)

On May 3, 1844, Parley P. Pratt claimed that Augustine Spencer had written a letter which stated that “Joseph Smith is in the habit of drinking, swearing, carousing, dancing all night, &c., and that **he keeps six or seven young females as wives**, . . .” (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 6, pp. 354, 355). On May 26, 1844, Joseph Smith absolutely denied the accusation that he was living in polygamy:

What a thing it is for a man to be accused of committing adultery, and having **seven wives when I can only find one**.

I am the same man, and as innocent as I was fourteen years ago; and I can prove them all perjurers. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 411)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart said that “due to the

extreme prejudice existing against the doctrine, it had to be kept as **confidential as possible**, and **even public denials of it made**” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, pp. 67-68). On page 148 of the same book, Stewart admits that “public denials of it were made by the Church leaders—for the safety of the Church and the individuals concerned.”

According to Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith said the following to John C. Bennett:

. . . why are you using my name to carry on your hellish wickedness? Have I ever taught you that fornication and adultery were right, **or polygamy** or any such practice? (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 5, p. 72)

The following notice was published in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, page 423:

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1844.  
NOTICE.

As we have lately been credibly informed, that an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter-day Saints, by the name of Hiram Brown, has been **preaching polygamy**, and other **false and corrupt doctrines**, in the county of Lapeer, state of Michigan.

This is to notify him and the Church in general, that he has been cut off from the church, for his iniquity; and he is further notified to appear at the Special Conference, on the 6th of April next, to make answer to these charges.

**Joseph Smith,**  
**Hyrum Smith,**  
Presidents of said Church.

Joseph Smith’s brother Hyrum, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, also secretly practiced plural marriage while denying it openly. On March 15, 1844, Hyrum Smith stated:

. . . brother Richard Hewitt has called on me to-day to know my views concerning some doctrines that are preached in your place, and states to me that some of your elders say, that a man having a certain priesthood, may have **as many wives** as he pleases, and that doctrine is taught **here**: I say unto you that **that man teaches false doctrines**, for there is no such doctrine taught; neither is there any such thing practised here. And any man that is found teaching **privately** or publicly any such doctrine, is culpable, and will stand a chance to be brought before the High Council, and lose his license and membership also: therefore he had better beware what he is about. (*Times and Seasons*, letter by Hyrum Smith, Nauvoo, Ill., March 15, 1844, vol. 5, p. 474)

Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth president of the Mormon Church, made the following statement concerning the denials of Joseph and Hyrum Smith:

. . . Joseph Smith, the martyred Prophet, is responsible to God and the world for this doctrine, and let every soul know that he and his brother Hyrum did practice the doctrine in their lifetime, and until their death, **notwithstanding their seeming denials** as published in the *Times and Seasons*, . . . (*Historical Record*, p. 220)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith freely admitted that if someone had asked Joseph Smith about polygamy in

He comes to tell your honorable body, that the temple your fathers erected to freedom, whither their sons assembled to hear her precepts and cherish her doctrines in their hearts, has been desecrated; its portals closed, so that those that go up hither, are forbidden to enter.

He comes to tell your honorable body, that the blood of the heroes and patriots of the revolution, who have been slain by wicked hands for enjoying their religious rights, the boon of heaven to man, has cried, and is crying in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, saying, 'redress, redress our wrongs, O Lord God of the whole earth.'

He comes to tell your honorable body, that the dying groans of infant innocence, and the shrieks of insulted and abused females—and many of them widows of revolutionary patriots have ascended up into the ears of Omnipotence, and are registered in the archives of eternity, to be had in the day of retribution, as a testimony against the whole nation, unless their cries and groans are heard by the representatives of the people, and ample redress made, as far as the nation can make it, or else the wrath of the Almighty will come down in fury against the whole nation.

Under all these circumstances, your memorialist prays to be heard by your honorable body, touching all the matters of his memorial; and as a memorial will be presented to congress this session, for redress of our grievances, he prays your honorable body will instruct the whole delegation of Pennsylvania, in both houses, to use all their influence in the national councils, to have redress granted.

And, as in duty bound, your memorialist will ever pray.

SIDNEY RIGDON, P. M.

## TIMES AND SEASONS.

CITY OF NAUVOO,

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1844.

### NOTICE.

As we have lately been credibly informed, that an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter-day Saints, by the name of Hiram Brown, has been preaching Polygamy, and other false and corrupt doctrines, in the county of Lapeer, state of Michigan.

This is to notify him and the Church in general, that he has been cut off from the church, for his iniquity; and he is further notified to appear at the Special Conference, on the 6th

of April next, to make answer to these charges.

JOSEPH SMITH,  
HYRUM SMITH,  
Presidents of said Church.

### THE GATHERING.

(Continued.)

Jared and his brother, together with the families that were with them, and their several offsprings, were greatly blessed of God, for a length of time upon this continent; they prospered exceedingly. They were blessed with communion with the Lord, with revelations, visions, faith wisdom, and in all temporal blessings they became a great people. But when they transgressed the laws of God, the curse of Jehovah fell upon them, and they were swept from the face of the earth, according to the word of the Lord.

Abraham was made use of, he was selected and chosen as a peculiar personage, to whom God would commit his laws and ordinances, and to his seed after him, and in order that he might accomplish his purposes, he gave unto him, the land of Canaan as his inheritance, that he might be selected and set apart from all other nations; and this was the only principle upon which God could teach him his law, and establish the priesthood. It is true, that Abraham obtained it by faith, but then if he had not possessed faith, he would not have been a fit personage for the Lord to select, through whom he could communicate his will, and preserve a chosen seed upon the earth. Abraham, through a long train of afflictions, and in many trials, had proven his unflinching integrity and faithfulness to God, for many years, and when the Lord saw that he was a proper person to exalt, he said unto him, 'get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.' And when Abraham had journeyed to the place appointed, 'the Lord appeared unto him and said, unto thy seed will I give this land,' and he afterwards entered into a covenant with Abraham, saying, 'unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. The Kenites, and the Kennizites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perrizites, and the Rophaines, and the Ammorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.'

That land was given unto Abraham, and unto his seed, for an everlasting inheritance, and 'Isaac, and Jacob were heirs with him, of the same promise.' The land was allotted unto the

A photograph of the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, page 423. Hiram Brown was cut off from the Mormon Church for teaching polygamy and other "false and corrupt doctrines."



The voice of reason, the voice of humanity, the voice of the nation, and the voice of heaven seem to say to the honest and virtuous, throughout the State of Missouri; *Wash yourselves, make you clean*, lest your negligence should be taken by the world, from the mass of facts before it, *that you are guilty!* Let there be one unison of hearts for justice, and when you reflect around your own firesides, remember that fifteen thousand, once among you, now not, but who are just as much entitled to the privileges and blessings you enjoy as yourselves; like the widow before the unjust judge, are fervently *praying for their rights*. When you meditate upon the massacre at Hawn's mill, forget not that the constitution of your state holds this broad truth to the world: that none shall "be deprived of *life, liberty, or property*, but by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land." And when you assemble together in towns, counties or districts, whether to petition your legislature to pay the damage the saints have sustained in your state, by reason of oppression, and misguided zeal; or to restore them to their rights according to republican principles and benevolent designs, reflect, and make honorable, or annihilate, such statæ law as was in force in your state, in 1838; viz: "If twelve or more persons shall combine to levy war against any part of the people of this state, or to remove forcibly out of the state, or from their habitations, evidenced by taking arms and assembling to accomplish such purpose, every person so offending shall be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary for a period not exceeding five years, or by a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars: and imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding six months."

Finally, if honor dignifies an honest people; if virtue exalts a community; if wisdom guides great men; if principle governs intelligent beings; if humanity spreads comfort among the needy; and if religion affords consolation by showing that charity is the first, best and sweetest token of perfect love: then, O ye good people of Missouri, like the woman in scripture *who had lost one of her ten pieces of silver*, arise, search diligently till you find the lost piece, and then make a feast and call in your friends for joy.

With due consideration

I am the friend of

all good men,

JOSEPH SMITH.

Nauvoo, Ill., March 8, 1844.

Nauvoo, March 15, 1844.

To the brethren of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints, living on China Creek, in

Hancock County, Greeting:—Whereas brother Richard Hewitt has called on me to-day, to know my views concerning some doctrines that are preached in your place, and states to me that some of your elders say, that a man *having a certain priesthood*, may have as many wives as he pleases, and that doctrine is taught here: I say unto you that that man teaches *false doctrine*, for there is no such doctrine taught here; neither is there any such thing practised here. And any man that is found teaching privately or publicly any such doctrine, is culpable, and will stand a chance to be brought before the High Council, and lose his license and membership also: therefore he had better beware what he is about.

And again I say unto you, an elder has no business to undertake to preach mysteries in any part of the world, for God has commanded us all to preach nothing but the first principles unto the world. Neither has any elder any authority to preach any mysterious thing to any branch of the church unless he has a direct commandment from God to do so. Let the matter of the grand councils of heaven, and the making of gods, worlds, and devils *entire'y alone*: for you are not called to teach any such doctrine—for neither you nor the people are capacitated to understand any such principles—less so to teach them. For when God commands men to teach such principles the saints will receive them. Therefore beware what you teach! for the mysteries of God are not given to all men; and unto those to whom they are given they are placed under restrictions to impart only such as God will command them; and the residue is to be kept in a faithful breast, otherwise he will be brought under condemnation. By this God will prove his faithful servants, who will be called and numbered *with the chosen*.

And as to the celestial glory, all will enter in and possess that kingdom that obey the gospel, and continue in faith in the Lord unto the end of his days. Now, therefore, I say unto you, you must cease preaching your miraculous things, and let the mysteries alone until by and bye. Preach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; repentance and baptism for the remission of sins; the laying on of the hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost: teaching the necessity of strict obedience unto these principles; reasoning out of the scriptures; proving them unto the people. Cease your schisms and divisions, and your contentions. Humble yourselves as in dust and ashes, lest God should make you an ensample of his wrath unto the surrounding world. Amen.

In the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

I am

Your obedient servant,

HYRUM SMITH.

A photograph of the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, page 474. Hyrum Smith, who was Joseph Smith's brother and a member of the First Presidency, calls polygamy a false doctrine.



Kirtland he would have denied it, and that he had to “unpreach” a statement he had made about “sealing” in Nauvoo:

Now if the Lord had considered it wisdom, on the day of the Kirtland endowment and great solemn assembly, to come forward and reveal to the children of men the facts that are laid down plainly in the Bible, and had told them that, without the law of **sealing**, no man could be exalted to a throne in the celestial kingdom, that is, without he had a woman by his side; . . . had He revealed this simple sentiment, up would have jumped some man, saying, “What! got to have a woman sealed to me in order to be saved, in order to be exalted to thrones, dominions, and eternal increase?” “Yes.” “I do not believe a word of it,” . . . Again up jumps somebody else, “Brother Joseph, I have had two wives in my lifetime, cannot I have them both in eternity?” “No.” If he had said Yes, perhaps we should all have **apostatized** at once. . . . We thus passed on from the year 1837 until the year 1843, . . .

Whereupon, the Prophet goes up on the stand, and, after preaching about everything else he could think of in the world, . . . makes a bare hint at the law of **sealing**, and it produced such a tremendous excitement that, as soon as he had got his dinner half eaten, he had to go back to the stand, and **unpreach all that he had preached**, and left the people to guess at the matter. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, pp. 216-217)

The article on marriage, which was published in the early editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* (see photo on page 202 of this book), was frequently used to counteract the report that polygamy was being practiced. On September 1, 1842, this statement appeared in the *Times and Seasons*:

Inasmuch as the public mind has been unjustly abused through the fallacy of Dr. Bennett’s letters, we make an extract on the subject of marriage, **showing the rule of the Church** on this important matter. The extract is from the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, **and is the only rule allowed by the Church**.

“All legal contracts of marriage made before a person is baptized into this church, should be held sacred and fulfilled. Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the **crime** of fornication, and **polygamy**; we declare that we believe, that **one man** should have **one wife**; and **one woman**, but **one husband**, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again.” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 909)

A similar statement appeared in the *Times and Seasons* on October 1, 1842 (see vol. 3, pages 939-940).

In the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, page 143, we find the following:

We are charged with **advocating a plurality of wives**, and common property. Now this is as **false** as the many other ridiculous charges which are brought against us. No sect have a greater reverence for the laws of matrimony, or the rights of private property, and we do what others do not, practice what we preach.

In the *Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star* an article was published in which the following was stated:

But, for the information of those who may be assailed by those foolish tales **about two wives**, we would say that **no such principle ever existed among the Latter-day Saints, and never will**; this is well known to all who are acquainted with our books and actions, the Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants*; and also all our periodicals are very **strict** on that subject, indeed far more so than the bible. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 3, p. 74)

William Law, who was at one time a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, became very disturbed by Joseph Smith’s practices and charged him with adultery. He joined with a few others and attempted to publish the *Nauvoo Expositor*. In the first and only issue we find the following:

It is a notorious fact, that many females . . . are requested to meet brother **Joseph**, or some of the **Twelve**, at some insulated point, or at some particularly described place on the bank of the Mississippi, or at some room, which wears upon its front— **POSITIVELY NO**

**ADMITTANCE**. . . after having been sworn in one of the most solemn manners, **to never divulge what is revealed** to them, with a penalty of death attached, that God Almighty has revealed it to him, that **she should be his** (Joseph’s) **spiritual wife**; for it was right anciently, and God will tolerate it again: but we must keep those pleasures and blessings from the world, for until there is a change in government, we will endanger ourselves by practicing it—. . . (*Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844, p. 2)

In an affidavit published in the *Nauvoo Expositor*, Austin Cowles stated:

In the latter part of the summer, 1843, the Patriarch, Hyrum Smith, did in the High Council, of which I was a member, introduce what he said was a revelation given through the Prophet; . . . according to his reading there was contained the following doctrines; 1st, the sealing up of persons to eternal life, against all sins, save that of shedding innocent blood or of consenting thereto; 2nd, the doctrine of a plurality of wives, or marrying virgins; that “David and Solomon had many wives, yet in this they sinned not save in the matter of Uriah. (*Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844)

On June 8, 1844, the Nauvoo City Council met and declared the *Nauvoo Expositor* a “public nuisance.” Joseph Smith stated: “I immediately ordered the Marshal to **destroy it without delay**, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 432). For more information on this matter see pages 257-258 of this book.

Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum emphatically denied the *Expositor’s* charge that they were practicing polygamy. Hyrum Smith claimed that Austin Cowles statement was a “falsehood”:

Councillor H. Smith proceeded to show the **falsehood** of Austin Cowles in the “Expositor,” in relation to the revelation referred to, that it was in **reference to former days**, and **not the present time** as related by Cowles. (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, June 19, 1844)

When this statement was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, the last seventeen words were deleted without any indication to cover up the fact that Hyrum Smith had lied:

Councilor Hyrum Smith proceeded to show the **falsehood** of Austin Cowles in the *Expositor*, in relation to the revelation referred to. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 442)

Hyrum Smith also made this statement:

Councilor, H. Smith, . . . referred to the revelation, read to the High Council of the Church, which has caused so much talk about a multiplicity of wives, that said Revelation was in answer to a question concerning things which transpired in former days, and had no reference to the present time. (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, June 19, 1844)

When the Mormon historians reprinted this they left off the clause “**and had no reference to the present time**”:

Councilor Hyrum Smith . . . Referred to the revelation read to the High Council of the Church, which has caused so much talk, about multiplicity of wives; that said revelation was in answer to a question concerning things which transpired in former days. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 435)

The *Nauvoo Neighbor* reported the following concerning Joseph Smith:

He then read several statements of Austin Cowles in the *Expositor* concerning a private interview, and said he never had any private conversation with Austin Cowles on these subjects—that he preached on the stand from the bible, shewing the order in ancient days, having **nothing to do with [t]he present times**. (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, June 19, 1844)

When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, the clause “having nothing to do with [t]he present times” was deleted without any indication:

He then read several statements of Austin Cowles in

the *Expositor* concerning a private interview, and said he never had any private conversations with Austin Cowles on these subjects; that he preached on the stand from the Bible, showing the order in ancient days. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 441)

Eight years after the Mormon leaders destroyed the *Nauvoo Expositor*, they published the revelation on plural marriage. This revelation proves beyond all doubt that the statements in Cowles affidavit are true. Thus it is plain to see that the *Nauvoo Expositor* was condemned on the basis of false testimony given by Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

After Joseph Smith's death, the Mormon leaders still tried to keep the doctrine of plural marriage secret. John J. Stewart stated: ". . . the doctrine had to kept **confidential** until after the Saints reached Utah" (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 31). On May 1, 1845, the following statement appeared in the *Times and Seasons*:

For once let us say, that Cain, who went to Nod, and taught the doctrine of a "**plurality of wives**;" and the giants who practiced the same **iniquity**; . . . are all coworkers on the same plan:—when the reward for every man's work is given—this will be the everlasting answer to all sects, sorts, and conditions, from Cain down to Christian Israelites, **I never knew you!** (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 888)

On page 894 of the same volume this statement appeared:

Sidney Rigdon, I see by the papers, has made an exposition of Mormonism, **charging Joseph Smith and the Mormons with polygamy**, &c. . . .

As to the charge of **polygamy**, I will quote from the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, which is the subscribed faith of the church and is **strictly enforced**. Article Marriage, sec. 91, par. 4, says, "Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and **polygamy**, we declare that we believe that **one man** should have **but one wife**, and **one woman but one husband** . . ."

In the July 1, 1845, issue of the *Millennial Star* the Mormon apostle Parley P. Pratt wrote:

Again, beware of seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, as first introduced by John C. Bennet, under the name of the "**spiritual wife**" doctrine; . . .

Should any elder or member, come unto you professing to hold to any such **doctrine** or **practice**, either **secretly** or publicly, you may be sure he is **not of God**; and it becomes your duty to reject him, . . . he will be immediately disfellowshipped, and expelled from the church.

For know assuredly that **no one** has been authorized to teach, practice, or introduce any such doctrine in any of the branches of the church. **Nor is there any such doctrine known, held, or practised, as a principle of the Latter-day Saints.** (*Millennial Star*, vol. 6, p. 22)

The following is taken from an article published in the *Times and Seasons* on November 15, 1844:

. . . as if the law of the land allowed a man a **plurality of wives**, is fiendish, and like the rest of Sidney's revelation, just because he wanted "to go to Pittsburg and live." Wo to the man or men who will thus wilfully lie to injure an **innocent** people! The **law of the land** and the **rules of the Church do not allow man to have more than one wife alive at once**, . . . (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 715)

When someone stated that Joseph Smith taught polygamy, the *Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star* called it a lie:

**12th Lie.—Joseph Smith taught a system of polygamy.**

**12th Refutation.**—The Revelations given through Joseph Smith, state the following: . . . "We believe that **one man should have one wife.**" *Doctrine and Covenants*, page 331. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 12, pp. 29-30)

As late as 1850 John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, denied that the church believed in the practice of plural marriage, when he himself had six living wives.

In a public discussion in Boulogne-Sur-Mer, France, he stated:

We are **accused here of polygamy**, and actions the most indelicate, obscene, and disgusting, such that none but a corrupt and depraved heart could have contrived. These things are **too outrageous** to admit of belief; . . . I shall content myself by reading **our views** of chastity and **marriage**, from a work published by us, containing some of the articles of our Faith. "*Doctrine and Covenants*," page 330 . . . "Inasmuch as this Church of Jesus Christ has been reproached with the **crime** of fornication and **polygamy**, we declare that we believe that **one man** should have **one wife**, and **one woman but one husband**, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again." (A tract published by John Taylor in 1850, p. 8; found in *Orson Pratt's Works*, 1851 edition)

The names of the six wives John Taylor had at this time are found in *The Life of John Taylor*, by B. H. Roberts, page 465. These names are listed below as well as the marriage dates.

Lonora Cannon, January 28, 1833  
Elizabeth Haigham, December 12, 1843  
Jane Ballantyne, February 25, 1844  
Mary Ann Oakley, April, 1845  
Sophia Whitaker, April, 23, 1847  
Harriet Whitaker, December 4, 1847

There is no doubt that many of the Mormon people were very embarrassed when their leaders announced that polygamy was a doctrine of the church. Elder John Jaques wrote the following:

But to the question—Have not the Latter-day Saints denied that a plurality of wives existed in their midst, when such was actually the case? Doubtless some have, because they did not know that such was the case. . . . they are not culpable for denying it, because, to the best of their knowledge, such was not the case.

Probably you may wish to put the question still closer to me—Have not some **Elders** of the Latter-day Saints **denied** that Polygamy was practised in the Church, when **at the same time they positively knew that it was**? That is a personal question, and must be answered accordingly. I can only answer for myself—I have not, neither have I heard any other Elder.

The question may arise in your mind—If a plurality of wives has been **prevalent in the Church** so long, why have not the **Elders publicly preached** the doctrine? The answer is very plain. Because neither the body of the Saints nor Christendom were prepared for it. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 15, p. 165)

While Mr. Jaques may have been able to claim ignorance for an excuse, Joseph Smith, John Taylor and other Mormon leaders had no such excuse.

As we have already shown in another chapter, the Mormon leaders continued to pursue a deceitful course with regard to polygamy even after they issued the Manifesto. The reader will remember that Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, testified before the Master in Chancery that the Manifesto was supposed to end all unlawful cohabitation even though the marriages had been performed before it was issued. Secretly, however, he taught that "This manifesto only refers to future marriages, and does not affect past conditions" ("The Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon." October 7, 1890). It is very obvious, then, that Wilford Woodruff was guilty of perjury in his testimony given before the Master in Chancery. That the Mormon leaders were embarrassed by this false testimony is evident from the Apostle Cannon's journal. Under the date of April 1, 1892, he reported the following:

. . . we got seven of the brethren together . . . Pres. Snow . . . then continued: ". . . When the Manifesto was issued we had no idea that it was to effect our cohabitation with our wives, but Pres. Woodruff and his brethren who were on the witness stand before the Master in Chancery, were **forced to go further in their testimony** than



we anticipated, or we would have been placed in a worse position than we were before the Manifesto was issued.—It is the privilege of you brethren to see the Savior, and thus testify of Him and that you know He lives.”—Heber J. Grant said: “I remember Pres. Woodruff saying that the Manifesto would never apply to our living with our wives, and he would see them damned and in hell before he would agree to cease living with his wives or advise any other person to do so. . . . Concerning the living with our wives, I believe that if we had taken the manly stand and had said we will continue to live with and honor our present wives but will cease marrying in the future, we would have fared better; but now I cannot see any chance of our ever being permitted to live with our wives in freedom again.” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” April 1, 1892)

The church leaders not only continued to practice unlawful cohabitation, but they also continued to perform plural marriages long after the Manifesto was issued. When they found themselves in trouble over this matter, they went so far as to ask Anthony W. Ivins to go back to Washington, D.C., and give **false testimony** before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate.

### The Mormon Battalion

The story of the Mormon Battalion clearly reveals the duplicity of the early Mormon leaders. The Mormon Battalion was composed of 500 Mormons who were called by the President of the United States to serve in the U.S. Army. This group was raised after the Mormons left Nauvoo and were established in Winter Quarters. Dr. Hugh Nibley claims that this was a “great patriotic sacrifice” on the part of the Mormons. The anti-Mormon writer T.B.H. Stenhouse, however, said that “the instructions of the Federal Government to employ the Mormon volunteers was an act of sympathetic kindness. The Government did not require them at all, but extended as far as consistent its aid” (*The Rocky Mountain Saints*, 1873, p. 240).

Many Mormons have claimed that the President was persecuting them when he asked for the Battalion. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, went so far as to say that President Polk should have been hung for requesting the Battalion. On September 13, 1857, he stated:

There cannot be a more damnable, dastardly order issued than was issued by the Administration to this people while they were in an Indian Country, in 1846 . . . while we were doing our best to leave their borders, the poor, low, degraded curses sent a requisition for five hundred of our men to go and fight their battles! That was President Polk; and he is now weltering in hell with old Zachary Taylor, where the present administrators will soon be, if they do not repent. . . .

There is high treason in Washington; and if the law was carried out, it would hang up many of them. And the very act of James K. Polk in taking five hundred of our men, while we were making our way out of the country under an agreement forced upon us, would have hung him between the heavens and the earth, if the laws had been faithfully executed. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 231, 232, 235)

On February 18, 1855, Brigham Young stated:

Permit me to draw your attention, for a moment, to a few facts in relation to raising the Battalion . . . I ask, had we not reason to feel that our enemies were in the ascendant? that even the government, by their silent acquiescence, were also in favor of our destruction? Had we not, I ask, some reason to consider them all, both the people and the government, alike our enemies?

And when, in addition to all this, and while fleeing from our enemies, another test of fidelity and patriotism was contrived by them for our destruction, and acquiesced in by the Government, . . . consisting of a requisition from the War Department, to furnish

a Battalion . . . I ask again, could we refrain from considering both people and government our most deadly foes? . . . under these trying circumstances we were required to turn out of our travelling camps 500 of our most efficient men, leaving the old, the young, the women upon the hands of the residue, to take care of and support; and in case we refused to comply with so unreasonable a requirement, we were to be deemed enemies to the Government, and fit only for the slaughter.

Look also at the proportion of the number required of us, compared with that of any other portion of the Republic. . . . our quota of an equitable requisition would not have exceeded four persons. Instead of this, five hundred must go, thirteen thousand per cent above an equal ratio, even if all other things had been equal, but under the peculiar circumstances in which it was made comparison fails to demonstrate, and reason itself totters beneath its enormity. And for whom were we to fight? As I have already shown, for those that we had every reason to believe were our most deadly foes. . . . history furnished no parallel, either of the severity and injustice of the demand, or in the alacrity, faithfulness, and patriotism with which it was answered and complied. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, pp. 173-175)

John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff made similar statements. Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Church, also claimed that the request for the Mormon Battalion was an act of persecution (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, pp. 360-361).

The anti-Mormon writer R. N. Baskin claimed that the Government’s request for the Mormon Battalion was a means of helping the Mormons and that the Mormon leaders misrepresented the Government’s motives in calling for the Battalion:

The masses of the people in Utah were formerly taught, and yet believe, that the government . . . demand was made for the purpose of oppressing the Mormons. . . .

Both Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff knew that the enlistment of the Mormon Battalion was requested by Colonel Little, who **represented the Mormon Church**, and that President Polk granted the request for the purpose of assisting the Mormons on their journey to the West, and not to oppress or injure them. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, 1914, pp. 193-194)

Although the Mormon leaders later claimed that the Government was trying to persecute them when they called for the Battalion, their own books and journals written at the time prove that they considered it a favor. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, wrote the following in 1846:

. . . the President of the United States is **favourably disposed to us**. He has sent out orders to have five hundred of our brethren employed in an expedition . . . it amounts to the same **as paying them for going to the place where they were destined to go without**. They also had the privilege of choosing their own leaders. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 8, p. 117)

On July 13, 1846, Hosea Stout wrote that the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith explained that the Mormons themselves had requested the Government to help them and that the calling of the Mormon Battalion was a special favor:

To day Br George A. Smith gave an account of Col Kane the man from Washington spoken of before.

Col Kane & **Elder Little** from the East he said **were the ones who brought about the order** for the 500 mormon troops and that it was done as **a special favor to us by the President** & that they brought the dispatches to Col Kearney Commander of the West, who detailed Capt. James Allen to us to execute the same. This made the matter plain and I was well satisfied for I found that there was no trick in it. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 178)

The most devastating evidence against the Mormon claims of persecution, however, comes from the “Manuscript



History of Brigham Young” in the seventh volume of the *History of the Church*. Unfortunately, however, he discontinued following it with the close of February, 1846, claiming that there was an “inadequacy” of space in that volume to continue daily entries. Nevertheless, B. H. Roberts must have read the part concerning the Mormon Battalion, for he told the truth concerning it. He admitted that the whole thing was planned by the Mormon leaders and that there was no persecution involved:

... Jesse C. Little ... had been appointed to preside over the Eastern States Mission with instructions to visit Washington ... Elder Little contacted the federal administration and ... obtained the promise of President James K. Polk that an opportunity would be given for a company of at least 500 men ... **Elder Little had proposed to raise 1000 settlers for California in the eastern branches of the church and 1000 men from their encampments on the Missouri, but the administration decided to take into service only 500 men.** ...

Unfortunately there were many misapprehensions concerning the enlistment of this company of volunteers. For a **long time** it was represented as current traditional history that the opportunity given for enlistment was a “demand” or “requisition” or “draft” ... unjust and out of all proportion to the membership of the church, and made from sinister motives of encompassing the destruction of the moving caravans either by scattering or annihilating them. ... Nothing of this kind, of course, could be implied in the action of the administration at Washington, still it was so reported and believed. In the first place, **a much larger offer than 500 men was tendered to the administration, and the service was almost piteously pleaded for by a representative of the Church**—the president of the Eastern States Mission. ... The quota in most of the states was over-subscribed by three times the number asked for, and the United States did **not really need the service of the Mormon Battalion** of 500 men in the sense that there was a lack of volunteers. The war was a very popular one. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 611-613)

Even though B. H. Roberts admits the truth concerning the Mormon Battalion, he is careful not to mention the fact that Brigham Young, John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff were the men who misrepresented the story of the Mormon Battalion.

Fortunately, we have been able to obtain a copy of the “Manuscript History of Brigham Young.” This history proves beyond all doubt that the Mormon leaders requested the Government to help them and that President Polk did them a special favor when he called for the Battalion. In a letter to “Prest. Samuel Bent & Council,” dated July 7, 1846, Brigham Young stated:

Elder Little, President of the New England churches, is here also, direct from Washington, who has been to see the President on the subject of emigrating the Saints to the western coast, and confirms all that Capt. Allen has stated to us. **The U.S. want our friendship, the President wants to do us good**, and secure our confidence. The outfit of these five hundred men **costs us nothing, and their pay will be sufficient to take their families over the mountains**. There is war between Mexico and the U.S., to whom California must fall prey, and if we are the first settlers, the old citizens cannot have a Hancock or Missouri pretext to mob the saints. **The thing is from above, for our good, has long been understood between us and the U.S. Government**, but the first blow was struck sooner than we anticipated, the church would not help the Twelve over the mountains when they wanted to go, and now we will help the churches. (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” July 7, 1846, typed copy)

On July 13, 1846, Brigham Young made a speech in which he made the following statement:

Now, suppose we refuse this **privilege**, what will we do? If you won't go, I will go and leave you. We told you some time ago we would fit you out to go, and now we are ready to fit you out with Capn. Allen as the agent of the U.S. **to help us. The President has now stretched out his hand to help us and I thank God and him too.** (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” July 13, 1846)

R. N. Baskin quoted Henry W. Lawrence as making the following statement:

... there was a battalion called for from the Mormons ... I always supposed, from the teachings of the Mormon leaders, that it was a requisition, and I have heard over and over the government handled roughly—denounced for calling upon the Mormon people for 500 of their best men, to cripple them right there on the banks of the Missouri, in the most trying time. ... I used often to think that that was a most damnable thing. That was preached in sermons by Brigham Young, by George A. Smith and the other leading men of the church, time and time again. The true condition of the thing was, we afterwards found out, and it was one of the things that turned me against the system, that it was on the solicitation of the agents of this church that the battalion was asked for. Jesse S. Little was one of them. The government, out of kindness to the people, and on the solicitations of the agents of this church, asked for that battalion. They paid them one or two months' wages in advance, and that money was used to help buy teams and assistance for the people, and helped them to come out here to Salt Lake. Instead of the truth being told, they were told that it was done in order to cripple them in the face of the Indians. This was one of the things they taught the people to prejudice them against the government of the United States. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, pp. 195-196)

R. N. Baskin charged that Brigham Young was guilty of “flagrant duplicity” because of his statements concerning the Mormon Battalion. A careful comparison of Brigham Young's statements made in 1846 with statements he made in 1857 does show “duplicity” on his part. In 1846 he said:

Elder Little, President of the New England churches ... has been to see the President on the subject of emigrating the Saints to the western coast, ... **The U.S. want our friendship, the President wants to do us good**, and secure our confidence. The outfit of these five hundred men **costs us nothing, and their pay will be sufficient to take their families over the mountains ... the thing is from above, for our good, has long been understood between us and the U.S. Government**, ... (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” July 7, 1846)

Just eleven years later (1857) Brigham Young stated:

There **cannot** be a more **damnable, dastardly order issued than was issued** by the Administration to this people while they were in an Indian country, in 1846. ... the poor, low, **degraded curses** sent a requisition for five hundred of our men to go and fight **their battles!** That was **President Polk**; and he is now **weltering in hell** ... the very act of James K. Polk in taking five hundred of our men, while we were making our way out of the country under an agreement forced upon us, would have **hung him between the heavens and the earth**, if the laws had been faithfully executed. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 231, 232, 235)

These statements by Brigham Young reveal duplicity of the very worst kind. For a more complete treatment of this whole matter see our *Case*, vol. 1, pages 27-34.

## Making God a Liar

The Apostle John A. Widtsoe claimed that Joseph Smith was a man of truth:

The explanation that Joseph Smith was a deliberate deceiver has not satisfied all students. The record of Joseph's life is **one of honesty**. He **taught honesty in all affairs**; he insisted that his people be honest; the verified events of his life show him always reaching out for honesty. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, 1951 edition, p. 324)

It does not take much research to show that these statements concerning Joseph Smith are completely false.

As we have shown, Joseph Smith was completely dishonest in regard to the doctrine of polygamy. Strange as it may seem, however, the Book of Mormon teaches that liars will go to hell. In 2 Nephi 9:34 we read: “Wo unto the **liar**, for he shall be **thrust down to hell**.” In Enos 1:6 we read “And I, Enos, knew that God **could not lie**; wherefore my guilt was swept away.” In Ether 3:12 we find the following: “And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and **canst not lie**.”

While the Book of Mormon, which was first printed in 1830, teaches that God is a God of truth, the Book of Abraham, published 12 years later, seems to teach that God approves of and encourages the practice of lying. In Abraham 2:22-25 we read that God told Abraham to lie concerning his wife. The Bible teaches that it was Abraham who told his wife to lie, not the Lord. In the book of Genesis we read:

And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that **he** said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. (Genesis 12:11-13)

In Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham we find that this story has been rewritten to make it appear that God told Abraham to lie about his wife:

And it came to pass when I was come near to enter into Egypt, **the Lord said unto me**: Behold, Sarai, thy wife, is a very fair woman to look upon;

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see her, they will say—She is his wife; and they will kill you, but they will save her alive; therefore see that ye do on this wise:

Let her say unto the Egyptians, she is thy sister, and thy soul shall live.

And it came to pass that I, Abraham, told Sarai, my wife, **all that the Lord had said unto me**—Therefore say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Abraham 2:22-25)

Perhaps Joseph Smith rewrote the Bible story of Abraham and his wife, making God responsible for lying, to justify his own conduct. Since Joseph Smith could not tell the truth about his practice of polygamy, he evidently felt that it would be wise to make it appear that God approved of lying. His followers who knew that he practiced polygamy would then feel that it was God’s will for him to deny it.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have found that the Mormon Church leaders claim that their church operates in “full light,” that there “is no secrecy about its doctrine,” and that it has “fought half-truth and untruth.” Research, however, reveals that the church has not always operated in full light. Sometimes secrecy is used to further its purposes, and sometimes untruth and cover up have been used. The Mormon leaders would do well to consider these words found in the book of Isaiah:

Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? (Isaiah 29:15-16)



## 19. Joseph Smith

The importance of Joseph Smith in Mormon theology cannot be overemphasized. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

Well, now, examine the character of **the Savior**, and examine the characters of those who have written the Old and New Testament; and **then compare them with the character of Joseph Smith**, the founder of this work— . . . and you will find that **his character stands as fair as that of any man’s mentioned in the Bible. We can find no person who presents a better character to the world** when the facts are known than **Joseph Smith, Jun.**, the prophet, and his brother, Hyrum Smith, who was murdered with him. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, p. 203)

. . . **a better man never lived upon the face of this earth.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 41)

I shall bow to Jesus, my Governor, and under him, to brother Joseph . . . he is my **head**, under Jesus Christ . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 41)

. . . no man or woman in this dispensation will **ever** enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of **Joseph Smith**. . . . **every man and woman must have the certificate of Joseph Smith**, junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are— . . . **I cannot go there without his consent** . . . He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as **God** does in heaven. (*Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 289)

He is the man through whom God has spoken...yet I would not like to call him a saviour, though in a certain capacity **he was a God to us**, and is to the nations of the earth, and will continue to be. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 321)

What an uproar it would make in the Christian world to say, I am an Apostle of Joseph. Write it down, and write it back to your friends in the east, that **I am an apostle of Joseph Smith**. . . . all who reject my testimony will go to hell, so sure as there is one, no matter whether it be hot or cold; . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 212)

I will now give **my scripture**—“Whosoever confesseth that **Joseph Smith** was sent of God . . . that spirit is of God; and every spirit that does not confess that God has sent Joseph Smith, and revealed the everlasting Gospel to and through him, is of Antichrist, . . .” (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 176)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, made these statements concerning Joseph Smith:

You call us fools; but the day will be, gentlemen and ladies, whether you belong to this Church or not, when you will prize brother Joseph Smith as the Prophet of the Living God, **and look upon him as a God**, and also upon Brigham Young, our Governor in the Territory of Deseret. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 88)

In the Bible we read that when Stephen was stoned, he died “calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” (Acts 7:59) When Brigham Young died, however, his last words were “Joseph, Joseph, Joseph!” The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts states:

“The last words he uttered, that were distinctly understood,” says the bedside chronicle, were—

“Joseph, Joseph, Joseph!”\*

Other remarks relating to “Joseph” were expressed, but in a manner that was not comprehended. They gave evidence, however, that his mind was occupied with thoughts of his predecessor, the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 509)

In a letter to us, dated April 14, 1961, Levi Edgar Young, one of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies, made this statement: “The grandeur of Joseph Smith’s life must become known to the people of the world, and I am praying daily that people by the thousands may turn to him” (Letter photographically reprinted in our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, p. 75).

Mormons tend to elevate Joseph Smith almost to the same level as Jesus Christ. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated that Joseph Smith was “perhaps the most Christ-like man to live upon the earth since Jesus himself” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 1). It is interesting to compare this with Joseph Smith’s own statement in the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 335: “I am not so much a ‘Christian’ as many suppose I am. When a man undertakes to ride me for a horse, I feel disposed to kick up and throw him off, and ride him.”

The following appeared in *Tiffany’s Monthly* in 1859:

People sometimes wonder that the Mormon can revere Joseph Smith. That they can by any means make a Saint of him. But they must remember, that the Joseph Smith preached in England, and the one shot at Carthage, Ill., are not the same. The ideal prophet differs widely from the real person. To one, ignorant of his character, he may be idealized and be made the impersonation of every virtue. He may be associated in the mind with all that is pure, true, lovely and divine. Art may make him, indeed, an object of religious veneration. But remember, the Joseph Smith thus venerated, is not the real, actual Joseph Smith . . . but one that art has created. (*Tiffany’s Monthly*, 1859, p. 170)

### A Fighting Prophet

Joseph Smith was a man of great physical strength. He enjoyed wrestling and other sports where he could display his strength. Under the date of March 11, 1843, we find this entry in Joseph Smith’s *History*: “In the evening, when pulling sticks, I pulled up Justus A. Morse, the strongest man in Ramus, with one hand” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 302). Two days later Joseph Smith recorded: “Monday, 13.—I wrestled with William Wall, the most expert wrestler in Ramus, and threw him” (*Ibid.*, p. 302). On June 30, 1843, Joseph Smith gave a speech in Nauvoo in which he stated: “I feel as strong as a giant. I pulled sticks with the men coming along, and I pulled up with one hand the strongest man that could be found. Then two men tried, but they could not pull me up, . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 466).

Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith gives this information in the

\***FOOTNOTE:** Lester E. Bush, Jr., says that “The dying exclamation, ‘Joseph, Joseph, Joseph’ later attributed to Brigham by a daughter present at his death is mentioned neither by Richard Young nor the doctors” (*Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 5, p. 99). However this may be, Joseph Fielding Smith and other Mormon historians have accepted without question the words attributed to Brigham Young. Assistant Church Historian James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard write: “His last words were simply: ‘Joseph! Joseph! Joseph!’” (*The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, 1976, p. 375).



book *Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress, And Present Condition*, by N. W. Green, p. 52:

It appears the Prophet Joseph had one day broken the leg of my brother Howard, while wrestling. They . . . were both fond of that sport, and on this occasion they had wrestled with uncommon enthusiasm, when, by an unlucky pass, Howard fell with a broken leg. It was immediately set by the "Prophet," . . . Howard to this day claims he experienced no pain of any amount, and believes yet that Joseph healed it.

John D. Lee related that one day Joseph Smith and some of his men were wrestling. Because it was "the Sabbath day" Sidney Rigdon tried to break it up. Joseph Smith "dragged him from the ring, bareheaded, and tore Rigdon's fine pulpit coat from the collar to the waist; then he turned to the men and said: 'Go in, boys, and have your fun'" (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, pp. 76-78).

In his book *Mormon Portraits*, page 24, Dr. Wyl quoted the following:

He liked foot races and would have his boots off in a moment, to the great grief of old bigots. I remember the visit of a U.S.A. major, . . . Joseph wanted to wrestle with him. He threw off his coat and cried: "I bet you five dollars that I will throw you, come on!" The major declined, Joseph laughed and said: "Now you see the benefit of one's being a prophet; I knew you wouldn't wrestle." One of the Saints felt so scandalized by this joke of the prophet that he left the Church.

Two reverends came one day to Nauvoo . . . Joseph took them to his study, . . . The two reverends interrupted Joseph frequently . . . getting impatient the Prophet said to the two holy men, while he stood up in his full h[igh]light: "Gentlemen, I am not much of a theologian, but I bet you five dollars, that I will throw you one after the other." The reverends ran away and Joseph laughed himself nearly to death.

Jedediah M. Grant, a member of the First Presidency under Brigham Young, related this humorous incident:

I am aware that a great many have so much piety in them, that they are like the Baptist priest who came to see Joseph Smith. . . . the Baptist stood before him, and folding his arms said, "Is it possible that I now flash my optics upon a man who has conversed with my Savior?" "Yes," says the Prophet, "I don't know but you do; would not you like to **wrestle with me**?" That, you see, brought the priest right on to the thrashing floor, and he turned a summerset right straight. After he had whirled round a few times, like a duck shot in the head, he concluded that his piety had been awfully shocked, even to the centre, and went to the Prophet to learn why he had so shocked his piety. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, pp. 66-67)

Joseph Smith sometimes lost his temper and resorted to physical violence, Benjamin F. Johnson stated:

And yet, although so social and even convivial at times, he would allow no arrogance or undue liberties. Criticisms, even by his associates, were rarely acceptable. Contradictions would arouse in him the lion at once. By no one of his fellows would he be superceded. In the early days at Kirtland, and elsewhere, one or another of his associates were more than once, for their impudence, helped from the congregation by **his foot**. . . . He **soundly thrashed his brother William**, . . . While with him in such fraternal, social and sometimes convivial moods, we could not then so fully realize the greatness and majesty of his calling. But since his martyrdom, it has continued to magnify in our view as the glories of this last dispensation have more fully unfolded to our comprehension. (Letter by Benjamin F. Johnson to Elder George S. Gibbs, 1903, as printed in *The Testimony of Joseph Smith's Best Friend*, pp. 4-5)

Calvin Stoddard once testified that "Smith then came up and knocked him in the forehead with his flat hand—the blow knocked him down, when Smith repeated the blow four or five times, very hard—made him blind—that Smith afterwards came to him and asked his forgiveness . . ." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 132). The Mormon writer Max Parkin quotes Luke Johnson as saying that when a minister insulted Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, Smith

"boxed his ears with both hands, and turning his face towards the door, kicked him into the street, . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 268).

In Joseph Smith's *History* for the year 1843, he tells of two fights which he had in Nauvoo:

Josiah Butterfield came to my house and insulted me so outrageously that **I kicked him** out of the house, across the yard, and into the street. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 316)

Bagby called me a liar, and picked up a stone to throw at me, which so enraged me that I followed him a few steps, and struck him two or three times. Esquire Daniel H. Wells stepped between us and succeeded in separating us. I told the Esquire to assess the fine for the assault, and I was willing to pay it. He not doing it, I rode down to Alderman Whitney, stated the circumstances, and he imposed a fine which I paid, and then returned to the political meeting. (*Ibid.*, p. 524)

On August 13, 1843, Joseph Smith admitted that he had tried to choke Walter Bagby: "I met him, and he gave me some abusive language, taking up a stone to throw at me: I seized him by the throat to choke him off" (*Ibid.*, p. 531).

Brigham Young once made this statement concerning Joseph Smith:

Some may think that I am rather too severe; but if you had the Prophet Joseph to deal with, you would think that I am quite mild. . . . He would not bear the usage I have borne, and would appear as though he would **tear down all the houses in the city, and tear up trees by the roots**, if men conducted to him in the way they have to me. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, pp. 317-318)

## General Smith

Joseph Smith was very interested in military matters. This is reflected in the Book of Mormon, for it is filled with accounts of wars and bloodshed. Dr. Hugh Nibley admits that "Readers of the Book of Mormon often express disgust or at least weariness and impatience at having to wade through 170 pages of wars and alarms in a religious book. This writer must confess to having suffered from the same prejudice . . . In twenty years of writing about the Book of Mormon we have studiously ignored the war stories. But that is where we were wrong" (*Since Cumorah*, p. 328).

Only four years after Joseph Smith published the Book of Mormon, he organized an army and marched "to Missouri to 'redeem Zion.'" This project was a complete failure (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4). In 1838 Joseph Smith had the Mormons organized into an army at Far West, Missouri, but he ended up surrendering to the Militia. At Nauvoo, Illinois, the Mormons organized the Nauvoo Legion. Robert Bruce Flanders states:

The crowning provision of the charter gave the city its own little army, the famous Nauvoo Legion. . . . The Legion was therefore independent of and not subject to the military laws of Illinois. (*Nauvoo: Kingdom On The Mississippi*, p. 100)

. . . "Colonel," "Captain," or "General" came to replace "Brother," "Elder," or "President" in the address of the Saints. Military trappings were for them a particular symbol of status, prestige, and reassurance . . . The record clearly reveals that Lieutenant General (he preferred the full title) Smith set great store by his military role. . . .

As the city grew, so did the Legion, exciting apprehension among gentiles in the vicinity concerning the nature and intent of the Mormon kingdom. (*Ibid.*, pp. 112-113)

Fawn Brodie made these interesting observations concerning this matter:

Few visitors to Nauvoo . . . had any idea of the potentialities of the Mormon movement. But many of them were troubled by the unmistakable military atmosphere that pervaded the city. . . . Every able-bodied man between eighteen and forty-five was compelled to join [the Legion], and heavy fines were imposed for failure

to appear at parade. By January 1842 the Legion had a complement of 2,000 men. . . .

Joseph requested—and received—from Governor Carlin the commission of lieutenant-general and thereafter frequently jested about his outranking every military officer in the United States. He came to prefer the title “General” even to “President” and used it in much of his correspondence. His uniform was smartly designed: . . . On his hip he carried a sword and two big horse-pistols. Delighting in the pomp and splendor of parades, he called out the Legion on every possible occasion, marching at the head on his magnificent black stallion, Charlie.

The military spirit infected all the boys in Nauvoo, and Joseph, with his eye ever on the future, soon had them organized into a military corps of their own. (*No Man Knows My History*, pp. 270-271)

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus stated: “Of the Prophet’s appearance as a Lieutenant General at the head of the Nauvoo Legion, Lyman L. Woods recalled, ‘I have seen him on a white horse wearing the uniform of a general. . . . He was leading a parade of the Legion and looked like a God’” (*Joseph Smith, The Man and The Seer*, p. 5).

Joseph Smith was very proud of his position as head of the Nauvoo Legion and liked to be referred to as “Lieutenant-General Joseph Smith” (see *History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 382). The Mormon writer John J. Stewart said that “Joseph . . . was chosen as commanding officer with the rank of lieutenant-general . . . thus becoming the highest ranked military officer in the United States, although limited to command of the Legion” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 143). Actually, Joseph Smith’s title of “Lieutenant-General” did not really amount to anything outside of Nauvoo. When Ralph L. Foster wrote to the United States Military Academy at West Point regarding this matter, he received a letter from Joseph M. O’Donnell (Chief, Archives & History Division) in which the following appeared:

. . . although the Nauvoo Legion was chartered by the State of Illinois, it was not considered to be part of the state militia. . . . Joseph Smith, Jr., was not a Lieutenant General in the state militia, but of a small Mormon Army established to police Nauvoo, Illinois and to defend the state of Illinois. (Letter dated August 29, 1963, photographically reproduced in *The Book of Mormon on Trial*, by Ralph Leonard Foster, facing p. 20)

At any rate, Joseph Smith took his title very seriously. Josiah Quincy related the following:

As we rode back, there was more dispute between the minister and Smith. . . . the minister, . . . suddenly exclaimed, “Why, I told my congregation the other Sunday that they might as well believe Joe Smith as such theology as that.” “Did you say Joe Smith in a sermon?” inquired the person to whom the title had been applied. “Of course I did. Why not?” The prophet’s reply was given with a quiet superiority that was overwhelming: “Considering only the day and the place, it would have been more respectful to have said Lieutenant-General Joseph Smith.” Clearly, the worthy minister was no match for the head of the Mormon church. (*Figures of the Past*, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, p. 140)

In Benjamin F. Johnson’s letter to George S. Gibbs, he stated that the “Prophet Joseph laid the foundation of our church in a military spirit.” Ebenezer Robinson related the following:

Thus the corner stones of the house of the Lord, . . . were laid amid the roar of cannon, and by the hands of men wearing the garments, and bearing the implements of war and of blood.

Lieut. General Joseph Smith, who superintended laying the chief corner stone and Brig. Gen’l. Don Carlos Smith, . . . were both clothed in their military garments, and wearing their swords at the time. (*The Return*, vol. 2, pp. 298-302, typed copy)

The *History of the Church*, vol. 4, pages 326-330, gives an interesting account of these proceedings.

Joseph Smith seems to have loved military displays. Under the date of May 7, 1842, we find this statement in the *History of the Church*:

The Nauvoo Legion...was reviewed by Lieutenant-General Joseph Smith, who commanded through the day. . . . At the close of the parade, Lieutenant-General Joseph Smith . . . remarked “that his soul was never better satisfied than on this occasion.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 3)

The Mormon writer Gary Dean Guthrie made these observations concerning Joseph Smith’s love for military matters:

Many of Joseph’s own distinctive personality traits came out during the march [of Zion’s Camp] that became characteristic of his administration. The most prominent was a spirit of militancy and the excitement for parades, drills and sham battles. (“Joseph Smith As An Administrator,” M.A. thesis, B.Y.U., May 1969, p. 60)

Joseph Smith seems to have desired to lead a large army, for he prepared a “Petition to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, dated 26th March, asking the privilege of raising 100,000 men to extend protection to persons wishing to settle Oregon and other portions of the territory of the United States, and extend protection to the people in Texas” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 282). In this document we find the following:

Section 1. Be it ordained . . . that Joseph Smith, . . . is hereby authorized and empowered to raise a company of one hundred thousand armed volunteers . . .

Sec. 2. And be it further ordained that if any person or persons shall hinder or attempt to hinder or molest the said Joseph Smith from executing his designs in raising said volunteers, . . . he, or they so hindering, molesting, or offending, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars . . . or by hard labor on some public work not exceeding two years, or both, . . .

See. [sic] 3. And be it further ordained, . . . the said Joseph Smith is hereby constituted a member of the army of the United States, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 277)

There was, of course, hardly any chance that Joseph Smith’s petition would be accepted. On April 25, 1844, Orson Hyde wrote a letter from Washington in which he stated: “Mr. Semple said that Mr. Smith could not constitutionally be constituted a member of the army by law; and this, if nothing else, would prevent its passage” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 372).

Joseph Smith’s military plans and maneuvers were very disturbing to the non-Mormons who lived around Nauvoo. The following statements appeared in the anti-Mormon paper, *The Warsaw Signal*:

How military these people are becoming! Every thing they say or do seems to breathe the spirit of military tactics. Their prophet appears, on all great occasions, in his sp[ec]tacular regimental dress signs his name Lieut. General, and more titles are to be found in the Nauvoo Legion, than any one book on military tactics can produce; . . . Truly fighting must, be a part of the creed of these Saints! (*Warsaw Signal*, July 21, 1841)

The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey made these observations concerning the Nauvoo Legion:

Americans were for the most part decidedly opposed to large standing armies. Thus, many citizens in Illinois viewed with abhorrence the growing might of the Nauvoo Legion. Each muster, parade, or mock battle caused speculation regarding the ultimate design of its leaders. Rumors accusing Joseph Smith of calculating an attack on Texas, Mexico, Missouri, and even the United States itself, were incessantly printed in newspapers and disseminated by word of mouth throughout the country. Some individuals believed the Nauvoo Legion would have to be destroyed before it had grown so strong that opposition to it would be unthinkable. Citizens living in Missouri were especially fearful that the Mormons would assault their homes and cities in retribution for the losses they had suffered in that state in 1837 and 1838. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 206-207)

### “The Greatest Egotist”

In 1843 Charlotte Haven wrote some letters from Nauvoo, Illinois. These letters contain some very revealing statements:



Joseph Smith is a large, stout man, youthful in his appearance, . . . He is evidently a great egotist and boaster, for he frequently remarked that at every place he stopped going to and from Springfield people crowded around him, and expressed surprise that he was so “handsome and good looking.” (*Overland Monthly*, December 1890, p. 621)

We heard that Mrs. Joseph Smith wished to become acquainted with us, . . . She said very little to us, her whole attention being absorbed in what Joseph was saying. He talked incessantly about himself, what he had done and could do more than other mortals, and remarked that he was “a giant, physically and mentally.” In fact, he seemed to forget that he was a man. I did not change my opinion about him, but suppose he has good traits. They say he is very kindhearted, and always ready to give shelter and help to the needy. (*Ibid.*, p. 623)

I rushed out with the umbrella to shield Mrs. Smith, the others following, . . . Mrs. Smith was pleasant and social, more so than we had ever seen her before, . . . while her husband is the greatest egotist I ever met. (*Ibid.*, p. 631)

Josiah Quincy related the following:

The Mormon Temple . . . was a wonderful structure, . . . presumably, like something Smith had seen in vision, . . . In a tone half-way between jest and earnest, and which might have been taken for either at the option of the hearer, the prophet put this inquiry: “Is not here one greater than Solomon, who built a Temple with the treasures of his father David and with the assistance of Hiram, King of Tyre? Joseph Smith has built his Temple with no one to aid him in the work.” (*Figures of the Past*, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, p. 138)

The editor of the *Pittsburg Gazette* visited Joseph Smith at Nauvoo. His report was reprinted in the *New York Spectator*. We quote the following from that publication:

We spent about an hour conversing on various subjects, the prophet himself, with amazing volubility, occupying the most of the time, and his whole theme was himself. Let us give what turn we would to the conversation, he would adroitly bring it back to himself. . . . Running on in his voluble style, he said: “The world persecutes me, it has always persecuted me. . . . They thought to put me down, but they hav’nt succeeded, and they can’t do it. When I have proved that I am right, and get all the world subdued under me, I think I shall deserve something.” (*The New York Spectator*, September 23, 1843)

Toward the end of his life Joseph Smith seems to have become obsessed with a desire for power and fame. As we will later show, Joseph Smith ran as a candidate for President of the United States and was secretly ordained a king. Joseph Smith’s own *History of the Church* contains some statements which show that he felt that he was almost equal with God:

I am a lawyer; I am a big lawyer and comprehend heaven, earth and hell, to bring forth knowledge that shall cover up all lawyers, doctors and other big bodies. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 289)

I wish the lawyer who says we have no powers in Nauvoo may be choked to death with his own words. Don’t employ lawyers, or pay them money for their knowledge, for I have learned that they don’t know anything. I know more than they all. (*Ibid.*, p. 467)

I combat the errors of ages; I meet the violence of mobs; I cope with illegal proceedings from executive authority; I cut the gordian knot of powers, and I solve mathematical problems of universities, with truth-diamond truth; and God is my “right hand man.” (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 78)

God made Aaron to be the mouth piece for the children of Israel, and He will make me be God to you in His stead, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and if you don’t like it, you must lump it. (*Ibid.*, pp. 319-320)

If they want a beardless boy to whip all the world, I will get on the top of a mountain and crow like a rooster: I shall always beat them.

. . . I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever di it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him, but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet. (*Ibid.*, pp. 408-409)

In a speech delivered at Brigham Young University, April 14, 1905, Mary E. Lightner quoted Joseph Smith as saying:

“ . . . People little know who I am when they talk about me, and they never will know until they see me weighed in the balance in the Kingdom of God. Then they will know who I am and see me as I am. I dare not tell them and they do not know me.” (*The Life and Testimony of Mary Lightner*, Pioneer Press, pp. 41-42)

In the *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 1888 edition, pages 332-333, we find the following:

Had not Joseph said many times—are not men living who heard him say: “Would to God, brethren, I could tell you who I am! Would to God I could tell you what I know! But you would call it **blasphemy**, and there are men upon this stand who would want to take my life.”

## Mixing Politics and Revelation

One of the most important factors which led to Joseph Smith’s death was that he interfered in politics. On July 15, 1842, this statement appeared in the *Sangamo Journal*, published at Springfield, Illinois:

We received the Mormons into this state as we did every other sect. Disclosures have shown that the head of that church acts not under the influence of that pure religion which Jesus Christ established upon the earth; and that his vaulting ambition would secure to himself the control of our State elections. (*Sangamo Journal*, July 15, 1842)

The *Quincy Whig* printed an article in which the following appeared:

It is not so much the particular doctrines, which Smith upholds and practices, however abominable they may be in themselves, that our citizens care about—as it is the anti-republican nature of the organization, over which he has almost supreme control—and which is trained and disciplined to act in accordance with his selfish will. The spectacle presented in Smith’s case of a civil, ecclesiastical and military leader, united in one and the same person, with power over life and liberty, can never find favor in the minds of sound and thinking Republicans. (*Quincy Whig*, as reprinted in *Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844)

Robert Bruce Flanders made this observation:

The Church exhibited power—power enough perhaps to establish social, economic, and political dominion wherever it was located by the Prophet. Such a sect invited persecution. (*Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi*, pp. 3-4)

Thomas Ford, Governor of Illinois from 1842-1846, made these observations:

“But the great cause of popular fury was, that the Mormons at several preceding elections had cast their vote as a unit, thereby making the fact apparent that no one could aspire to the honors or offices of the country, within the sphere of their influence, without their approbation and votes. It appears to be one of the principles by which they insist upon being governed as a community, to act as a unit in all matters of government and religion. They express themselves to be fearful that if division should be encouraged in politics, it would soon extend to their religion, and rend their church with schism and into sects. . . . It is indeed unfortunate for their peace that they do not divide in elections, according to their individual preferences or political principles, like other people.

“This one principle and practice of theirs arrayed against them in deadly hostility all aspirants for office



who were not sure of their support, all who have been unsuccessful in elections, and all who were too proud to court their influence, with all their friends and connections.” (*History of Illinois*, as quoted in *History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 2-3)

The fact that the Mormons voted one way in Nauvoo is obvious from entries in Hosea Stout’s diary:

Nov 4 M. Today was the Presidential election and the brethren all concluded to vote for Polk and Dallas for President and Vice President of the United States . . . (*On the Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 8)

February 3rd 1845 Monday. Today I attended the Municipal election as one of the Judges of the same as mentioned on the 11th of January last there was about 850 votes polled and the persons nominated by the Twelve on the 8th of January was unanimously elected without a dissenting voice the greatest union and peace prevailed that I ever knew before in the place at an election . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 19)

Joseph Smith admitted that the Mormons were united in their politics, but claimed they “were driven to union in their elections by persecution, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 232). Although it is true that the Mormons were persecuted, evidence shows that much of this persecution was the result of Joseph Smith’s intemperate speech and actions. Mormon historians have attempted to cover up this fact. For instance, in the *History of the Church*, vol. 4, page 40, 179 words have been omitted from a letter written by Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee which was originally printed in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 17, pages 452-453. In this letter the President of the United States is called a fool. The words that have been deleted without any indication are as follows:

Now we shall endeavour to express our feelings and views concerning the President, as we have been eye-witnesses of his Majesty. He is a small man, sandy complexion, and ordinary features; with frowning brow, and considerable body, but not well proportioned as to his arms and legs; and to use his own words, is “quite fat.” On the whole we think he is without body or parts, as no one part seems to be proportioned to another; therefore instead of saying body and parts, we say body and part, or partyism if you please to call it. And in fine, to come directly to the point, he is so much a fop or a fool (for he judged our cause before he knew it) we could find no place to put truth into him.

We do not say the Saints shall not vote for him, but we do say boldly, (though it need not be published in the streets of Nauvoo, neither among the daughters of the Gentiles,) that we do not intend he shall have our votes.

Joseph Smith’s *History* for February 15, 1844, contains an article which was originally printed in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons*. In this article we find the following statement: “And however much we might wish to sustain the Democratic nomination, we cannot—we will not vote for Van Buren” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 216).

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 5, page 531, we find this statement by Joseph Smith:

King took me by the collar and told me to go away. (All our wrongs have arisen under the power and authority of Democracy; and I have sworn that this arm shall fall from my shoulder, and this tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, before I will vote for them,) unless they make me satisfaction, and I feel it sensibly.

The *New York Spectator* for September 23, 1843, printed this statement by Joseph Smith:

. . . I have sworn by the eternal gods that I never will vote for a democrat again, and I intend to swear my children, putting their hands under the thigh, as Abraham swore Isaac, that they will never vote a democratic ticket in all their generations. It is the meanest, lowest party in all creation.

Francis M. Higbee wrote an article for the *Nauvoo Expositor* in which the following statements appeared:

. . . Hyrum Smith is already in the field as a candidate for the legislature, but will you support him, that same Hyrum Smith the devoted follower and brother of Joe, who feigned a revelation from God, directing the citizens of Hancock County to vote for J. P. Hoge, in preference to Cyrus Walker, and by so doing blaspheming the name of God? (*Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844)

Francis Higbee’s charge concerning the purported revelation is confirmed by Joseph Smith’s own *History of the Church*. Under the date of August 6, 1843, these words are attributed to Joseph Smith:

Brother Hyrum tells me this morning that he has had a testimony to the effect it would be better for the people to vote for Hoge; and I never knew Hyrum to say he ever had a revelation and it failed. Let God speak and all men hold their peace. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 526)

The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey made this statement concerning the political problems in Illinois:

Leaders of the Church attempted to minimize the growing number of Mormon voters and even made serious efforts to camouflage the baptism of two county commissioners. . . . immigration by August of 1842 augmented the Mormon population in Hancock County so that by voting solidly for the same candidates the Saints were able to dominate the politics of that region. . . . Following the 1842 election the Anti-Mormon Party was formally revived. . . . This party proved ultimately to be one of the most decisive forces in causing the death of the Mormon Prophet and the migration of large numbers of his followers to the Great Basin. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 211)

Harold Schindler gives this interesting information:

Bennett . . . was appointed lobbyist to the Illinois Legislature where he urged the passage of a bill seeking incorporation of Nauvoo. By dangling the prize of a solid Mormon voting bloc (by now the Saints knew full well how to apply political pressure) before both Democrats and Whigs, the measure passed and was signed by Governor Thomas Carlin. . . . There was good reason to rejoice; the Nauvoo City Charter was an extraordinary document, indeed.

It permitted, among other things, a city council, including a mayor, four aldermen, and nine councilmen, empowered to pass any ordinance not in conflict with state or federal constitutions. . . .

The Legislature, in its desire to curry Mormon favor, had placed in Joseph’s hands the legal and military power with which to institute a secular dictatorship unmatched by any other city in the land. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, pp. 70-71)

Robert Bruce Flanders states: “On its face it was just another city charter with some novel clauses; in operation it was a charter to create a Mormon kingdom in the sovereign state of Illinois” (*Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi*, 1975, p. 104).

In a speech delivered June 30, 1843, Joseph Smith stated:

Relative to our city charter, courts, right of habeas corpus, etc., I wish you to know and publish that we have all power; and if any man from this time forth says anything to the contrary, cast it into his teeth. . . . All the power there was in Illinois she gave to Nauvoo; and any man that says to the contrary is a fool. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 466)

The Nauvoo City Council certainly passed some very unusual ordinances. For instance, the Nauvoo City Council “passed ‘an extra ordinance for the extra case of Joseph Smith and others.’” In this ordinance we find the following:

Section 1. Be it ordained by the City Council . . . that hereafter, if any person or persons shall come with process, demand, or requisition, founded upon the aforesaid Missouri difficulties, to arrest said Joseph Smith, he or they so offending shall be subject to be arrested by any officer of the city, with or without process, and tried by the Municipal Court, upon testimony, and, if found guilty, sentenced to imprisonment in the city prison for life; which convict or convicts can only be pardoned by the Governor, with the consent of the Mayor of said city. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 105)

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith himself was

Mayor of Nauvoo at the time this ordinance was passed.

The unusual ordinances passed by the Nauvoo City Council and Joseph Smith's claim that he was not subject to the laws of Illinois caused serious problems with the non-Mormons in the vicinity of Nauvoo. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen feels that Joseph Smith's "attempt to build a political kingdom of God was also the primary reason why the Mormons were forced to leave Illinois, and why Smith was murdered in 1844" (*Quest for Empire*, 1967, p. 154).

## Destruction of Expositor

The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey makes these interesting observations concerning the conflict in Illinois:

Antagonism toward the Mormon Prophet was further incited when it was **correctly** rumored, that he had been ordained "**King** over the Immediate House of Israel" by the Council of Fifty. This action was wrongly interpreted by non-Mormons to mean that he was going to attempt to overthrow the United States government by force. . . . Still newspapers and tracts repeatedly charged that the Prophet conducted himself like a dictator and that his actions were not only treasonable but a violation of the constitutional principle that church and state should be disassociated. Thus, his **kingly ordination** only incensed the populace, and his untimely death became even more inevitable.

The Prophet's mayoral order, with the consent of the city council, to destroy the *Nauvoo Expositor* became the immediate excuse to stamp out his life. . . .

Perhaps in retrospect both Mormons and Gentiles were partly to blame for conflict which developed between them. The Mormons were sometimes boastful of their political and economic power. They frequently declared they were the chosen people of God, and tended to trade in a commercial way only with themselves, to promulgate a large army and to engage in a marriage system thought to be adulterous by the Gentiles. On the other side, the Gentiles blamed the Mormons for almost every crime committed in Hancock County, said Joseph Smith was a dictator, and believed themselves justified in opposing him without really waiting to determine the truth or falsity of the numerous accusations against him. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 212-214)

The *Nauvoo Expositor*, spoken of by Kenneth Godfrey, was to be printed in Nauvoo by a number of people who opposed Joseph Smith's political ambitions and the practice of polygamy. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart says:

They attempted to set up their own church with William Law as President. They bought a press and published a newspaper entitled the *Nauvoo Expositor*, . . . Joseph Smith as mayor ordered the *Expositor* press destroyed. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 34)

Mormon writers often refer to the *Nauvoo Expositor* as a scandalous and vile publication, but in reality it advocated high morals and obedience to the law. This newspaper was very opposed to Joseph Smith's "political schemes":

The next important item which presents itself for our consideration, is the attempt at Political power and influence, which we verily believe to be preposterous and absurd. We believe it is inconsistent, and not in accordance with the christian religion. We do not believe that God ever raised up a Prophet to christianize a world by political schemes and intrigue. (*The Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844)

We have already shown that Joseph Smith's own *History of the Church* confirmed the *Nauvoo Expositor's* charge that Hyrum Smith had given a revelation that the Mormons were to vote for Hoge.

One thing that really disturbed the Mormon leaders, however, was that the *Nauvoo Expositor* exposed the fact that Joseph Smith was secretly advocating polygamy. The Mormon leaders claimed that this was a lie, but eight years after Joseph Smith's death they published the revelation on polygamy. This revelation proves

beyond all doubt that the statements in the *Expositor* were true. Thus it is clear that the *Expositor* was condemned on the basis of false testimony given by Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

In a synopsis of the proceedings of the Nauvoo City Council we find the following:

Mayor [Joseph Smith] said, if he had a City Council who felt as he did, the establishment (referring to the *Nauvoo Expositor*) would be declared a nuisance before night; . . .

Councilor Stiles said . . . he would go in for suppressing all further publications of the kind.

Councilor Hyrum Smith believed the best way was to **smash the press** and pi the type. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 441, 445)

When Joseph Smith's *History* was first published in the *Millennial Star*, Phineas Richards was quoted as saying: "He considered the publication of the *Expositor* as much murderous at heart as David was before the death of Uriah; was for making a short work of it; was prepared to take his stand by the Mayor, . . ." (*Millennial Star*, vol. 23, p. 828). When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 447, the words "**was for making a short work of it**" were deleted without any indication.

At any rate, the Nauvoo City Council ordered the press to be destroyed. The following is recorded in Joseph Smith's *History* under the date of June 10, 1844:

The Council passed an ordinance declaring the *Nauvoo Expositor* a nuisance, and also issued an order to me to abate the said nuisance. I immediately ordered the Marshal to **destroy it without delay**, . . .

About 8 p.m., the Marshal returned and reported that he had removed the press, type, printed paper, and fixtures into the street, and **destroyed them**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 432)

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen gives this information concerning the destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor*:

The *Expositor* allegations and the subsequent reaction triggered the immediate events leading to the death of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. . . .

The publication of the *Expositor* put Smith in a dilemma. If he did not stop its publication, exposure of the secrets of polygamy and the political kingdom of God might well rend the church asunder . . . When Smith convinced his rubber-stamp city council, in a trial without lawyers, witnesses, or jury, that the paper should be declared a public nuisance, . . . he may not have been prepared to pay for such a course of action with his life; but there is no question that he was prepared to pay a high price for the preservation of the kingdom. . . .

In destroying the press Smith had overstepped both his authority and the bounds of propriety. (*Quest For Empire*, pp. 156, 158, 159)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning the destruction of the *Expositor*:

The legality of the action of the Mayor and City Counsel was, of course, **questionable**, though some sought to defend it on legal grounds; **but it must be conceded that neither proof nor argument for legality are convincing**. On the grounds of expediency or necessity the action is more defensible. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, Introduction, p. 38)

George Q. Cannon, who became a member of the First Presidency, made this statement on October 7, 1868:

It was on the 10th of June, 1844, I had occasion to go to the City Council of Nauvoo, . . . the subject under discussion was the declaring of the "Nauvoo Expositor" a nuisance. . . . They had passed an ordinance declaring it a nuisance, and empowering the city marshal, . . . to abate it. . . . Yet we, for years have had in our city [Salt Lake City] a paper which publishes, if possible, more abominable lies about us and our people than were published by the "Nauvoo Expositor," for the abatement of which Hyrum Smith said he was willing to die. We have not noticed it; we have suffered it to go on undisturbed. But the time

has come for us to take this matter into consideration. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 292)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states that after the *Expositor* was destroyed, “The apostate publishers dashed away to Carthage, **squealing like stuck pigs**, and before Justice of the Peace Thomas Morrison, a notorious Mormon hater, sued out a writ for the arrest of Joseph and seventeen other Church and city officials, on a charge of riot” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 220).

Charles A. Foster, one of the publishers of the *Expositor*, wrote the following in a letter dated June 11, 1844:

Mr. Sharp: —I hasten to inform you of the **unparalleled outrage**, perpetrated upon our rights, . . . a company consisting of some 200 men, armed and equipped, with **muskets, swords, pistols, bowie knives, sledge-hammers**, &c, assisted by a crowd of several hundred minions, who volunteered their services on the occasion, marched to the building, and breaking open the doors with a **sledge-hammer** commenced the work of destruction and desperation.

They tumbled the press and materials into the street, and set fire to them, and demolished the machinery with a sledge hammer, and injured the building very materially. We made no resistance; but looked on and felt revenge, but leave it for the public to avenge this climax of insult and injury. (*Warsaw Signal*, June 12, 1844)

Charles A. Foster’s description of the destruction of the *Expositor* sounds more like a mob scene than a legal one. Vilate Kimball, the wife of Heber C. Kimball and a faithful Mormon, gave this description of the destruction of the press:

“June 11th. Nauvoo was a scene of excit[e]ment last night. Some **hundreds of the brethren** turned out and **burned the press of the opposite party**.” (Letter written by Vilate Kimball, as published in *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 350)

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett stated:

The destruction of the *Nauvoo Expositor* June 10, 1844, proved to be the spark which ignited all the smoldering fires of opposition into one great flame. It offered the occasion for which the apostates from the Church were waiting, a legal excuse to get the Prophet and other leaders into their hands. **The cry that the “freedom of the press” was being violated**, united the factions seeking the overthrow of the Saints as perhaps nothing else would have done. (*The Restored Church*, p. 255)

According to George Laub, Joseph Smith claimed to have a vision in which he was directed to destroy the *Nauvoo Expositor*:

. . . Brother Joseph called a meeting at his own house and told us that God showed to him in an open vision in daylight that if he did not destroy that printing press (*Nauvoo Expositor*) that it would cause the blood of saints to flow in the streets and by this was that evil destroyed . . . I write what I know and seen and heard for myself. (*Pioneer Journals*, “Excerpts From the Diary of George Laub,” 1814-1880)

In a letter dated June 22, 1844, Governor Ford rebuked Joseph Smith for destroying the press of the *Nauvoo Expositor*:

I now express to you my opinion that your conduct in the destruction of the press was a very gross outrage upon the laws and liberties of the people. It may have been full of libels, but this did not authorize you to destroy it.

There are many newspapers in this state which have been wrongfully abusing me for more than a year, and yet such is my regard for the liberty of the press and the rights of a free people in a republican government that I would shed the last drop of my blood to protect those presses from any illegal violence. You have violated the Constitution in at least four particulars. You have violated that part of it which declared that the printing presses shall be free, being

responsible for the abuse thereof, and that the truth may be given in evidence. . . . No civilized country can tolerate such conduct, much less can it be tolerated in this free country of the United States. (Letter from Governor Ford, as printed in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 534-536)

## Like a Lamb?

Edward Bonney gave the following information in his book, *Banditti of the Prairies*:

This outrage upon the public press helped to fan the flame already kindled . . . and plainly foreshadowed the storm that was to burst with startling fury.

The dissenting Mormons at once united with those opposed to that sect, and various meetings were called, and all parties urged to arm and prepare themselves to resist any further aggression: to be ready at all hazards to protect themselves and meet the worst. Warrants were issued against the Smiths, and other leaders, in the destruction of the printing office of the *Expositor*, and though served by the proper officers, they refused to obey the mandates of the law, and laughed at its power!

As in all former cases, the writ of habeas corpus was resorted to, and all the arrested at once set at liberty and discharged from arrest, the same persons that were arrested acting as officers of the courts that discharged them! Thus effectually defeating the ends of justice, and compelling the officer to return to Carthage without a single prisoner!

This mock administration of law, added new fuel to the flame. The public being convinced that Nauvoo was the headquarters of nearly all the marauders who were preying upon the surrounding community, together with the full belief that the Mormon leaders were privy to their depredations and the resistance and defeat of justice, now became enraged, and determined to rise in their might and enforce the law, even though it should be at the point of the bayonet or sabre. . . .

The officer from whose custody the Smiths and others were discharged proceeded to summon a posse and renew the arrest from the adjacent counties, rallied under the banner of law and justice. The Mormon leaders, learning this fact, gathered also their forces. The Nauvoo Legion, organized at the call of the Prophet, fully armed and equipped and numbering nearly four thousand, with their pieces of artillery prepared for a desperate resistance.

The city of Nauvoo was declared under martial law, and all necessary preparations were made to sustain the edicts of the Prophet and the freedom of the crime-stained ones or die in the attempt. . . .

A full investigation was entered into and Gov. Ford, instructing the officer having the writs from which the Mormons had discharged themselves, to proceed to Nauvoo and demand the surrender of the Smiths and others upon whom the writs had already been served, and in case of a refusal to obey the law, to enforce it at the point of the bayonet. At the same time pledging himself, as the Chief Executive of the state, to protect them from personal violence, and the troops under his command pledged themselves to sustain him. . . .

Morning came, and the hour of their departure arrived, but the Prophet could not be found, having crossed the Mississippi River during the night with his brother Hiram and secreted themselves in Iowa, and the officer was again forced to return to Carthage without the prisoners. . . .

During the day, several dispatches crossed the river to and from the Prophet, some advising him to seek safety in flight, and others urging him to return and save the city. Thus urged, the Prophet and his companion in flight, recrossed the river about sunset, and on the following morning started for Carthage, and Nauvoo was again quiet. . . .

On arriving there, the prisoners were examined on the charge of riot in destroying the printing press, and held to bail for their appearance at the next term of the Hancock Circuit Court. Joseph and Hiram Smith were arrested on charge of treason, and committed to await examination.



All being tranquil, and Governor Ford thinking an armed force no longer necessary, disbanded his troops on the morning of the 27th, leaving but a small force to guard the jail, and proceeded with his suite to Nauvoo. . . .

After the troops were disbanded, the most hostile of them believing the Smiths eventually would be acquitted on the charge of treason, and the Mormons still continued their depredations, and deeming that the only way to secure safety was by ridding them of their leaders, they still continued to fan the flame of revenge that had heretofore been burning but too brightly. Urged on by the Mormon dissenters, who were thirsting for blood, they collected, to the number of about 140, armed and disguised, and proceeded to the jail about five o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th. Having dispersed the guard, they attacked the jail, and Joseph and Hiram Smith in an effort to escape were both shot dead. Four balls pierced each of them, and any one of the wounds would have proved fatal. Having accomplished this cold-blooded murder (for surely no other name will apply to it) and glutted their appetite for blood, the mob instantly dispersed. (*Banditti of the Prairies*, 1963, pp. 20-24)

It is interesting to compare the death of Joseph Smith with that of Jesus. In Isaiah 53:7 we read the following: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: **he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter**, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." In the New Testament it is claimed that Christ fulfilled this prophecy (see Acts 8:32). The reason that Christ fulfilled it is that he did not try to fight back when he was led to death. He died without putting up a fight. In 1 Peter 2:23 we read: "Who, when he was reviled, reviled **not again**; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"

When Peter tried to defend Jesus with the sword, Jesus told him: "Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11). It is claimed that before Joseph Smith was murdered in the Carthage jail he made this statement: "I am going like a **lamb to the slaughter**; . . ." (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 135, verse 4).

Most Mormons believe that Joseph Smith died without putting up a struggle, but the actual truth is that he died in a gun fight. In the *History of the Church* the following is recorded concerning Joseph Smith's death:

Immediately there was a little rustling at the outer door of the jail, and a cry of surrender, and also a discharge of three or four firearms followed instantly. . . . **Joseph** sprang to his coat for his **six shooter**, Hyrum for his single barrel, . . .

When Hyrum fell, Joseph exclaimed; "Oh dear, brother Hyrum!" and opening the door a few inches **he discharged his six shooter in the stairway** (as stated before), two or three barrels of which missed fire.

Joseph, seeing there was no safety in the room, and no doubt thinking that it would save the lives of his brethren in the room if he could get out, turned calmly from the door, dropped his **pistol** on the floor, and sprang into the window when two balls pierced him from the door, and one entered his right breast from without, and he fell outward into the hands of his murderers, exclaiming, "O Lord, my God." (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 617-618)

In the Introduction to vol. 6 of the *History of the Church*, page XLI, the following is stated about Joseph Smith's death:

When the jail in Carthage was assailed, and the mob was pouring murderous volleys into the room occupied by himself and friends, the Prophet turned from the prostrate form of his murdered brother to face death-dealing guns and bravely returned the fire of his assailants, "**bringing his man down every time**," and compelling even John Hay, who but reluctantly accords the Prophet any quality of virtue, to confess that he "made a handsome fight". . .

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made these statements concerning the death of Joseph Smith:

Elder Cyrus H. Wheelock came in to see us, and when he was about leaving drew a small pistol, a six-shooter, from his pocket, remarking at the same time, "Would any of you like to have this?" Brother **Joseph** immediately replied, "**Yes**, give it to me," whereupon he took the pistol, and put it in his pantaloons pocket. . . . I was sitting at one of the front windows of the jail, when I saw a number of men, with painted faces, coming around the corner of the jail, and aiming towards the stairs. . . .

I shall never forget the deep feeling of sympathy and regard manifested in the countenance of Brother Joseph as he drew nigh to Hyrum, and, leaning over him, exclaimed, "Oh! my poor, dear brother Hyrum!" He, however, instantly arose, and with a firm, quick step, and a determined expression of countenance, approached the door, and pulling the six-shooter left by Brother Wheelock from his pocket, opened the door slightly, and snapped the pistol six successive times; only three of the barrels, however, were discharged. I afterwards understood that two or three were **wounded** by these discharges, **two** of whom, I am informed **died**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 100, 102, 103)

From the information given above it can be seen that the death of Joseph Smith can in no way be compared to the death of Jesus. Jesus did go like a "lamb to the slaughter," but Joseph Smith died like a raging lion.

In a letter dated July 22, 1844, Sarah Scott wrote:

I suppose you received our letter and was somewhat prepared, when you heard of the dreadful murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith in Carthage jail. . . . Joseph prophesied in the last *Neighbor* that was published before his death that they would come off victorious over them all, as sure as there was a God in Israel. Joseph also prophesied on the stand a year ago last conference that he could not be killed within five years from that time; that they could not kill him till the Temple would be completed, for that he had received an unconditional promise from the Almighty concerning his days, and he set Earth and Hell at defiance; and then said, putting his hand on his head, they never could kill this Child. But now that he is killed some of the Church say that he said: unless he gave himself up. My husband was there at the time and says there was no conditions whatever, and many others testify to the same thing. . . . Brigham Young said if he had been here, he wouldn't have consented to give Joseph up and he would be damned if he would give himself up to the law of the land. He would see them all in hell first; the Church [sic], and then he said he would see all Creation in Hell before he would. (*Among the Mormons*, pp. 152-153)

Joseph Smith's prophecy that he would prevail against his enemies is found in the *Nauvoo Neighbor* for June 19, 1844:

I therefore, in behalf of the Municipal Court of Nauvoo, warn the lawless, not to be precipitate in any interference in our affairs, for as sure as there is a God in heaven, **we shall ride triumphant over all oppression**.

**Joseph Smith**, Mayor

Just eight days after Joseph Smith made this prophecy he was murdered in the Carthage jail, and before two years had elapsed the Mormons were driven from Illinois.

There is some evidence that just before his death Joseph Smith sent for the Nauvoo Legion to rescue him from the Carthage jail. Harold Schindler states:

Because Ford had permitted Joseph to use the debtor's apartment in jail and allowed several of the prophet's friends access to him, it was possible to smuggle messages out of Carthage. Realizing time was precious, Joseph dictated a note to Major General Jonathan Dunham ordering him to call out the Legion and march on the jail immediately. Dunham received the communication in Nauvoo but failed to carry out the command. One of the Legionnaires, Allen Stout, said, "Dunham did not let a single man or mortal know that he had received such orders and we were kept in the city under arms not knowing but all was well." (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, 1966, p. 130)

## 20. The Virgin Birth

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

Now, remember from this time forth, and for ever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 51)

This statement is in conflict with both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. In Matthew 1:18 and 20 we read: “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, **she was found with child of the Holy Ghost** . . . for that which is conceived in her is **of the Holy Ghost**.” The Book of Mormon agrees with the Bible on this point, for in Alma 7:10 we read: “And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our fore-fathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and **conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost**, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.”

In spite of these plain statements, Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, has denied that the Book of Mormon and the Bible teach that Christ was begotten by the Holy Ghost. He stated as follows:

They tell us the Book of Mormon states that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost. I **challenge that statement**. The Book of Mormon teaches **no such thing! Neither does the Bible**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 19)

The reason that Joseph Fielding Smith objects to the teaching that Jesus was begotten by the Holy Ghost is that, according to Mormon theology, this would make Jesus the son of the Holy Ghost rather than the Son of God. This idea arises from an improper understanding of the term *Holy Ghost*. The term *Holy Ghost* means exactly the same as the term *Holy Spirit*. The *American College Dictionary* defines the term *Holy Spirit* as *the Holy Ghost*. Now, the Bible tells us that God is a Spirit, and that he is holy; therefore, God himself must be the Holy Spirit. So we see that there is no contradiction in saying that Jesus was begotten by the Holy Ghost and also is the Son of God.

Since Mormon theology teaches that God himself is a man instead of a spirit and is the **literal** father of Christ, the birth of Christ is considered a natural, rather than miraculous occurrence. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., stated:

The birth of the Savior was a **natural** occurrence unattended with any degree of mysticism, and the Father God was the **literal parent** of Jesus in the **flesh** as well as in the spirit. (*Religious Truths Defined*, p. 44)

President Joseph Fielding Smith made this statement:

Christ was begotten of God. **He was not born without the aid of man, and that man was God!** (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Salt Lake City, 1959, vol. 1, p. 18)

Bruce R. McConkie, who is a member of the First Council of the Seventy, makes the following statements:

These name-titles all signify that our Lord is the only Son of the Father in the flesh. Each of the words is to be understood literally. Only

means only; Begotten means begotten; and Son means son. Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father **in the same way** that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, pp. 546-547)

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, . . . Christ is the Son of Man, meaning that his Father (the Eternal God!) is a Holy Man. (*Ibid.*, p. 742)

The Mormon writer Carlfred B. Broderick made these comments:

There are two basic elements in the Gospel view of sexuality as I interpret it from the scriptures. The first is that sex is good—that sexuality, far from being the antithesis of spirituality, is actually an attribute of God. . . .

In the light of their understanding that God is a procreating personage of flesh and bone, latter-day prophets have made it clear that despite what it says in Matthew 1:20, the Holy Ghost was not the father of Jesus. . . . The Savior was fathered by a personage of flesh and bone, and was literally what Nephi said he was, “Son of the Eternal Father.” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1967, pp. 100-101)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, had this to say concerning the birth of Christ:

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)

This same type of reasoning led the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt to say:

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 a 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*, p. 158)



Brigham Young explained the birth of Christ in the following manner:

The birth of the Saviour was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood—was begotten of his Father, **as we were of our fathers.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 115)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement:

In relation to the way in which I look upon the works of God and his creatures, I will say that I was naturally begotten; so was my father, and also **my saviour Jesus Christ.** According to the Scriptures, he is the first begotten of his father **in the flesh**, and there was **nothing unnatural about it.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 211)

In a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle on April 9, 1852, Brigham Young made the following statements:

I have given you a few leading items upon this subject, but a great deal more remains to be told. Now remember from this time

forth, and for ever, that **Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost.** I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon the subject, when I replied, to this idea—“if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be very dangerous to baptize and confirm females, and give the Holy Ghost to them, **lest he should beget children to be palmed upon the elders by the people,** bringing the elders into great difficulties.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 51)

## Conclusion

The Mormon Church leaders have taught that Jesus Christ “was not begotten by the Holy Ghost”; they have also stated that “Mary the wife of Joseph had another husband,” and that was “God the Father.” They have also taught that Mary and God the Father “associated together in the capacity of husband and wife,” and that there was “nothing unnatural about” the way Christ was begotten.

A careful examination of this teaching reveals that it is far closer to paganism than it is to Christianity!

pure, and sublime attributes which are perfected in all their fulness in themselves.

If none but Gods will be permitted to multiply immortal children, it follows that each God must have one or more wives. God, the Father of our spirits, became the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. Hence, the Father saith concerning him, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” We are informed in the first chapter of Luke, that Mary was chosen by the Father as a choice virgin, through whom He begat Jesus. The angel said unto the Virgin Mary, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” After the power of the Highest had overshadowed Mary, and she had by that means conceived, she related the circumstance to her cousin Elizabeth in the following words: “He that is Mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name.” It seems from this relation that the Holy Ghost accompanied “the Highest” when He overshadowed the Virgin Mary and begat Jesus; and from this circumstance some have supposed that the body of Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost without the instrumentality of the immediate presence of the Father. There is no doubt that the Holy Ghost came upon Mary to sanctify her, and make her holy, and prepare her to endure the glorious presence of “the Highest,” that when “He” should “overshadow” her she might conceive, being filled with the Holy Ghost; hence the angel said, as recorded in Matthew, “That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost;” that is, the Holy Ghost gave her strength to abide the presence of the Father without being consumed; but it was the personage of the Father who begat the body of Jesus; and for this reason Jesus is called “the Only Begotten of the Father;” that is, the only one in this world whose fleshly body was begotten by the Father. There were millions of sons

and daughters whom He begat before the foundation of this world, but they were spirits, and not bodies of flesh and bones; whereas, both the spirit and body of Jesus were begotten by the Father—the spirit having been begotten in heaven many ages before the tabernacle was begotten upon the earth.

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 a 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.

As God the Father begat the fleshly body of Jesus, so He, before the world began, begat his spirit. As the body required an earthly Mother, so his

against him, and he should be frowned upon by all high-minded and virtuous persons. Wealth, influence and position should not screen him from their righteous indignation. His sin is one of the blackest in the calendar of crime, and he should be cast down from the high pinnacle of respectability and consideration, to find his place among the worst of felons.

Every virtuous woman desires a husband to whom she can look for guidance and protection through this world. God has placed this desire in woman's nature. It should be respected by the stronger sex. Any man who takes advantage of this, and humbles a daughter of Eve to rob her of her virtue, and cast her off dishonored and defiled, is her destroyer, and is responsible to God for the deed. If the refined Christian society of the nineteenth century will tolerate such a crime, God will not; but he will call the perpetrator to an account. He will be damned; in hell he will lift up his eyes, being in torment, until he has paid the uttermost farthing, and made a full atonement for his sins. It is this very class of men, though not all of them, who have set up such a howl against the doctrine of polygamy, which is so much despised and which was believed in and practiced by the ancients—by the very men who are held up to us as patterns of all the piety that was ever exhibited through man upon the face of the earth.

This matter was a little changed in the case of the Savior of the world, the Son of the living God. 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. On this account infidels have called the Savior a bastard. This is merely a human opinion upon one of the inscrutable doings of the Almighty. That very babe that was cradled in

the manger, was begotten, not by Joseph, the husband of Mary, but by another Being. Do you inquire by whom? He was begotten by God our heavenly Father. This answer may suffice you—you need never inquire more upon that point. Jesus Christ is the only begotten of the Father, and he is the Savior of the world, and full of grace and truth. It is not polygamy that men fight against when they persecute this people; but, still, if we continue to be faithful to our God, he will defend us in doing what is right. If it is wrong for a man to have more than one wife at a time, the Lord will reveal it by and by, and he will put it away that it will not be known in the Church. I did not ask Him for the revelation upon this subject. When that revelation was first read to me by Joseph Smith, I plainly saw the great trials and the abuse of it that would be made by many of the Elders, and the trouble and the persecution that it would bring upon this whole people. But the Lord revealed it, and it was my business to accept it.

Now, we as Christians desire to be saved in the kingdom of God. We desire to attain to the possession of all the blessings there are for the most faithful man or people that ever lived upon the face of the earth, even him who is said to be the father of the faithful, Abraham of old. We wish to obtain all that father Abraham obtained. I wish here to say to the Elders of Israel, and to all the members of this Church and kingdom, that it is in the hearts of many of them to wish that the doctrine of polygamy was not taught and practiced by us. It may be hard for many, and especially for the ladies, yet it is no harder for them than it is for the gentlemen. It is the word of the Lord, and I wish to say to you, and all the world, that if you desire with all your hearts to obtain the

A photograph of *The Seer*, page 158. The Apostle Orson Pratt states that Mary and God the Father associated together in the capacity of husband and wife.

A photograph of the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, page 268. Brigham Young states that Mary had another husband.



## 21. The Negro in Mormon Theology

**NOTE: Since this chapter was written before Mormon President Spencer W. Kimball gave a revelation which granted blacks the priesthood, it reflects Mormon teachings prior to June 9, 1978. Although this should be kept in mind, this chapter is still extremely important because it lays out the development of the anti-black doctrine and shows the pressures which led to its demise. The material we have added at the end of the chapter brings the reader right up to date. It should be noted also that had this chapter been written at the present time we would have used the word “blacks” instead of “Negroes.”**

In his book, *A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made the following statements:

. . . the Lord has made it plain that **all** male members of the Church, who live worthily, may receive the priesthood . . . (*A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, Salt Lake City, 1966, pp. 91-92)

. . . the Latter-day Saints, . . . have a “royal priesthood,” where **every worthy** male member of the Church over twelve years of age may be a bearer thereof, . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 163-164)

These statements by the Apostle Richards are actually very misleading, for Negroes are not allowed to hold the Priesthood or go through the Temple no matter how they live. The Mormon leaders teach that Negroes are cursed by God, and therefore they are not entitled to receive the Priesthood. The Mormon position concerning the Negro was clearly stated in a letter written by the First Presidency of the Mormon Church in 1947. In this letter the following appears:

From the days of the Prophet Joseph even until now, it has been the **doctrine** of the Church, never questioned by any of the Church leaders, that **the Negroes are not entitled to the full blessings of the Gospel**. (Letter from the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, July 17, 1947, quoted in *Mormonism and the Negro*, by John J. Stewart and William E. Berrett, 2nd edition, 1960, pp. 46-47)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the Council of the Seventy, made this statement:

**Negroes in this life are denied the priesthood**; under no circumstances can they hold this delegation of authority from the Almighty. The gospel message of salvation is **not carried affirmatively to them** . . .

**Negroes are not equal with other races where the receipt of certain spiritual blessings are concerned** . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 477)

### Black Skin

In Mormon theology a black skin is a sign of God’s displeasure. In the Mormon publication, *Juvenile Instructor*, the following statement appeared:

We will first inquire into the results of the approbation or **displeasure of God upon a people**, starting with the belief that a **black skin is a mark of the curse of heaven placed upon some portions of mankind**. Some, however, will argue that a black skin is not a curse, nor a white skin a blessing. In fact, some have been so foolish as to believe and say that a black skin is a blessing, and that the negro is the finest type of a perfect man that exists on the earth; but to us such teachings are foolishness. We understand that when God made man in his own image and pronounced him very good, that he made him **white**. We have no record of any of God’s favored servants being of a black race . . . every angel who ever brought a message of God’s mercy to man was beautiful to look upon, clad in the purest **white** and with a countenance bright as the noonday sun. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 3, October 15, 1868, p. 157)

The Book of Mormon tells of a people being cursed with a black skin:

. . . wherefore, as they were **white**, and exceeding fair and delightful, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a **skin of blackness** to come upon them. (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 5:21)

And the skins of the Lamanites were **dark**, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which **was a curse** upon them because of their transgression . . . (*Ibid.*, Alma 3:6)

In Mormon 5:15 of the Book of Mormon the following statement is made concerning the Indians:

. . . for this people shall be scattered, and shall become a **dark**, a filthy, and a loathsome people, beyond the description of that which ever hath been amongst us, . . .

The Book of Mormon, however, predicts that the Indians will repent of their sins and become white:

. . . and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a **white and delightful people**. (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 30:6)

The *Juvenile Instructor* suggested that the Polynesians were also cursed with a dark skin:

We are asked if the natives of New Zealand and of the Samoan, Society and Sandwich Islands are descendants of the Nephites or of the Lamanites. . . .

It is plain from the history which the Lord has given us in the Book of Mormon that this **dark skin has been brought upon them by transgression**. Whether this transgression occurred before they left this continent or afterwards, is not clear. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 30, p. 129)

In another article in the *Juvenile Instructor* it was taught that even apostates in “our day” have turned dark:

From this it is very clear that the mark which was set upon the descendants of Cain was a **skin of blackness**, and there can be no doubt that this was the mark that Cain himself received; in fact, it has been noticed in our day that men who have lost the spirit of the Lord, and from whom his blessings have been withdrawn, **have turned dark to such an extent as to excite the comments of all who have known them**. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 26, p. 635)

Although Mormon theology teaches that anyone who is born with a dark skin is inferior, the Negro is considered the most inferior of all. Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Mormon Church in 1970, once made this statement concerning the Negro:

Not only was Cain called upon to suffer, but because of his wickedness **he became the father of an inferior race**. (*The Way to Perfection*, p. 101)

President Smith has even stated that the Negro’s dark skin is emblematical of eternal darkness: “. . . we will

also hope that blessings may eventually be given to our Negro brethren, for they are our brethren—children of God—notwithstanding their **black covering emblematical of eternal darkness**" (*The Way to Perfection*, p. 102).

The following statement concerning the "pure Negro" is found in the *Juvenile Instructor*: "Their skin is quite black, their hair woolly and black, **their intelligence stunted**, and they appear never to have arisen from the most savage state of barbarism" (*The Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 3, p. 157).

Although all dark-skinned people are considered inferior, the Negroes are the only people who cannot hold the Priesthood. The Mormon writer John L. Lund states: "The Church leaders from the earliest times up to and including the present have never changed their position concerning the Negro. Simply stated, no one who is a descendant of Cain may function in any capacity requiring Priesthood" (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, p. 111).

Wallace Turner, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, made this statement:

The Negro Mormon can hold no office whatsoever in a church which offers some office to every one of its male members at some time in his life. A gray-haired Negro Mormon who may have spent his adult life in the careful practice of all the complicated and demanding rules set down by the LDS church stands disenfranchised before the altar where a youth whose beard is just beginning to fuzz may preside. A twelve-year-old boy may become a member of the Aaronic priesthood, more than this Negro man has been able to achieve through a lifetime of devotion. To hold any church office, a Mormon must be a member of the priesthood. (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 243-244)

Some Mormons who have questioned this doctrine have found themselves in serious trouble with the church. Grant Syphers wrote a letter in which he stated:

In all humility I must say that God has not inspired me to feel good about the Church's practices regarding Negroes. In fact, I have come to feel very strongly that the practices are not right and that they are a powerful hindrance to the accepting of the gospel by the Negro people.

As a result of my belief, when my wife and I went to San Francisco Ward's bishop to renew our temple recommends, he told us that anyone who could not accept the Church's stand on Negroes as divine doctrine was not supporting the General Authorities and could not go to the temple. Later, in an interview with the stake president we were told the same thing: if you express doubts about the divinity of this "doctrine" you cannot go to the temple. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 6)

## Pre-Existence

To understand the Mormon attitude concerning the Negro, a person must first understand the Mormon doctrine of pre-existence. One of the basic doctrines of the Mormon Church is that the spirit of man existed before the world was created. Joseph Smith once 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** . . . I am going to tell of things more noble . . .

**The mind of man is as immortal as God himself . . . God never did have power to create the spirit of man at all.** (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 615; reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 310-311)

From this doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul, came the idea of some spirits being more noble than others. The Apostle Orson Pratt expressed this idea as follows:

I have already told you that the spirits of men and women, all had a **previous** existence, thousands of years ago, in the heavens, in the presence of God; and I have already told you that among them are many spirits that are **more noble**, more **intelligent** than others, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 62)

The following is taken from Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham:

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;

And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; . . . and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 3:22-23)

The Mormon leaders teach that the "more noble" or choice spirits are to be born as Mormons. The Apostle Pratt said:

... among the Saints is the most likely place for these spirits to take their tabernacles, through a just and righteous parentage. They are sent to **that people that are the most righteous of any other people upon the earth**; . . . **this is the reason the Lord is sending them here**. . . The Lord has not kept them in store for five or six thousand years past, and kept them waiting for their bodies all this time to send them among the Hottentots, the **African Negroes**, the idolatrous Hindoos, or any other of the fallen nations that dwell upon the face of the earth. They are not kept in reserve in order to come forth to receive such a **degraded parentage** upon the earth; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 63)

As we have already shown in another chapter, Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, still maintains that the Mormons "are, notwithstanding our weaknesses, **the best people in the world**. I do not say that boastfully, for I believe that this truth is evident to all who are willing to observe for themselves. **We are morally clean**, in every way equal, and in many ways **superior to any other people**" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 236). President Smith also maintains that the spirits who were not valiant in their "first estate" are born with a dark skin:

There is a reason why one man is **born black** and with **other disadvantages**, while another is **born white** with great advantages. The reason is that we once had an estate before we came here, and were obedient; more or less, to the laws that were given us there. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 61)

The Negro is considered to have been more unfaithful than any of the spirits who were allowed to take a body. In a letter dated April 10, 1963, Joseph Fielding Smith said:

According to the doctrine of the church, **the Negro**, because of some condition of **unfaithfulness in the spirit**—or pre-existence—was **not valiant** and hence was not denied the mortal probation, but was **denied the blessings of the priesthood**.

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

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**. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 476-477)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning the "rebellion in heaven":

Only those, however, who wickedly rebelled against God were adjudged to deserve banishment from heaven, and become the devil and his angels. Others there were, who may not have rebelled against God, and yet **were so indifferent in their support of the righteous cause** of our Redeemer, that they forfeited certain privileges and powers granted to those who were more valiant for God and correct principles. We have, I think, a demonstration of this in the seed of Ham... I believe that race is the one through which it is ordained those spirits that were not valiant in the great rebellion in heaven should come; who through their **indifference or lack of integrity to righteousness**, rendered themselves unworthy of the Priesthood and its powers, and hence it is withheld from them to this day. (*The Contributor*, vol. 6, pp. 296-297)

The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen gives the following information concerning the doctrine of pre-existence:

Is there reason then why the type of birth we receive in this life is not a reflection of our **worthiness or lack of it** in the pre-existent life? . . . can we account in any other of way for the birth of some of the children of God in darkest **Africa**, or in flood-ridden **China**, or among the starving hordes of **India**, while some of the rest of us are born here in the United States? We cannot escape the conclusion that because of performance in our pre-existence some of us are born as Chinese, some as Japanese, some as Indians, some as Negroes, some as Americans, some as Latter-day Saints. **These are rewards and punishments**, fully in harmony with His established policy in dealing with **sinners and saints**, rewarding all according to their deeds. . . .

Let us consider the great mercy of God for a moment. A Chinese, born in China with a **dark skin**, and with all the handicaps of that race seems to have little opportunity. But think of the mercy of God to Chinese people who are willing to accept the gospel. **In spite of whatever they might have done in the pre-existence to justify being born over there as Chinamen**, if they now, in this life, accept the gospel and live it the rest of their lives they can have the Priesthood, go to the temple and receive endowments and sealings, and that means they can have exaltation. Isn't the mercy of God marvelous?

Think of the Negro, **cursed as to the priesthood** . . . This Negro, who, in the pre-existence lived the type of life which justified the Lord in sending him to the earth in the lineage of Cain with a **black skin**, and possibly being born in darkest Africa—if that Negro is willing when he hears the gospel to accept it, he may have many of the blessings of the gospel. **In spite of all he did in the pre-existent life**, the Lord is willing, if the Negro accepts the gospel with real, sincere faith, and is really converted, to give him the blessings of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. If that Negro is faithful all his days, he can and will enter the celestial kingdom. He will go there as **a servant**, but he will get celestial glory. (*Race Problems—As They Affect The Church*, Address by Mark E. Petersen at the Convention of Teachers of Religion on the College Level, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, August 27, 1954)

In 1845 the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde explained that the Negroes were inferior spirits who lent an influence to the devil in the pre-existent state:

At the time the devil was cast out of heaven, there were some spirits that did not know who had authority, whether God or the devil. They consequently did **not take a very active part on either side, but rather thought the devil had been abused, and considered he had rather the best claim to the government**. These spirits were not considered bad enough to be cast down to hell, and never have bodies; neither were they **considered worthy of an honourable body** on this earth: but it came to pass that Ham, the son of Noah, saw the nakedness of his father while he lay drunk in his tent, and he with “wicked joy,” ran like Rigdon, and made the wonderful disclosure to his brethren; while Shem and Japheth took a garment, with pity and compassion, laid it upon their shoulders—went backwards and covered their father, . . . The conduct of the former **brought the curse of slavery** upon him, while that of the latter secured blessings, jurisdiction, power and dominion. . . . Canaan, the son of Ham, received the curse; for Noah wished to place the curse as remote from himself as possible. He therefore placed it upon his grandson instead of his son. Now, it would seem cruel to force **pure** celestial spirits into the world through the lineage of Canaan that had been **cursed**. This would be ill appropriate, putting the **precious** and **vile** together. But those spirits in heaven that rather **lent an influence** to the **devil**, thinking he had a little the best right to govern, but did not take a very active part any way were required to come into the world and take bodies in the **accursed** lineage of Canaan; and hence

the **Negro** or African race. (Speech of Elder Orson Hyde, delivered before the High Priests' Quorum, in Nauvoo. April 27th, 1845, printed in Liverpool, p. 30)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart claimed that the Negro was lucky to even receive a body:

In our society today, from which situation is the Negro suffering most: (1) In not being permitted to hold the Priesthood in the LDS Church, or (2) in having a black skin and other Negroid features, which stigmatize him in the eyes of most Whites?

The answer is obvious.

And who controls the fact of his having these Negroid features? His Creator, of course.

When God allows a spirit to take on a Negroid body, do you suppose He is unaware of the fact that he will suffer a social stigma?

Therefore, if you say this Church is unjust in not allowing the Negro to bear the Priesthood, you must, to be consistent, likewise say that **God is even more unjust** in giving him a black skin. . . . Is it not possible to see an act of mercy on the part of God in not having the Negro bear the Priesthood in this world, in view of his living under the **curse** of a black skin and other Negroid features? . . . With the social prejudice against him, imagine the obstacles that the Negro would encounter in attempting to honor and magnify his Priesthood.

I believe that we should recognize the mercy as well as the justice of God in all things. The very fact that **God would allow those spirits who were less worthy in the spirit world to partake of a mortal body at all** is further evidence of his mercy. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part I, pp. 48-50)

Alvin R. Dyer, a General Authority who served in the First Presidency under President McKay, made these statements in a talk given to a group of missionaries in 1961:

We have talked a lot about missionary work and heard the testimonies of those who have spoken. I want to talk to you a little bit now about something that is not missionary work, and what I say is **not** to be given to your investigators by any matter of means. . . . Why is it that you are **white** and not colored? Have you ever asked yourself that question? Who had anything to do with your being born into the Church and not born a Chinese or a Hindu, or a Negro? Is God such an unjust person that He would make you **white** and free and make a Negro **cursed** under the **curse of Cain** that he should not hold the Priesthood of God? . . .

I want to talk to you just briefly about this, not with any information that you would convey to your investigators, but that you, yourselves, may have a better understanding of what we are doing in the mission field today . . . There were three divisions of mankind in the pre-existence, and when you are born into this life, you are born into one of these three divisions of people. There is an imposed judgment placed upon everyone who leaves the Spirit World just the same as there will be when they leave this life and go into one of three places. When they left the Spirit World, they had already been judged by what they had done in the Spirit World and in their previous life. From what judgment is determined how they shall be born in this life? When you understand that, you know that God is not unjust to cause a righteous spirit to be born as a **cursed** member of the **black race** or to be **cursed** as one of the other people who have been **cursed**. Everything is in order. The procreation of man is orderly and in accordance with the plan of life and salvation.

In keeping with this thought, when Noah went into the Ark, here again he took with him his three sons—one representing the **cursed lineage**. . . . Those who have been cursed in the pre-existence were born through this lineage of Ham.

I suppose, and you may have often heard missionaries say it or have asked the question: Why is a Negro a Negro?



And, you have heard this answer. “Well, they must have been neutral in the pre-existence or they must have straddled the fence.” That is the most common saying—they were neither hot nor cold, so the Lord made them Negroes. This, of course, is not true. The reason that spirits are born into Negro bodies is because **those spirits rejected the Priesthood of God in the pre-existence**. This is the reason why you have Negroes upon the earth.

You will observe that when Cain was influenced by the power of Lucifer to follow him . . . Cain rejected the counsel of God. He rejected again the Priesthood as his forebearers had done in the pre-existence. Therefore, the curse of the pre-existence was made institute through the loins of Cain. Consequently, you have the beginning of the race of men and women into which would be born those in the pre-existence who had rejected the Priesthood of God. . . . Ham reinstated the curse of the pre-existence when he rejected the Priesthood of Noah, and in consequence of that he preserved the curse on the earth. Therefore, the Negroes to be born thereafter, or those who were to become Negroes, were to be born through the loins of Ham.

All of this is according to a well worked-out plan, that these millions and billions of spirits awaiting birth in the pre-existence would be born through a channel or race of people. Consequently, the cursed were to be born through Ham. . . . The cursed people are the descendants of Ham. The chosen people are the descendants of Shem . . . Through these lineages the spirits that compare with their station are born in this life. This is why you have colored people, why you have dark people and why you have white people. . . .

I don't know whether the knowledge or the revelation of these things will have an effect upon you as a missionary, but I know that it has an effect upon me, . . . the day will come when you know who you are, because you are a person of nobility. You may not fully know that now, but you were a person of nobility in the pre-existence. If you were not, you would have been born into one of these other channels, and you would not have been born in this day and age, because the Lord has withheld the **choice** spirits of the pre-existence to come forth in this, the last dispensation, . . . I wanted you to know the reason why you are preaching the Gospel. There is a purpose behind it and knowing this as you do and knowing your **nobility**—what kind of a missionary are you going to be from this day to the end of your mission? . . .

I have always thought and have proven the point many times that if you will place into the mind of a boy or a girl, firmly, that they are noble persons born of noble heritage in the pre-existence, they will never stoop to anything that is sordid. . . . I have made known to you today something you may not have known before, but you know them now because the Spirit bears record.

May the Lord bless you in it and bless you with this knowledge. I bear record of its truthfulness in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. (“For What Purpose?,” a talk given by Alvin R. Dyer at the Missionary Conference in Oslo, Norway, March 18, 1961, printed in *The Negro in Mormon Theology*, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, 1967, pp. 48-58)

The Mormon writer John L. Lund gives this information:

It is the Mormon belief that in our pre-mortal state there were a large number of individuals who, due to some act or behavior of their own in the pre-existence, forfeited the right to hold the Priesthood during their mortal lives, . . . The Negro is thus denied the Priesthood because of his own behavior in the pre-existence. (*The Church and the Negro*, pp. 42-43)

Melvin J. Ballard, who was an Apostle in the Mormon Church, made this statement:

Of the thousands of children born today, a certain proportion of them went to Hottentots of South Africa; thousands went to Chinese mothers; thousands went to Negro mothers; thousands to beautiful **white** Latter-day Saint mothers. Now you cannot tell me that all these spirits were just arbitrarily designated, marked, to go where they did, . . .

Why is it in this Church we do not grant the Priesthood to the Negroes? . . . I am convinced it is because of some things they did before they came into this life that they have been denied the privilege. (*Melvin J. Ballard—Crusader for Righteousness*, p. 218, as quoted in *The Church and the Negro*, p. 98)

## Sons of Cain

Joseph Smith definitely taught that Negroes are the descendants of Cain. Under the date of January 25, 1842, we find this statement in Joseph Smith's *History*:

In the evening debated with John C. Bennett and others to show that the Indians have greater cause to complain of the treatment of the whites, than the **Negroes, or sons of Cain**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 501)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, explains the curse which was put on Cain as follows:

Though he was a rebel and **an associate of Lucifer in pre-existence**, and though he was a liar from the beginning whose name was Perdition, **Cain managed to attain the privilege of mortal birth**. Under Adam's tutelage, he began in this life to serve God. . . . he came out in open rebellion, fought God, worshiped Lucifer, and slew Abel. . . .

As a result of his rebellion, **Cain was cursed with a dark skin**; he became the father of the Negroes, and those spirits who **are not worthy** to receive the priesthood are born through his lineage. He became the first mortal to be cursed as a son of perdition. As a result of his mortal birth he is assured of a tangible body of flesh and bones in eternity, a fact which will enable him to **rule over Satan**. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 102)

In the Book of Moses, a revelation given to Joseph Smith in December 1830, it is stated that the “children of Canaan” were black:

For behold, the Lord shall curse the land with much heat, and the barrenness thereof shall go forth forever; and there was **a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan**, that they were **despised** among all people. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 7:8)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, declared that the flat nose and black skin were part of the mark put upon the descendants of Cain:

Cain slew his brother . . . and the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the **flat nose and black skin** . . . (*Mormonism and the Negro*, Part 2, p. 14; taken from *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 290-291)

The following is taken from the Mormon publication, the *Millennial Star*, vol. 14, page 418:

For instance, the descendants of Cain cannot cast off their **skin of blackness**, at once, and immediately, although every soul of them should repent, . . . Cain and his posterity must wear the mark which God put upon them; and his white friends may **wash the race of Cain with Fuller's soap every day, they cannot wash away God's mark**; . . .

Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

What was that mark? It was a mark of **blackness**. That mark rested upon Cain, and descended upon his posterity from that time until the present. To day there are millions of the **descendants of Cain**, through the lineage of Ham, in the world, and that mark of **darkness still rests upon them**. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 51, p. 339)

The Mormon writer John L. Lund states:

Frankly, sincerely, and somewhat abruptly, President Brigham Young has told us that the mark of Cain was a “black skin.” For the Latter-day Saint no further explanation is required. . . . The question as to what the mark of Cain was, and is, is thus answered—a black skin for him and his posterity. (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, pp. 13-14)

## Through the Flood

The Mormon Apostle Erastus Snow said that “the

offspring of Ham inherited a curse, and it was because, as a revelation teaches, some of the blood of Cain became mingled with that of Ham's family, and hence they inherited that curse" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 21, p. 370).

John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, stated that a descendant of Cain came through the flood so that the devil might be properly represented upon the earth:

Why is it, in fact, that we should have a devil? Why did not the Lord kill him long ago? Because he could not do without him. He needed the devil and a great many of those who do his bidding just to keep men straight, that we may learn to place our dependence upon God, and trust in Him, and to observe his laws and keep his commandments. When he destroyed the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, he suffered a **descendant of Cain** to come through the flood in order that he might be properly **represented** upon the earth. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 23, p. 336)

The Mormon leaders teach that it was Ham's descendants who were "cursed as to the priesthood." They claim that Ham married a Negro woman named Egyptus, and that the curse was continued "through Ham's wife." Bruce R. McConkie says that "Noah's son Ham married Egyptus, a descendant of Cain, thus preserving the **Negro** lineage through the flood" (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 477).

John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

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

In the Book of Abraham—the Book of Abraham is found in the *Pearl of Great Price* which is one of the four standard works—the following appears:

Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of **Egyptus**, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which **is forbidden**.

When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, **from Ham**, sprang **that race which preserved the curse in the land**.

Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal.

Pharaoh, being a righteous man, . . . seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but **cursed him as pertaining to the priesthood**. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 1:21-26)

In the *Juvenile Instructor* this statement appeared:

When God cursed Cain for murdering his brother Abel, He set a mark upon him that all meeting him might know him. No mark could be so plain to his fellow-men as a **black skin**. This was the mark God placed upon him, and which his children bore. After the flood this curse fell upon the **seed of Ham**, through the sin of their father, and his descendants bear it to this day. The Bible tells us but little of the races that sprung from Ham, but from that little, and from the traditions of various tribes, we are led to believe that from him came the **Canaanites**, the **Philistines**, the **Egyptians** and most of the earliest inhabitants of Africa. (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 3, p. 157)

The Mormon writer Arthur M. Richardson made this statement concerning the Negro:

Referring to Elder Hyde's statement we find, then, that those assigned to a **dishonorable body** on this earth came through the **accursed** lineage of Canaan through Ham's wife who was a descendant of the first murderer Cain, . . . (*That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, pp. 6-7)

Briefly stated, then, the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro is this: In the "pre-existence" the Negroes "lent an influence to the devil." Because of their "unfaithfulness in the spirit world," they were "assigned to a dishonorable body on this earth." They come through "the accursed lineage of Canaan," and are "marked" with a "flat nose" and a "black covering" which is "emblematical of eternal darkness." They are a "vile" and "inferior" race. In fact, they are a "representation" of the "devil" upon the earth. They are "not equal with other races where the receipt of certain spiritual blessings are concerned," and they are "not entitled to the full blessings of the gospel." They are "denied the priesthood," and they cannot be married in a Mormon temple. But, "in spite" of all they "did in the pre-existence," they can be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost. If a Negro is faithful all his life he will enter the celestial kingdom. The Apostle Mark E. Petersen says the Negro will be only a "servant" there, but he will get a "celestial glory."

## One Drop Disqualifies

The Mormon leaders have been very opposed to intermarriage with the Negro. The following appeared in the *Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 3, page 165:

In fact we believe it to be a great **sin** in the eyes of our Heavenly Father for a **white** person to marry a **black** one. And further, that it is a proof of the mercy of God that no such race appear able to continue for many generations.

Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, stated that if a person who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the Negro the penalty is death on the spot:

Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the **African race**? If the **white** man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the **penalty**, under the **law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110)

One reason the Mormon leaders are so opposed to intermarriage is that they teach that "one drop of Negro blood" would prevent a person from holding the priesthood. The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen explained as follows:

Now what is our policy in regard to inter-marriage? As to the Negro, of course, there is only one possible answer. We must not inter-marry with the Negro, Why? If I were to marry a **Negro** woman and have children by her, my children would **all be cursed** as to the **priesthood**. Do I want my children cursed as to the priesthood? If there is **one drop of Negro blood in my children**, as I have read to you, they **receive the curse**. There isn't any argument, therefore, as to inter-marriage with the Negro, is there? There are 50 million Negroes in the United States. If they were to achieve complete absorption with the white race, **think what that would do**. With 50 million **Negroes** inter-married with us, **where would the priesthood be? Who could hold it, in all America? Think what that would do to the work of the Church!** (*Race Problems—As They Affect The Church*, Address by Mark E. Petersen at the Convention of Teachers of Religion on the College Level, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, August 27, 1954)

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

Any man having **one drop** of the **seed of Cain** in him **cannot receive the priesthood**; . . . (*Wilford Woodruff*, by Mathias F. Cowley, p. 351, quoted in *That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, p. 8)

In his address, "Race Problems—As They Affect The

Church,” the Apostle Mark E. Petersen stated:

President Woodruff added, “The Lord said, ‘I will not kill Cain, but I will put a mark upon him, and that mark will be seen upon every face of every Negro . . . that mark shall remain upon the seed of Cain, until the seed of Abel shall be redeemed, and Cain shall not receive the Priesthood until the time of that redemption. **Any man having one drop of the blood of Cain in him cannot receive the priesthood.**’”

Joseph Fielding Smith, who is now President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in a letter to Morris L. Reynolds, dated May 9, 1966:

The descendants of Cain were barred from the blessings of the Priesthood . . . It would be a serious error for a white person to marry a Negro, for the Lord forbid it.

David L. Brewer interviewed several church leaders. He quoted one of these leaders as saying:

What can a Negro definitely want that I can’t give him? He may want to go into the temple. He’ll tell us we’re discriminating, and I suppose **we are**, aren’t we? Any red blooded American doesn’t want his children to marry **Negroes**. (*Utah Elites and Utah Racial Norms*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, August, 1966, p. 148)

The Mormon writer John L. Lund makes these statements:

A second reason for the mark of a black skin deals specifically with the problems of intermarriage. The Lord did not want the seed of Cain to intermingle with the rest of Adam’s children. (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, p. 15)

. . . intermarriage with the Negro means the loss of Priesthood blessings. . . .

Brigham Young made a very strong statement on this matter when he said, “. . . Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so.” God has commanded Israel not to intermarry. To go against this commandment of God would be to sin. Those who willfully sin with their eyes open to this wrong will not be surprised to find that they will be separated from the presence of God in the world to come. This is spiritual death. . . .

The reason that one would lose his blessings by marrying a Negro is due to the restriction placed upon them. “No person having the least particle of Negro blood can hold the Priesthood.” It does not matter if they are one-sixth Negro or one-one hundred and sixth, the curse of no Priesthood is still the same. If an individual who is entitled to the Priesthood marries a Negro, the Lord has decreed that only spirits who are not eligible for the Priesthood will come to that marriage as children. To intermarry with a Negro is to forfeit a “Nation of Priesthood holders.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 53-55)

Outwardly the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro seems to be firm and absolute. “**One drop of Negro blood**,” the Mormon leaders declare, would prevent a man from holding the priesthood. The truth is, however, that some people with Negro blood are being ordained to the priesthood in the Mormon Church, in spite of the fact that the Mormon leaders have tried to prevent it. John M. Whitaker related in his journal the struggle he had when a man he suspected of having Negro blood applied for a Temple Recommend. It is interesting to note that Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, was unable to help him decide whether the man was part Negro:

On the 10th, had a long conversation with brother Nelson Holder Ritchie, father of 12 children and living in the Pleasant View ward. As soon as he crossed the threshold of the front door, I felt that he had **Negro blood** in him. He came for a recommend to go through the temple and I asked him many questions concerning his birth. He told me his father was a pure blooded Cherokee Indian and that he never

knew his mother, but was told by some friends she was very dark, Creole or mulatto, and a woman by the name of Nancy McNeal raised him. He told me he explained to his present wife before he married her all he knew of his genealogy and they want to go temple. He has been faithful and a good provider and saw no reason why he could not; but that feeling still persisted and I had many conversations with him on the matter and finally sent for his wife and learned all the facts she knew, still I felt the same and told them how I felt. They were really disturbed over the matter and I told them I would take their genealogy and all the facts and submit the case to the First Presidency of the Church. I did and they held **several meetings** with the Twelve and finally **President Smith** sent for me and said: “Johnny (he always called me by that name for years) We have fully considered the case of Brother Ritchie, and have concluded that as you are common judge in Israel, **we return the case to you to decide.**” That was a terrible responsibility, but I again had several meetings with the Richies and finally told them I still felt the same, that I appreciated they were good saints, and that feeling as I did, I dare not issue a recommend to the temple unless my feelings changed; that if they remained faithful and true, if they did not go to the Temple and died without getting in the Temple, the Lord would give them all that they were entitled to, but according to my understanding of the gospel anyone with **Negro blood was not entitled to the Temple rights**. They said their children, at least some of them had **already been to the Temple** for their marriage. So I told them to be faithful and no one could eventually hinder them from receiving all blessings earned by them, but not to think I had any personal feelings in the least, but must not go against my continued impressions. I made them feel that I was responsible also for anything I did to hinder good people from going to the Temple, that thus far, no one has been given a recommend to go the Temple by me unless my blessing went also. This case was a source of considerable sorrow to me for I believe they were good saints but [I] **never gave the recommend**. (“John M. Whitaker Journal,” vol. 2, p. 625, typed excerpts)

## Negroes in the Priesthood

In the anti-Mormon book, *Mormon Portraits*, we read that a “colored man” by the name of Elijah Abel was ordained to the Priesthood in the Mormon Church in the days of Joseph Smith. Strange as it may seem, Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant Church Historian, admitted that Elijah Abel was a Negro and that he had been ordained to the Priesthood:

Abel, Elijah, the **only colored man who is known to have been ordained to the priesthood**, . . . he was ordained an **Elder** March 3, 1836, and a **Seventy** April 4, 1841, **an exception having been made in his case with regard to the general rule of the Church in relation to colored people**. . . . In Nauvoo **he was intimately acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith**. . . . In 1883, as a **member** of the Third Quorum of **Seventy**, he left Salt Lake City on a **mission** to Canada, during which he also performed missionary labors in the United States. Two weeks after his return he died, Dec. 25, 1884, of debility, consequent upon exposure while laboring in the **ministry** in Ohio. He died in full faith of the gospel. (*L.D.S. Biographical Encyclopedia*, vol. 3, p. 577)

In a meeting held May 31st, 1879, Zebedee Coltrin was reported as saying: “. . . Brother Abel was ordained a **Seventy** because he had labored on the Temple, . . .” (“Journal History,” as quoted in *Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 10).

In 1884 the Mormon newspaper *Deseret News* printed Elijah Abel’s obituary:

ABLE.—In the 13th Ward, December 25th 1884, of old age and debility, consequent upon exposure while laboring **in the ministry** in Ohio, **Elijah Able**. Deceased was born in Washington County, Maryland, July 25, 1810; joined



were destroyed by the Indians. That unfortunate affair has been laid to the charge of the whites. A certain judge that was then in this Territory wanted the whole army to accompany him to Iron county to try the whites for the murder of that company of emigrants. I told Governor Cumming that if he would take an unprejudiced judge into the district where that horrid affair occurred, I would pledge myself that every man in the regions round about should be forthcoming when called for, to be condemned or acquitted as an impartial, unprejudiced judge and jury should decide; and I pledged him that the court should be protected from any violence or hindrance in the prosecution of the laws; and if any were guilty of the blood of those who suffered in the Mountain Meadow massacre, let them suffer the penalty of the law; but to this day they have not touched the matter, for fear the Mormons would be acquitted from the charge of having any hand in it, and our enemies would thus be deprived of a favorite topic to talk about, when urging hostility against us. "The Mountain Meadow massacre! Only think of the Mountain Meadow massacre!" is their cry from one end of the land to the other.

"Come, let us make war on the Mormons, for they burnt government property." And what was the government doing there with their property? They were coming to destroy the Mormons, in violation of every right principle of law and justice. A little of their property was destroyed, and they were left to gnaw, not a file, but dead cattle's bones. I was informed that one man brought five blood hounds to hunt the Mormons in the mountains, and that the poor devil had to kill them and eat them before spring to save himself from starving to death, and that he was fool enough to acknowledge it

afterwards in this city. This is the kind of outside pressure we have to meet with. Who wanted the army of 1857 here? Who sent for them? Liars, thieves, murderers, gamblers, whoremasters, and speculators in the rights and blood of the Mormon people cried to government, and government opened its ears, long and broad, saying, "I hear you, my children, lie on, my faithful sons Broccus, Drummond and Co.," and so they did lie on until the parent sent an army to use up the Mormons. Now I say, for the consolation of all my brethren and sisters, they cannot do it; and that is worse to them than all the rest; they cannot do it.

The rank, rabid abolitionists, whom I call black-hearted Republicans, have set the whole national fabric on fire. Do you know this, Democrats? They have kindled the fire that is raging now from the north to the south, and from the south to the north. I am no abolitionist. neither am I a pro-slavery man; I hate some of their principles and especially some of their conduct, as I do the gates of hell. The Southerners make the negroes, and the Northerners worship them; this is all the difference between slaveholders and abolitionists. I would like the President of the United States and all the world to hear this.

Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so. The nations of the earth have transgressed every law that God has given, they have changed the ordinances and broken every covenant made with the fathers, and they are like a hungry man that dreameth that he eateth, and he awaketh and behold he is empty.

The following saying of the prophet is fulfilled: "Now also many nations

A photograph of the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, page 110. Brigham Young states that marriage to an African should be punished by death on the spot.

**ABEL, Elijah**, the only colored man who is known to have been ordained to the Priesthood, was born July 25, 1810, in Maryland. Becoming a convert to "Mormonism" he was baptized in September, 1832, by Ezekiel Roberts and, as appears from certificates, he was ordained an Elder March 3, 1836, and a Seventy April 4, 1841, an exception having been made in his case with regard to the general rule of the Church in relation to colored people. At Nauvoo, Illinois, where he resided, he followed the avocation of an undertaker. After his arrival in Salt Lake City he became a resident of the Tenth Ward, and, together with his wife, he managed the Farnham Hotel in Salt Lake City. In Nauvoo he was intimately acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith and later in life was the especial friend of the late Levi W. Hancock. In 1883, as a member of the Third Quorum of Seventy, he left Salt Lake City on a mission to Canada, during which he also performed missionary labors in the United States. Two weeks after his return he died, Dec. 25, 1884, of debility, consequent upon exposure while laboring in the ministry in Ohio. He died in full faith of the gospel.

**ADAIR, Thomas Jefferson**, an Elder who died away from home, filling a mission for the Church, was born May 28, 1884, at Nutrioso, Apache county, Arizona, the son of Samuel Newton Adair and Helen J. Brown. His grandparents on his father's side were among the noted residents of Nauvoo, Illinois, and his grandparents on his mother's side were associated with the Church in Kirtland, Ohio, where his grandfather Brown assisted in the erection of the Kirtland Temple. His parents were among the early settlers in Apache county, Arizona, and were staunch Latter-day Saints. Thomas J. was baptized Sept. 1, 1892, by his father and was ordained successively to the

offices of Priest and Elder. He was set apart for a mission to the Southwestern States April 1, 1904, and was appointed to labor in Arkansas, where he spent twenty-eight months as a faithful, energetic missionary. While thus engaged he contracted a disease and being released from his mission he started for home and arrived at St. Johns, Arizona, July 23, 1904. His parents, who lived about seventy-five miles from St. Johns, were notified, but when they arrived at his bedside he was unable to travel further, and getting gradually worse, he died Aug. 1, 1906, at St. Johns. Elder Adair was greatly respected by all who knew him. He had received a good education, had attended the Stake academy at St. Johns, and taken the missionary course prior to going on his mission. He was noted for his exceptionally energetic and lively disposition and ever showed the greatest loyalty and devotedness to the Church.

**ADAMS, Barnabas L.**, one of the original Utah pioneers of 1847, was born August 28, 1812, near Pearth, Upper Canada, of Vermont parents and was educated in the Methodist faith, several of his immediate relatives being preachers in that denomination. He became a convert to "Mormonism" when about twenty-three years of age and afterwards gathered to Missouri, traveling to that State in what was known as the Canada Camp, led by Elder John E. Page. Together with his co-religionists he was expelled from the State of Missouri by mobocratic violence, and settled with the Saints in Illinois. There he afterwards became subject once more to the ruthless hand of persecution, and during the general exodus in 1846 he came west, having lived for some time in Montrose, Lee county, Iowa. In June, 1846, he married Julia Ann Bawker at Montrose. She was a native of the State of New York. When President Brigham Young made

A photograph of the *L.D.S. Biographical Encyclopedia*, vol. 3, page 577. This was written by the Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jensen. It proves that Elijah Abel, a Negro, was ordained to the Priesthood.

the Church and was ordained an **Elder** as appears by certificate dated March 3d, 1836; was subsequently ordained a **Seventy** as appears by certificate dated April 4, 1841; labored successfully in Canada and also performed a **mission** to the United States, from which he returned about two weeks ago. He died in **full faith** of the Gospel.

Funeral at 16th Ward Assembly Rooms Saturday, Dec. 27th, at 10 a.m. Friends invited. (*Deseret News*, December 26, 1884)

At the funeral of Eugene Burns, who was Elijah Abel's grandson, a Patriarch by the name of Miner spoke of Elijah Abel's "loyalty and service to Joseph the Prophet." The following appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

Eugene Burns, colored, died last week . . . He was 24 years of age and was to have been married on the day on which his funeral occurred.

. . . At the request of the family Rev. D. A. Brown, pastor of the First Baptist church conducted the services. Following his remarks of condolence and sympathy to the bereaved friends who had gathered, Patriarch Miner, president of one of the quorums of the seventies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, made a few remarks. In the course of the dissertation he stated in substance that all **that ever existed of the dead man lay in the casket before the altar.**

**Soul Was Doomed.**

He further said that an **Ethiopian could not reach the state of exaltation necessary to entrance into heaven. His soul was doomed before his birth.** The patriarch's remarks caused awe and consternation among the hearers and precipitated an ecclesiastical scrimmage. The Rev. Mr. Brown replied to the remarks of the patriarch, . . .

Burns was a grandson of **Abel**, the body servant of Joseph the Prophet. **Abel was a Negro**, and, according to the remarks of Patriarch Miner, is the **only one of his race who ever succeeded in gaining entrance within the pearly gates.** The reason he was so successful in accomplishing that feat, according to the patriarch, was his **loyalty and service to Joseph the Prophet**, and his belief that the Mormon religion is the only one that ever happened. . . .

Abel, the son of Ham and body servant of Joseph the Prophet, died and was translated. The children whom he left in this world may never be exalted to that state, according to the patriarch. **The reason assigned** by the patriarch for the **non-admission** of Ethiopians to the other side is the fact of **their dusky skins. No man with black skin may enter the gates of heaven, said the patriarch.** . . .

"This is hardly the place to bring forth matters of truth," said the venerable patriarch as he ascended the pulpit after Mr. Brown had concluded his remarks, "but the truth ought always to be told. The truth never hurts." . . .

"I repeat, the truth must be told," continued the aged man in continuing the strange panegyric. He quivered and shook in the throes of intense excitement. "I am president of a quorum of seventies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. I am here to bear testimony **not** to the man who is dead, but to his **Grandfather, Abel**". . .

"I cannot refrain from speaking of the **exceptional qualification of Abel**, the body servant of Joseph the Prophet. His **loyalty** to the prophet was **wonderful**. He stayed constantly at his side until the prophet was translated. He believed implicitly in the Mormon faith and was rewarded for that belief. **For his services to the Prophet and his faith in our religion he was raised to the order of the Melchisedek Priesthood. He was the only colored man who ever lived that belonged to that order.** . . .

"It is not to be wondered at, too, when you consider the teachings of our church in relation to the colored people. We believe that there are three orders of spirits. In the first class are included the spirits that have never been incarnated. Having never been given a human body

they are doomed to grope in darkness throughout eternity. There is no redemption for them.

"The second class includes the spirits which have been incarnated. They have been given the privilege of coming into the world and being redeemed through the plan of salvation that is open to us. **That class is the whites.**

"The third and last class of spirits is the class that fell. Because of their **fall** they are compelled to **reside in bondage**. They are given carnate bodies, but can never lift the yoke of bondage. That class of spirits includes the **Negroes.**

"Abel, the body servant of the prophet believed in Joseph Smith as a prophet and the latter-day dispensation. Hence he **was exalted**, and, so far as is known, **he is the only one of his race who ever overcame the conditions of his bondage.** . . .

"For the colored race, however, there is an exalted state in the next world into which they may go. Provision has been made in the teachings of the Prophet Joseph so that the negro may step up into that preliminary state of exaltation, and when he gets there a chance is given him to accept redemption, according to the teachings of Joseph Smith." . . .

Mr. Brown immediately arose and declared that no such teachings existed in the Bible. In refutation of the assertions of the patriarch he read several selections from the Bible, citing instances where men with black skins had been saved. He attempted to calm the feelings that had been aroused by the remarks of the patriarch. He offered assurances of hope and salvation to the friends of the dead man.

Bishop N. A. Empey then attempted to gain the attention of the audience to reply to Mr. Brown. He was refused the privilege of speaking by those in charge of the services.

Burns's family are Mormons, though the young man is said to have never affiliated himself with the church. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, November 1, 1903, p. 8)

Although we were aware of the fact that Elijah Abel held the Priesthood in the Mormon Church, we were very astonished to learn that his descendants have also been ordained to the Priesthood.

The information concerning the ordination of Elijah Abel's descendants was found by Bob Phillips—Mr. Phillips has done a tremendous job of tracing Elijah Abel's descendants. The following is a copy of a chart, given to us by Mr. Phillips, showing that Elijah Abel and his descendants were ordained to the priesthood.

ORDINATIONS TO PRIESTHOOD

Elijah Able	Ordained an Elder March 3, 1836. Ordained a Seventy April 4, 1841 Nauvoo, Illinois
Enoch Able (son of Elijah)	Ordained an Elder November 10, 1900. by John Q. Adams Logan 5th Ward, Utah
Elijah Able (grandson of Elijah) son of Enoch	Ordained a Priest July 5, 1934. by J. C. Hogenson Ordained an Elder September 29, 1935 by Reuben L. Hill Logan 10th Ward, Utah

After receiving this chart we began to search through the records in the Genealogical Society—which is owned by the Mormon Church—to see if we could confirm the statement that Elijah Abel's descendants have been ordained to the Priesthood. With the help of Bob Phillips, we were able to find information that proves that the Negro blood in the Abel family has not prevented some of them from holding the Priesthood. In fact, we have obtained an actual photograph of Elijah Abel's grandson's ward membership record, which proves beyond all doubt



that he was ordained to the Priesthood. The Genealogical Library would not make a photocopy of this record. After a great deal of trouble, however, we found a way to get one. We have reproduced this photocopy at the bottom of this page. Enoch Abel (Elijah's son) evidently married a "white" woman by the name of Mary Jordi. The people in Enoch Abel's ward must have known that he was a Negro, for when the local newspaper announced his death it called him a "colored" man:

Enoch Able, a **colored** resident of the Fifth ward, died at noon on Thursday, of pneumonia. Able left a wife and **large** family in destitute circumstances. (*The Journal*, Logan City, Utah, February 23, 1901)

Enoch Abel had a son that he named Elijah. Sometime between 1917 and 1925 he was ordained to the Priesthood, for the Church Census Records for 1925 list him as a Deacon. The photograph printed below shows that he was ordained a Priest in 1934 and an Elder in 1935. This definitely proves that the Negro blood in the Abel family has not prevented some of them from being ordained.

Bob Phillips says that there are at least sixty descendants of Elijah Abel (not to be confused with his grandson who was also named Elijah) in the Mormon Church. At least forty of these live within a radius of 100 miles of Salt Lake City, and, of course, some of them hold the Priesthood and are doing missionary work for the Church. Elijah Abel had six daughters. Therefore, many of his descendants do not have the name of Abel. Some of their children were apparently adopted into "white" families in Utah. It is evident, then, that some members of the Mormon Church who believe that they are "white" are in reality part Negro. Bob Phillips claims that some of Elijah Abel's descendants think he was an "Indian." Perhaps some of the very people who are defending the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro are themselves descendants of Elijah Abel. For more information on Elijah Abel and his descendants see our book, *Mormons and Negroes*, pages 13-18.

There have been other Negroes, who were not related to the Abel family, who have held the Priesthood in the Mormon Church. The Mormon writer William E. Berrett tells of a Negro who was ordained to the Priesthood:

It appears that one person of **Negro blood had been ordained an Elder** by William Smith while he was on his mission in New York State as evidence by a letter appearing in *Journal History*, June 2, 1847:

At this place (Batavia, New York) I found a **colored** brother by the name of Lewis, a barber and **an Elder in the Church** ordained by William Smith. This Lewis, I am also informed, has a son who is married to a white girl and both are members of the Church.

(*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 7)

Another Negro who was apparently ordained to the Priesthood was Edward Leggroan. In the 1914 Church Census the Leggroans are listed as "Colored." Kate B. Carter reproduces the following letter from Sarah Leggroan:

Dear Mrs. Carter:

Edward Leggroan lived in the 9th Ward. He was a **deacon**. In those days the deacons cleaned the church, looked after the lamps and fire. . . .

Sincerely

Sarah Leggroan

(*The Negro Pioneer, Daughters of Utah Pioneers*, Lesson For May, 1965, p. 547)

L. H. Kirkpatrick stated: "The reason there might have been other colored members in full standing is that some of the first converts and branches of the Church were long on faith, but short on records" (*Pen*, Winter, 1954, p. 12).

Joseph Fielding Smith, who became President of the Church in 1970, has done his best to cover up the fact that Negroes have been ordained. On June 8, 1960, a woman, who is a member of the Mormon Church, wrote a letter to Joseph Fielding Smith asking him concerning the ordination of Negroes. In this letter she stated:

Last night at our Mutual class we were studying the 38 Sec. of Doctrine and Covenant[s] verse 16, where in—All flesh is mine and I am no respecter of persons.

This led on to discussion and some one remarked that negroes were ordained Elders in the early church.

Will you please tell me who the man was, at what time did this happen, and who ordained him? . . . Was more than one negro ordained an Elder? . . .

The answer she received was postmarked June 10, 1960, and read: "**Negroes were not ordained in the early Church.**"

Lately the truth about Elijah Abel has become more generally known, and in a letter dated April 10, 1963, Joseph Fielding Smith stated: ". . . this statement that Elijah Abel was so ordained has **traveled to the end of the earth.**" In the same letter Joseph Fielding Smith admitted that Elijah Abel was ordained: "It is **true that**

No. <b>81</b>	{Cancellation}	Name in Full <b>Elijah Ables</b>	Sex <b>Male</b>
Mother's Name <b>Leasiah Ables</b>	DAY MONTH YEAR	Mother's Maiden Name <b>Mary Jardy</b>	DAY MONTH YEAR
Born at <b>Logan, Utah</b>	<b>21 Dec 1892</b>	Received from <b>Daniel Malad</b>	<b>1 May 1923</b>
Blessed by		Mission to	
Baptized by <b>Fred Silgen Jr.</b>	<b>30 June 1917</b>	Married to	
Confirmed by <b>Lorenzo Eggert</b>	<b>30 June 1917</b>	Temple or Civil	
Priesthood when received	Ordained	Removed to	
Ordained <b>Prest</b>	By <b>J. C. Hogson</b>	Excommunicated for	
Ordained <b>Ables</b>	By <b>Randall L. Hill</b>	Died of	
Ordained	By	Canceled [see instructions]	
Ordained	By		

A photograph from the records of members of the Logan Tenth Ward for the years 1927-1943. This photograph proves that Elijah Abel (the grandson of the Negro Elijah Abel) was ordained to the priesthood. Notice that he was ordained a priest July 5, 1934, and an Elder September 29, 1935. This photograph was obtained with great difficulty from a microfilm in the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. The serial number for this microfilm is 6360 and the part number is 22.

elders of the church laid hands on a Negro and blessed him 'apparently' with the priesthood, but they could not give that which the Lord had denied. It is true that Elijah Abel was so 'ordained.'

In less than three years Joseph Fielding Smith had to change his story from "Negroes were not ordained in the early Church" to "It is true that elders of the church laid hands on a Negro and blessed him 'apparently' with the Priesthood, . . . It is true that Elijah Abel was so 'ordained.'"

It is very interesting to note that President Joseph Fielding Smith has criticized the Reorganized Church for ordaining a "few" Negroes: "In the 'Reorganized' Church they have a few, at least, of the Negro race, that they have been 'ordained to the priesthood' but it is contrary to the word of God" (*Origin of the Reorganized Church and the Question of Succession*, p. 130).

The Mormon apologist William E. Berrett admitted that two Negroes were ordained; however, he stated that in a meeting held May 31, 1879, the "leaders of the Church reapproved" that Negroes could not hold the Priesthood. Mr. Berrett states that Elijah Abel was "light of color," and he implies that the man who ordained him may not have known that he was a Negro. He quotes Zebedee Coltrin as making this statement: "Brother Coltrin further said Brother Abel was ordained a seventy . . . and when the Prophet Joseph learned of his lineage he was dropped from the Quorum, and another was put in his place" (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 10). This argument is absolutely ridiculous, for even Zebedee Coltrin admits that he knew that Elijah Abel was a Negro:

In the washing and anointing of Brother Abel at Kirtland, I anointed him and while I had my hands upon his head, I never had such unpleasant feelings in my life. And I said, "I never would again anoint another person who had Negro blood in him unless I was commanded by the Prophet to do so." (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 11)

If Zebedee Coltrin knew that Elijah Abel was a Negro, is it possible to believe that Joseph Smith did not know? It should be remembered that Joseph Smith lived in Kirtland at the time Elijah Abel was there.

Arthur M. Richardson uses the same type of argument as William E. Berrett. He states that Elijah Abel was ordained "without the Prophet Joseph's knowledge and that when he found out he had Elijah Abel dropped from the quorum (Church Library)" (*That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, p. 8).

Notice that the only source Mr. Richardson gives for this statement is the "Church Library." Since the Church Library has thousands of books and manuscripts, we feel that Mr. Richardson should have been more specific in his reference. In his other references he tells the name of the book and the page number. Perhaps he was referring to the statement by Zebedee Coltrin; if so, it must be remembered that this statement was made at least thirty years after the event was supposed to have occurred. But even if it were possible for Mr. Richardson to prove that Elijah Abel was "dropped from the quorum," how would he explain the fact that "In 1883" Elijah Abel was a "member of the Third Quorum of Seventy?"

The Mormon writer John L. Lund admits that Elijah Abel was ordained: "History records an incident of Elijah a Negro, being given the Priesthood" (*The Church and the Negro*, p. 76). Nevertheless, Mr. Lund argues that Elijah Abel was later dropped from his Priesthood Quorum:

. . . when the Church leaders became aware that this man had Negro blood, his Priesthood was suspended.

That Elijah Abel was a good man is not in question. The fact that he held the Priesthood is also a matter of record. . . . Once it was discovered that Elijah Abel was of Negroid ancestry, he was dropped from his Priesthood Quorum (1879) . . . he did have Negro blood and was therefore not eligible for the Priesthood. (*The Church and the Negro*, pp. 76-77)

Like Mr. Richardson, John L. Lund's only source for this statement is listed as: "Record in Church Historian's office." And, strange as it may seem, on the same page that Mr. Lund states that Elijah Abel was dropped from his quorum, he quotes Andrew Jenson (who was Assistant Church Historian) as saying that Elijah Abel was still a member of the "Third Quorum of Seventy" in "1883." On the next page, Mr. Lund makes his argument even weaker, for he admits that Elijah Abel's descendants were apparently ordained:

It is also apparently true that several other Negroes, including some of Elijah Abel's descendants, have been ordained to the Priesthood. It is the policy of the Church in these and other cases to suspend the Priesthood from those who are known to be of the seed of Cain. It is admitted that the Priesthood has been mistakenly given to some Negroes who are light of color. However, the Church wishes to follow the order of heaven and the commandments of God; therefore, when Negro ancestry is discovered in a man who holds the Priesthood, he is suspended in the use of that Priesthood. (*The Church and the Negro*, p. 78)

It is not possible for us to believe that the Mormon leaders ordained Elijah Abel by mistake, took his Priesthood away and then "mistakenly" ordained his descendants. Mr. Lund claims that the policy of the church is to "suspend the Priesthood" from those who have Negro blood, yet he furnishes no evidence to show that Elijah Abel's descendants have been suspended in the use of their Priesthood. We do not believe that the Mormon leaders will suspend the Priesthood from Elijah Abel's descendants. We feel that they would rather keep the matter quiet. If they really believe that it is "contrary to the word of God" to ordain Negroes (as Joseph Fielding Smith claims) why don't they search out the descendants of Elijah Abel and take away their Priesthood? Of course they will not do this because they know that there are many other people in the church who have Negro blood in them. According to an article in *Time Magazine*, almost all white people have at least a small amount of Negro blood in them:

A glance tells that many Americans who are classified as Negro have plenty of European "blood"; white people with Negro blood are harder to distinguish, their African genes may not affect their appearance and they usually do not know that some of the ancestors "passed." In the *Ohio Journal of Science*, Sociologist Robert P. Stuckert of Ohio State University attempts to estimate how many white Americans have some African ancestry. . . . When Dr. Stuckert has constructed his table for each census year, he reaches the conclusion that of 135 million Americans classified as white in 1950, about 28 million (21%) had some African ancestry. Of the 15 million classified as Negro, slightly more than 4,000,000 (27%) were of pure African descent. During 1941-50, he estimates, about 155,000 Negroes moved into the white category . . . people with ancestors who lived in the Roman Empire, including England and part of Germany, are descended from a broad cut of the empire's population.

The Roman Empire had no color line, and streams of people moved through it for centuries in every direction. Africans including those with Negro ancestry, fought in the legions, traveled as merchants or seamen. Everywhere they went they left their immortal genes; so few white Americans can claim to have none of them, and none can prove it. (*Time Magazine*, June 30, 1958, p. 47)

If Brigham Young's statement that even one drop of Negro blood would exclude a person from the Priesthood were true, many of the Mormons would have to relinquish their Priesthood. It would be impossible to do as much missionary work in the South as the Mormon Church does and not convert many people who have Negro ancestry.

The Mormon writer Armand L. Mauss made the following statements in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal*

of *Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, page 24:

One wonders, for example, why the Lord permitted the ordination of Elijah Abel (and I have even heard it claimed that Church records would show Abel's sons and grandsons to have been ordained too, . . .) One wonders also how we can be sure that all who are given the priesthood are free of even remote Hamitic lineage, especially in such ethnically mixed areas as Latin America and Fiji. . . . In cases of ordinations which seem to constitute "exceptions," or are otherwise questionable, it is not my responsibility to offer "explanations"; these must come, if they are to come, from the Prophets themselves, who, we must presume, know what they are doing. Nothing is to be gained, it seems to me, by nit-picking about occasional exceptions to Church policies anyway, as long as these are rare; . . .

The Mormon writer Lester Bush is willing to admit that a number of Negroes have been ordained:

Elijah Abel, . . . was . . . ordained a Seventy . . . There have been numerous subsequent cases of men of Negro ancestry reportedly receiving the priesthood. The most commonly cited include a "colored" Elder in Batavia, N.Y., . . . Samuel Chambers, a prominent Salt Lake Negro reportedly active in the Eighth Ward Deacon's Quorum in 1873-74 . . . two unnamed Negro Elders reported in South Carolina (*Journal History*, August 18, 1900); Eduard Leggroan, a "deacon" in Salt Lake City's Ninth Ward . . . and several of Elijah Abel's descendants, e.g., his son Enoch and grandson Elijah, both reportedly Elders . . . Some of Abel's children, themselves with light complexions, married into "white" families, and the descendants of these marriages have largely "passed over" from Negro to white. The problem of what policy to follow in cases such as this, where a priesthood holder finds unexpected Negro ancestry, has **not** been resolved consistently by the Church. Though Brigham Young is said to have excluded anyone with as much as "one drop of the seed of Cain" in his blood, occasional exceptions are reported more recently, particularly if the individual was assigned a lineage other than Cain, Ham or Canaan in his patriarchal blessing. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1969, pp. 91-92, n. 30)

Wallace Turner gives this information:

The continual LDS insistence on racial bigotry has another serious, defect, too, since it assumes that the prohibition is equal to all Negroes and always has been. This is untrue. All Mormons who have ever studied the matter know that Elijah Abel, . . . was a full member of the Mormon priesthood for almost a half century, . . . (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 241-242)

One indication of potential change is the astounding fact that in the past year or so the Mormons have been ordaining Fiji islanders into the priesthood. It came about gradually. For many years the church maintained missions among the Polynesians, . . .

The Mormon mission worked through the Polynesians on Tonga and then moved to the Melanesians on Fiji. The Melanesians are black—very black—and are described in reference works as Negroid in appearance except that their noses are not so flat as African Negroes and their hair is more inclined to stand out from their heads than to be coiled closely to it it is obvious that someone advanced the argument successfully that they were not African Negroes and therefore—whatever their skin color—were not the bearers of the curse of Cain.

A different thing is going on in South America where the Mormon missionaries are pushing ahead full throttle. There the former careful selection to keep out "white Negroes" has been allowed to slide a little.

But, sadly, sometimes the missionaries get orders from Salt Lake City to go to a new elder and tell him that he should not try to exercise his priestly authorities, that he has a Negro ancestor and everything was a big mistake.

"There is no question but that in Brazil they have been ordaining priests who are part Negro," said one careful observer. (*Ibid.*, pp. 262-263)

Speaking of Brigham Young's statement that one drop of Negro

blood would exclude a person from the Priesthood, Jim Todd made these observations:

Sweeping as this statement is, it can have no literal meaning without causing great, if not total reduction, in the numbers holding the LDS priesthood.

Of course Brigham Young made his statement a long time ago, and did not have access to later scientific concepts. . . .

It has been claimed that probably no European is totally free of Negro genes . . . they do have some, certainly more than the "one drop" mentioned by Brigham Young.

Obviously, few if any Eu[r]opeans are barred from the LDS priesthood. Yet do not Brigham Young's words require they should be so barred? Where, then, could the line be drawn?

What possible method could be used to detect a person who had a single Negro ancestor as few as four generations ago? Furthermore, what if the colored ancestor was eight or ten generations back?

. . . Therefore, unless drastically modified, there is no way Brigham Young's statement can have any real meaning.

Yet just what are the reasons that the Negro is denied the LDS priesthood? Are they only trivial and unimportant? An apparent injustice such as this which moves against the winds of change merits a reasonable and public explanation. Why is there at present no convincing, or even any official, explanation?

Perhaps sooner rather than later, the LDS hierarchy will consider this an issue of the times, and either resolve it or clarify it. (*The Daily Utah Chronicle*, University of Utah, November 22, 1966)

Mormons claim that the "mark of Cain" was a "black skin," yet they admit that all Negroes are not black. John L. Lund makes these statements:

Therefore, no one who is a descendant of Cain, regardless of whether he is black, brown, red, yellow, or white is allowed to hold the Priesthood. (*The Church and the Negro*, pp. 101-102)

Some have believed that the mark and the curse of Cain were one and the same. The mark of a dark skin was separate from the curse although generally the two are found together. It is possible to have a light-colored skin and still carry the curse of no Priesthood. (*Ibid.*, p. 106)

In a letter published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Gary Lobb wrote the following:

We must therefore ask, "Just who is a Negro?" We, as a Church, have decided that the Melanesian Fiji Islanders are not while the Papuans of neighboring New Guinea are. In some of the branches of the Church which my wife and I have attended here in Brazil, there appear to be priesthood bearers who possess the essential characteristics of the Negroid races. I am reminded that someone of authority decided that these people are not.

These, I believe, are some legitimate questions for us as individuals within the Church to examine, and we should examine them within a context of our testimonies and with the assurance of the divine mission of Joseph Smith. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1967, p. 8)

## Negroes Unhappy

President Joseph Fielding Smith would have us believe that the Negroes who are in the church accept their position without question:

Fortunately for the Negro, he is not denied entrance into the Church. . . . We have in the Church many good, honest, faithful Negroes **who fully understand**. (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 2, p. 178)

This statement is in direct contradiction to a statement made by a Negro member of the church by the name of Monroe Fleming. In a letter to us Mr. Fleming stated:



Dear brother Tanner:

I wish to state that the statement that the Negro is contented as a member in the church without the priesthood, is **not true**. I know most of the members of the Negro race in the Church and know that they feel that they should have the priesthood if they live a life based upon the principles of the Gospel.

Sincerely,  
M. H. Fleming

Kate B. Carter made this statement concerning a Negro woman who was a member of the Mormon Church:

She had a great desire to go to the temple, and when she found that the temple was closed to Negroes, **she scratched her arm until it bled and said: "See, my blood is as white as anyone's."** (*The Negro Pioneer*, p. 523)

On page 535 of the same book, Mrs. Carter quoted Mary Lee Bland Ewell as saying:

Mammy Chloe loved the Gospel. I taught her to read, and she often remarked: "I'd be willen, honey, to be skinned alive if I could jus' go in dat Temple."

Edgar Whittingham, a Negro member of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

When I made it known that I had decided to take steps to become a member of the Church, my friend, the person who actually taught me the Gospel or discussed it with me . . . very hesitatingly approached me one day and said that he had something very special to tell me. Then he proceeded to explain the curse on the Negroes. Naturally I was deeply hurt and greatly upset about it. I guess my emotions got the best of me. I didn't do anything irrational, but having been deeply wounded in the house of my friends, I left the Church and stayed away for approximately a year. . . . In time I gradually overcame the emotional hurt and after much reflective thinking, I returned to the LDS branch. . . . Up until the time I was told that because I was a Negro I could not hold the Priesthood, my knowledge of Christianity in the Methodist Church had persuaded me to believe that regardless of color we would all have the opportunity to do the same things or acquire the same glories. My reaction to being told I could not hold the priesthood was that it was a stigma of discrimination. Now this is the general belief that I think most Negroes hold today. Perhaps the only reason I am a member of the Church today is that I heard the Gospel before I had known of this particular curse. . . .

I've had contact with many Negroes since joining the Church who have not pursued their interests in the Church because they were repelled by awareness of inability to acquire full Priesthood fellowship. Even as a member of the Church, I still find the "curse" very difficult to understand. I find others also have difficulty understanding this problem. . . . I believe that through revelation a change may be made. . . . Whether or not Negroes will receive the Priesthood during my life I don't know, . . . ("Is the Negro My Brother?," unpublished paper of Dr. Wilford S. Smith, as cited in *The Church and the Negro*, pp. 70-72)

## Objections to Doctrine

Many objections can be found to the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro. One of the most important is that it is not in harmony with the Bible. In Acts 10:34 we read: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God **is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.**" In Acts 10:28 Peter said, ". . . God hath showed me that I should not call **any man common or unclean.**" William E. Berrett admits that the Bible does not lend much support to the idea that the Negro should be forbidden any rights in the church:

While the Bible contains no account of a Negro bearing the Priesthood of God, one would find rather **scant materials** upon which to base any policy limiting the rights and participation of the Negro in God's Church. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 3)

Although the Book of Mormon states that the Indians were cursed with a dark skin, it does not say anything concerning the Negro. In fact, it states that "all men are privileged the one like unto the other and none are forbidden" (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 26:28). In 2 Nephi 26:33 this statement appears:

. . . he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, **black and white**, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and **all are alike unto God**, both Jew and Gentile.

David O. McKay, who was the ninth President of the Mormon Church, made the following statement:

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

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, admits that he has not found any scriptural basis for not allowing the Negro to hold the Priesthood other than the statement in the Book of Abraham, which is part of the *Pearl of Great Price*:

It is true that the negro race is barred from holding the Priesthood, and this has always been the case. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught this doctrine, and it was made known to him, although we know of no such statement in any revelation in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Book of Mormon, or the Bible. (*The Improvement Era*, vol. 27, p. 565)

## For Cain's Sins

The second Article of Faith of the Mormon Church reads as follows: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression" (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 60).

To avoid the idea that Cain's descendants were punished for his "transgression," the Mormon leaders have taught that the Negroes were "indifferent in their support of the righteous cause" in the pre-existence. Gaylon L. Caldwell made the following statement:

This doctrine is not without logical difficulties, however. Considering the Latter-day Saint dictum that "man is punished for his own sins" the curse on Cain is understandable and consistent with Mormon philosophy, since the Mormon scripture insists that he sinned knowingly and wilfully. But how is one to account for the penalty on all his alleged descendants? An arbitrary God who would permit millions of people to be deprived of the priesthood, and hence its concomitant blessings, by accident of birth simply does not fit into the Mormon theology. As would be expected, this problem has led to the formulation of several theses. One of the most popular was framed by B. H. Roberts from a suggestion by Orson Hyde, early Apostle. Roberts suggested that since all spirits before living in the flesh had an opportunity to prove their fidelity to God and His laws during the "war in heaven" some of them might have been **neutral**, or proved **less valiant** than others, and thus lost the right of priesthood during their earthly sojourn. (*Western Humanities Review*, Winter 1959, p. 105)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

Note, also, that part of Cain's curse was to have as his posterity those spirits unable to bear the Priesthood in this life. . . .

To suppose that the Negroes, the descendants of Cain, are born with black skins and are denied the Priesthood merely to perpetuate God's curse upon Cain, is alike an **affront to reasoning man and to the justice and mercy of God.** (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 1, pp. 44-45)

Strange as it may seem, however, the idea that the Negroes did something wrong in the pre-existence (which the Mormon Church leaders now teach) is contradicted by a statement which Brigham Young attributes to Joseph Smith:

President Brigham Young, answering a question put to him by Elder Lorenzo D. Young . . . said that **Joseph Smith** had declared that the negroes were not neutral in heaven, for all the spirits took sides, but "the posterity of Cain **are black because he (Cain) committed murder.** He killed Abel and God set a mark upon his posterity. But the **spirits are pure** (i.e. **innocent**). See

D.C. 93:38.) that enter their tabernacles and there will be a chance for the redemption of all the children of Adam, except the sons of perdition. (*The Way to Perfection*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 105-106)

To show how confused the Mormon writers are concerning the pre-existence, we need only compare two statements they have made concerning Cain. John J. Stewart implies that Cain was “valiant” in the pre-existence and did not fall to the temptations of Satan until he came to this earth:

Cain, a son of Adam and Eve, apparently had quite a different record in the Spirit world. He was likely **one of the valiant one there**, and thus was born into this world under the most favorable circumstances, of a noble sire and mother, and was even privileged to walk and talk with God. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 1, p. 39)

Bruce R. McConkie, on the other hand, states:

Though he was a rebel and **an associate of Lucifer in pre-existence**, and though he was a **liar** from the beginning whose name was Perdition, **Cain managed to attain the privilege of mortal birth**. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, p. 102)

### Negroes and the Gospel

The Bible teaches that the Gospel is to be carried to **all** people. Jesus is recorded as saying: “. . . go ye into **all** the world, and preach the gospel to **every** creature” (Mark 16:15). Jesus also said: “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).

Philip was actually commanded to preach the gospel to an Ethiopian; see Acts 8:26-39. An Ethiopian is defined in the dictionary as a Negro. Jeremiah asks, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin” (Jeremiah 13:23). In Acts 8:38 it tells us that Philip baptized the Ethiopian.

Although the Bible teaches that the Gospel is to be carried to all people, including the Negro, the Mormon Church has tried to avoid doing missionary work among the Negro people. Bruce R. McConkie, of the Council of the Seventy, stated: “**The gospel message of salvation is not carried affirmatively to them . . .**” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 477)

William E. Berrett stated: “. . . **no direct efforts have been made to proselyte among them**” (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 2, p. 5).

The Mormon writer Arthur M. Richardson very bluntly stated: “. . . The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, **has no call to carry the gospel to the Negro, and it does not do so**” (*That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, p. 13).

The Mormon publication, *The Pearl of Great Price*, is used by Mormon writers to justify not taking the Gospel to the Negro. In the Book of Moses, which is part of the *Pearl of Great Price*, we read:

. . . and there was a **blackness** came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people. . . .

And it came to pass that Enoch continued to call upon all the people, **save it were the people of Canaan, to repent**; (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 7:8, 12)

President Joseph Fielding Smith stated: “The Canaanites before the flood preserved the curse in the land; the Gospel was **not** taken to them, and no other people would associate with them” (*The Way to Perfection*, p. 108).

The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen made this statement: “When he told Enoch **not** to preach the gospel to the descendants of Cain who were **black, the Lord engaged in segregation**” (*Race Problems as They Affect the Church*, Address by Mark E. Petersen, August 27, 1954).

The Mormon writer Arthur M. Richardson made this statement:

Also, **the gospel was not carried to this segregated black group**.

And it came to pass that Enoch continued to call upon all the people, save it were the people of Canaan, to repent.

These quotations so far point out that the Negroes tread the earth with **black dishonorable bodies** as a judgment of God because at the time of decision in the pre-existence they were **faint-hearted** and exhibited an **infirmity of purpose**—they were not valiant in the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, they were entitled to no better earthly lineage than that of the first earthly murderer, Cain. They were to be the “servant of servants.” They were to be segregated. **No effort was made to carry the gospel to them as a people**. (*That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, pp. 9-10)

In 1947 the Mormon Church was considering doing missionary work in Cuba. On June 20, 1947, a Mission President wrote Lowry Nelson, a “nationally prominent sociologist” (who was also a member of the Mormon Church) desiring to know whether missionary work could be done in Cuba without bringing people with Negro blood into the church. In this letter he stated:

A short time ago at the request of the **First Presidency** I visited Cuba in view of doing missionary work on that island. While there I met Mr. Chester W. Young . . . He was very helpful to us and in the course of our conversation I learned that he was very well acquainted with and wished to be remembered to you. . . .

He advised me that you spent some two years in Cuba making a study of rural communities. Your study there would be very helpful to us. I would appreciate your opinion as to the advisability of doing missionary work particularly in the rural sections of Cuba, knowing, of course, your concept of the Negro and his position as to the Priesthood.

Are there groups of **pure white blood** in the rural sections, particularly in the small communities? If so, are they **maintaining segregation from the Negroes?** The best information we received was that in the rural communities there was no segregation of the races and it would be **difficult to find**, with any degree of certainty, groups of **pure white people**. (Letter dated June 20, 1947, typed copy)

On June 26, 1947, Lowry Nelson replied. In this reply he stated:

The attitude of the Church in regard to the Negro makes me very sad. . . . I do not believe that God is a racist. But if the Church has taken an irrevocable stand, I would dislike to see it enter Cuba or any other island where different races live and establish missionary work. The white and colored people get along much better in the Caribbean and most of Latin-America than they do in the United States. . . . For us to go into a situation like that and preach a doctrine of “**white supremacy**” would, it seems to me, be a tragic disservice. . . . I am sad to have to write you and say, for what my opinion is worth, that it would be better for the Cubans if we did not enter their island—unless we are willing to revise our racial theory. To teach them the pernicious doctrine of segregation and inequalities among races where it does not exist, or to lend religious sanction to it where it has raised its ugly head would, it seems to me, be tragic. It seems to me we just fought a war over such ideas. (Letter dated June 26, 1947, typed copy)

On October 8, 1947, Lowry Nelson wrote to the First Presidency protesting the church’s doctrine concerning the Negro. On November 12, 1947, the First Presidency—i.e. George A. Smith, J. Reuben Clark and David O. McKay—wrote him a letter in which they stated:

We feel very sure that you understand the doctrines of the Church. They are either true or not true. Our testimony is that they are true. Under these circumstances

we, may not, permit ourselves to be too much impressed by the reasonings of men, however well-founded they may seem to be. We should like to say this to you in all kindness, and in all sincerity, that you are too fine a man to permit yourself to be led off from the principles of the Gospel by worldly learning. You have too much of a potentiality for doing good and we therefore prayerfully hope that you can re-orient your thinking and bring it in line with the revealed word of God.

Twenty years later Lowry Nelson wrote a letter which shows that he was not satisfied with the answer given by the First Presidency. In this letter he stated:

... it is twenty years ago this summer that I was first shocked into a realization of the implications of the present policy and began a "dialogue" with the First Presidency. I had spent twelve months beginning in September, 1945, making a study of rural life in Cuba for the Department of State. The following year, 1947, a friend of college days was sent by the Church Authorities to investigate the possibility of establishing mission work there. Upon learning of my having been in Cuba, he wrote me to inquire if I had found many white people there. In retrospect, I realize that I was very naive. But the truth is, that it was my first real confrontation with this question. Inevitably, in growing up in a Mormon Utah village, I had become familiar with such phrases as "white and delightsome," "cursed with a dark skin," the "third who sat on the fence," but they were just "phrases" that went in one ear and out the other. The Negro never came to our village. In my correspondence with the First Presidency, I was truly troubled to find myself in opposition to a fixed dogma. ... mission work among the blacks has been studiously avoided. Witness my Cuban inquiry. ... Since we claim to be a universal church whose message is to go to "every kindred, tongue, and people," how can we justify the exclusion of over 100 million human beings? (Letter by Lowry Nelson, published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1967, pp. 8-9)

### Nigerian Mission

On January 11, 1963, the President of the Mormon Church surprised the world by announcing that the church was going to send a mission to Nigeria. Wallace Turner made this statement in the *New York Times*:

The Mormons are vigorous proselyters, maintaining missions all over the world, except in the Negro nations in Africa. They have a mission among the whites in the Union of South Africa.

Earlier this year a plan was announced to send a mission to Nigeria, but the mission has not left Salt Lake City. (*New York Times*, Western edition, June 7, 1963)

A few months after the church announced the mission it became apparent that something was wrong. On August 7, 1963, we called the Mormon Church offices and asked if there was still going to be a mission to Nigeria. The woman in the Missionary department stated that conditions were "unsettled." Then she stated: "We have been asked not to give out any information about it."

It has now been more than nine years since the church announced this mission, but the mission has still "not left Salt Lake City." It appears that before the Mormon Church was able to establish their mission, Ambrose Chukwu—a Nigerian student who was attending college in California—wrote an article which was published in the *Nigerian Outlook*. In this article he warned the Nigerians of the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro (see our book *Mormons and Negroes*, p. 29). In another article in the same paper, the Editor of the *Nigerian Outlook* promised to help keep the Mormon Church out of Nigeria:

Elsewhere on this page we publish an article by a Nigerian in the United States on a new but dangerous religious organisation known as Latter Day Saints. The formation of a religious body in far away America should not have been the concern of any Nigerian but for the fact that this sect, otherwise known as Mormons, believe as a cardinal

of their faith that the Negro race is not equal to any other race in the eyes of God, as a result of which Negroes who are foolish enough to choose Mormonism as their religion can never be ordained priests.

Our correspondent has gone into great pains to expose this organisation because he fears it may come to Nigeria thoroughly disguised. . . . These so-called Latter Day Saints must be recognised for what they are—godless Herrenvolkism—and must not be allowed into this country. . . . Since the United States Government preaches the equality of all races, Mr. Kennedy must ban this anti-Negro organisation that preaches heretic doctrines.

We must congratulate our correspondent for having the courage of warning us in good time and we would like to assure him that he has our full support in his campaign against this evil body. (*Nigerian Outlook*, March 5, 1963, published in Enugu, Nigeria)

Ambrose Chukwu was successful in his attempt to keep the Mormon missionaries out of Nigeria. The Nigerian government has refused to give resident visas to the Mormon missionaries. This has caused the Mormon Church leaders a real problem. The following appeared in *Time Magazine*:

... 7,000 Ibibio, Ibo and Efik tribesmen in eastern Nigeria, . . . have gone ahead to organize their own branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . Fascinated by the dramatic life of the Mormon prophet, Anie Dick Obot of Uyo decided to form a branch of the church in Nigeria, . . . Mormon leaders sent back books explaining their laws and doctrines, and in 1959 dispatched to Africa Elder Lamar Williams, who was much impressed by the Nigerian's zeal and orthodoxy. Since then, the Nigerian Saints, governed by Obot and a council of 75 Elders, have established branches in six cities.

Church chiefs are somewhat at a loss on how to deal with their new African converts, especially since the Nigerian government will not give resident visas to any missionaries from the U.S. "This is quite a unique situation," admits Hugh D. Brown, Mormon first counselor. One problem now is that in the absence of supervision from Utah the Nigerian Saints appear to be deviating somewhat from strict adherence to revelation. Some Nigerian Mormons practice polygamy—forbidden in the U.S. church since 1890—and the converts already seem to have established their own black hierarchy, priests and all. "I don't have to wait for revelation to know that I am the natural head in Nigeria," snaps Obot, who is accepted by his elders as their bishop. "Nigerian priests will run their own branch. This is their creation, and they are in their own country." (*Time Magazine*, June 18, 1965, p. 56)

Dr. Glen W. Davidson made this statement concerning the failure of the Nigerian mission:

Most of the Mormon hierarchy did not regret their inability to send missionaries into "black Africa" nearly as much as they regretted the unfavorable publicity. (*The Christian Century*, September 29, 1965, p. 1184)

### Rooted in Prejudice

An examination of early Mormon history plainly reveals that the doctrine concerning the Negro grew out of prejudice. At the time the Mormon leaders were formulating their doctrine concerning the Negro, slavery was an accepted practice in the southern part of the United States and other parts of the world. In many places Negroes were treated as animals. Some people thought they were "without souls and made only to serve the white man."

The Mormons, of course, would not want us to believe that their leaders were influenced by the prejudice of their time. John J. Stewart stated:

The Prophet's whole life shows beyond doubt that he was not afraid of persecution nor public censure nor ridicule. He openly taught his convictions of truth, no matter how much trouble and hardship it brought upon him. He even gave his life rather than yield to such pressure or to compromise on truth.

To suppose that he would curry the favor of the world by manifesting a prejudice against the Negro is an



**affront** to this courageous man, and to the known facts of history. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 1, p. 15)

In the *Utah Chronicle* for April 7, 1965, the following statement appeared in a letter to the editor:

... Joseph Smith and other church leaders brought upon themselves the wrath of the non-Mormons in the communities where they lived by denouncing slavery and the suppression of human rights and dignity. This has been a **consistent and unwavering stand** by church leaders throughout the history of the church.

Actually, the truth of the matter is that the leaders of the Mormon Church did show prejudice against the Negro, and some of them declared that slavery was a divine institution.

It would appear that at first the Mormon Church had no doctrine concerning the Negro. By the year 1833, however, some members of the Mormon Church began to compromise with regard to the Negroes to appease their slave holding neighbors. In the Mormon paper, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, July 16, 1833, the following appeared:

Having learned with extreme regret, that an article entitled, "Free People of Color," in the last number of the *Star*, has been misunderstood, we feel in duty bound to state, in this Extra, that our intention was not only to stop free people of color from emigrating to this state, but to **prevent them from being admitted as member of the Church**. (Reprinted in the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 378-379)

John J. Stewart claimed that Joseph Smith invited an abolitionist to speak in Kirtland:

In the early 1830's he wrote and published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, the Church newspaper at Kirtland, Ohio, an editorial suggesting that leading men in the southern states should take measures to liberate the slaves, so that the Negro could enjoy the blessings of a free nation. He also **invited an abolitionist to give a public speech** in Kirtland, at a time when abolitionists were generally hated in the North as well as in the South. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 1, p. 16)

Mr. Stewart does not tell which issue of the *Messenger and Advocate* contains this information, however, there is an article written by Joseph Smith for the *Messenger and Advocate* (later reprinted in the *History of the Church*) which shows that he favored the practice of slavery and was very opposed to abolitionists. Joseph Smith stated:

**Dear Sir:**—This place (Kirtland) having recently been visited by a gentleman who advocated the principles or doctrines of those who are called **abolitionists**, and his presence having created an interest in that subject, if you deem the following reflections of any service, or think they will have a tendency to correct the opinions of the Southern public, . . . you are at liberty to give them publicity . . . I **fear** that the sound might go out, that "an Abolitionist" had held forth several times to this community, . . . all, except a very few, attended to their own vocations, and left the gentleman to hold forth his own arguments to nearly naked walls. I am aware that many, who **profess** to preach the Gospel, complain against their brethren of the same faith, who reside in the South, and are ready to withdraw the hand of fellowship, because they will not renounce the principle of slavery, and raise their voice against every thing of the kind. This must be a tender point, and one which should call forth the candid reflections of all men, and more especially before they advance in an opposition calculated to lay waste the fair states of the South, and let loose upon the world a community of people, who might, peradventure, **overrun our country, and violate the most sacred principles of human society, chastity and virtue**. . . . I do not believe that the people of the North have any more right to say that the South shall not hold slaves, than the South have to say the North shall.

How any community can ever be excited with the **chatter** of such persons, boys and others, who are too indolent to obtain their living by honest industry, and are incapable of pursuing any occupation of a professional nature, is unaccountable to me; and when I see persons in the free states, signing documents against slavery, it is no less, in my mind, than an army of influence, and a **declaration of hostilities**, against the people of the South. What course can sooner divide our union?

After having expressed myself so freely upon this subject, I do not doubt, but those who have been forward in raising their voices against the South, will cry out against me as being uncharitable, unfeeling, unkind, and wholly unacquainted with the Gospel of Christ. . . . the first mention we have of **slavery** is found in the Holy Bible, . . . And so far from that prediction being averse to the mind of God, it remains as a lasting monument of the **decree of Jehovah**, to the shame and confusion of all who **have cried out** against the South, in consequence of their holding the sons of Ham in **servitude**. . . . I can say, the **curse is not yet taken off from the sons of Canaan**, neither will be until it is affected by as great a power as caused it to come; and the people who **interfere the least with the purposes of God** in this matter, will come under the **least condemnation before him**; and those who are determined to pursue a course, which shows an opposition, and a feverish restlessness against the **decrees of the Lord**, will learn, when perhaps it is too late for their own good, that God can do his own work, without the aid of those who are not dictated by His counsel. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 2, pp. 436-438)

In the same issue of the *Messenger and Advocate* (April, 1836) in which Joseph Smith defended slavery, this statement by W. Parrish appeared:

Not long since a gentleman of the Presbyterian faith came to this town (Kirtland) and proposed to lecture upon the abolition question. Knowing that there was a large branch of the church of Latter Day Saints in this place, . . . he no doubt anticipated great success in establishing his doctrine among us. But in this he was mistaken. **The doctrine of Christ and the systems of men are at issue** and consequently will not harmonize together. . . . we stand aloof from abolition societ[e]s. . . .

And although **political demagogues, and religious fanatics**, in their blind zeal, may bustle and rage, . . . yet God's **curse** pronounced by his servant Noah will remain upon them; and Canaan must dwell in the tents of Shem and be his servant until He, who pronounced it shall order it otherwise. And all the abolition societies that now are or ever will be, **cannot cause one jot or tittle of the prophecy to fail**. . . . We would ther[e]fore be distinctly understood, that we **do not countenance the abolition system, nor fellowship those who advocate it principles**: . . . (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 2, pp. 295-296)

In the same issue another article appeared that denounced the abolitionists. In this article we find the following:

What benefit can the slave derive from the long harrangues and discussions held in the north? Certainly the people of the north have no legal right to interfere with the property of the south, neither have they a right to say they shall, or shall not, hold slaves. . . .

Where can be the common sense of any wishing to see the slaves of the south set at liberty, . . . Such a thing could not take place without corrupting all civil and wholesome society, of both the north and the south! Let the **blacks** of the south be free, and our community is overrun with paupers, and a reckless mass of human beings, uncultivated, untaught and unaccustomed to provide for themselves the necessities of life—endangering the chastity of every female who might by chance be found in our streets—our prisons filled with convicts, and the **hang-man wearied** with executing the functions of his office! This must unavoidably be the case, every rational man must admit, who has ever travelled in the slave states, or we must open

our houses unfold our arms, and bid these **degraded and degrading** sons of Canaan, a hear[t]ly welcome and a free admittance to all we possess! A society of this nature, to us, is so intolerably **degrading**, that the bare reflection causes our feelings to recoil, and our hearts to revolt . . . the project of **emansipation is destructive to our government**, and the notion of amalgamation is devilish!—And insensible to feeling must be the heart, and low indeed must be the mind, that would consent for a moment, to see his fair daughter, his sister, or perhaps, his bosom companion, in the embrace of a **Negro!** . . .

There is a strange mysteriousness over the face of the scripture with regard to servitude. The fourth son of Ham was cursed by Noah, . . . When it will be removed we know not, and where he now remains in bondage, **remain he must** till the hand of God interposes. As to this nation his fate is **inevitably sealed**, so long as this form of government exists. (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 2, pp. 299-301)

In 1838 Joseph Smith answered the questions “which were frequently” asked him. Question number thirteen was concerning slavery:

Thirteenth—“Are the Mormons abolitionists?”

**No**, unless delivering the people from priestcraft, and the priests from the power of Satan, should be considered abolition. But we do **not** believe in setting **the Negroes free**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 29)

Toward the end of his life Joseph Smith seemed to change his mind somewhat concerning the Negro and even spoke against slavery. Under the date of January 2, 1843, Joseph Smith was supposed to have recorded the following in his history:

Had I anything to do with the negro, I would **confine them by strict law to their own species**, and put them on a national equalization. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 218)

In a letter dated January 2, 1844, Joseph Smith spoke of the “rebellious **Niggers** in the slave States, . . .” (*Millennial Star*, vol. 22, p. 602)

Thus, while Joseph Smith may have mentioned setting the slaves free toward the end of his life, he was basically a racist. Marvin Hill, who teaches History at Brigham Young University, made these interesting comments:

Even Joseph’s “calling for the end of slavery by 1850” in his Presidential campaign is not so liberal as Brodie supposes. . . .

Joseph Smith was, therefore, to some degree a racist, a segregationist, a colonizer, and only incidentally a supporter of abolition. He had some elements of liberalism in his thinking, but these had definite limits. His record, . . . is marked by ambiguity. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1970, p. 99)

## Slavery in Utah

After Joseph Smith’s death the Mormon leaders continued to speak against the Negro. The following appeared in the April 1, 1845, issue of the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*—the *Times and Seasons* was edited by John Taylor who later became President of the Church:

The descendants of Ham, besides a **black skin** which has ever been a curse that has followed an apostate of the holy priesthood, as well as a **black heart**, have been servants to both Shem and Japheth, and the **abolitionists are trying to make void the curse of God, but it will require more power than man possesses to counteract the decrees of eternal wisdom**. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 857)

Because the Mormon Church believed the Negroes were an “inferior race” it was easy for them to accept the practice of slavery. Slavery was an accepted practice in the territory of Utah. The following appeared in the *Millennial Star* in 1851:

We feel it to be our duty to define our position in relation to the subject of Slavery. There are several men in the Valley of the Salt Lake from the Southern States, who have their **slaves** with them. (*Millennial Star*, 1851, p. 63)

Stanley P. Hirshon cites the *New York Herald* for May 4, 1855. In this issue Brigham Young was quoted as saying that the Negro “is **dammned**”:

Like many defenders of slavery, Young considered Negroes the children of Canaan, who in the Bible had been made a “servant of servants” to his brothers. “**The Negro is dammed.**” Young preached in 1855, “and is to serve his master till God chooses to remove the curse. . . . These are my views—and, consequently, the views of all the saints—on abolitionism.” (*The Lion of the Lord*, by Stanley P. Hirshon, New York, 1969, p. 256)

In his Master’s thesis, James Boyd Christensen wrote:

In 1850 Utah was the **only** western territory which had **Negro slaves**. It was one of the few places in the United States where Negro and Indian Slavery occurred in the same locale in the same period. It is interesting to draw a parallel between the attitudes of the Mormon colonizers toward the Negro slavery and the Indian slave trade. In short, **they countenanced slavery of Negroes among them** while they abhorred the slave traffic among the Indians and legislated against it. (“A Social Survey of the Negro Population of Salt Lake City, Utah,” Unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Utah, pp. 11-12)

The slaves were held primarily by converts to the Mormon Church from the South. According to the compromise of 1850, Utah was left open to slavery, and by the compromise of 1859 it was to be a **slave state** when admitted to the Union. (*Ibid.*, p. 98)

It is logical to assume that the slaves desired their freedom in Utah as much as they did in California, but after 1850, Utah was open to slavery, and they could legally be held as slaves, while California was free territory.

During the period from 1850 until the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln, Negro slave trading was carried on to a small extent in the territory. (*Ibid.*, pp. 8-9)

The following appeared in the *Utah State Historical Quarterly*:

According to Dr. John Z. Brown, his father obtained Betsy Brown, a 16 year old mulatto girl from St. Louis and brought her to Lehi, Utah, in 1848. At the time of the emancipation she married a colored barber, Fleweller . . .

Monroe Perkins owned another negro slave named Ben, whom he sold in Utah to Sprouse, a southerner . . .

I have been informed by Atty. Benjamin L. Rich of Salt Lake City that his grandfather Charles C. Rich, in whose honor Rich County, Utah, was named, owned three pairs of slaves that were later liberated in California when Rich went there in 1851. . . . A few of the slave-owners went with Amasa M. Lyman to San Bernardino, California, in 1851, to establish an L.D.S. colony; among these were Charles C. Rich, William Mathews, Daniel M. Thomas, William Crosby and William Smith. Their **slaves** were liberated in California as that State was then free soil. Mr. Lyman, Jr. relates that when William Smith realized that his slaves would become free in California, he tried to take them to Texas, but his **slaves** desiring freedom, refused to go with him . . . According to the U.S. census of 1850, Utah was the **only** western state or territory **having slaves**.

The U.S. census for 1860 gives the number of colored persons in the Territory of Utah as 59, 30 free colored and 29 **slaves**. Of the slaves, Davis County had 10 and Salt Lake County 19. (“Negro Slaves in Utah,” by Jack Beller, *Utah State Historical Quarterly*, vol. 2, pp. 124-126)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* gives definite proof that slave trading was carried on in the Utah territory:

Patrick J. Sullivan, employee of a Salt Lake Abstract firm, while searching the records for real estate information, came across the copy of a **bill of sale for a**

Negro boy named “Dan” in a book containing transactions for the year 1859.

The **slave was sold** by Thomas S. Williams of “Great Salt Lake City” to William H. Hooper, same address, for \$800. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 31, 1939)

On January 8, 1857, John Brown “**consecrated and deeded to the Church**” property which he listed as worth \$3,038.50. Among the items listed we find an “**African servant girl**” (*Autobiography of John Brown*, as cited in *The Negro Pioneer*, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Lesson For May, 1965, p. 528).

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, taught that slavery was a “divine institution” and that the Civil War could not free the slaves. He stated:

Ham will continue to be servant of servants, as the Lord decreed, until the curse is removed. **Will the present struggle free the slave? No;** but they are now wasting away the black race by thousands. . . .

Treat the slaves kindly and let them live, for **Ham must be the servant of servants until the curse is removed.** Can you destroy the decrees of the Almighty? **You cannot.** Yet our Christian brethren think that they are going to overthrow the sentence of the Almighty upon the seed of Ham. **They cannot do that,** though they may kill them by thousands and tens of thousands. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 25, p. 787; also published in *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 250)

In other sermons Brigham Young made the following statements:

We knew that the children of Ham were to be the “servant of servants,” and **no power under heaven could hinder it, so long as the Lord should permit them to welter under the curse,** and those were known to be our religious views concerning them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 172)

The seed of Ham, which is the seed of Cain descending through Ham, will, according to the **curse** put upon him, serve his brethren, and be a “servant of servants” to his fellow-creatures, until God removes the **curse; and no power can hinder it. These are my views upon slavery.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 184)

. . . the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the flat nose and black skin. Trace mankind down to after the flood, and then another **curse** is pronounced upon the race—that they should be the “servant of servants;” and they will be, until that **curse** is removed; and the **abolitionists cannot help it, nor in the least alter that decree.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 290)

If Utah was admitted into the Union as a sovereign State, and we chose to introduce slavery here, it is not their business to meddle with it; and **even if we treated our slaves in an oppressive manner, it is none of their business** and they ought not to meddle with it. (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 40)

In his book *History of Utah*, A. L. Neff gives us some very interesting information concerning Brigham Young’s viewpoints on slavery:

The Mormon viewpoint with reference to the peculiar institution of the South was admirably set forth in the famous interview between abolitionist Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, and President Brigham Young, at Salt Lake City, July 13, 1859:

H.G.—What is the position of your church with respect to slavery?

B.Y.—We consider it of **divine institution**, and not to be abolished until the curse pronounced on Ham shall have been removed from his descendants.

H.G.—Are any **slaves** now held in this territory?

B.Y.—**There are.**

H.G.—Do your territorial laws uphold slavery?

B.Y.—Those laws are printed—you can read for yourself. If slaves are brought here by those who owned them in the states, we **do not** favor their escape from the service of those owners. (*History of Utah*, by A. L. Neff, 1940, p. 618)

Horace Greeley was disturbed because the Mormon people did not seem to be opposed to slavery. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning Mr. Greeley’s visit to Salt Lake City:

Mr. Greeley was **disappointed** in the **lack of abolition sentiment** in Salt Lake City, which he resented by saying at a banquet given in his honor: “I have **not** heard tonight, and I think I never heard, from the lips of the journals of your people, **one word** in reprehension of that national crime and scandal, American chattel slavery. \* \* \* This **obstinate silence, this seeming indifference on your part, reflects no credit on your faith and morals,** and I trust they will not be persisted in.” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 533)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement concerning Horace Greeley:

. . . **I would not talk to him: I felt myself superior to such a mean contemptible cur.** I knew he was not after truth, but falsehood.

This Greeley is one of their popular characters in the East, and one that supports the stealing of **Niggers** and the underground railroad. . . . he is one of the prominent newspaper editors in the Eastern country, and he is a **poor, miserable curse.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 119)

Catharine V. Waite claims that in a speech delivered March 3, 1863, Brigham Young made these comments about Governor Harding:

Man, did I say?—thing, I mean,—a **Nigger worshipper**,—a **black-hearted abolitionist** is what he is, and what he represents; and that I **do naturally despise.** (*The Mormon Prophet*, pp. 90-91)

In a sermon delivered August 31, 1856, Brigham Young stated:

Brother Robbins also spoke of what they term the “**Nigger drivers and Nigger worshippers**” and observed how keen their feelings are upon their favourite topic slavery. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 39)

In another sermon Brigham Young said: “The rank, rabid **abolitionists**, whom I call **black-hearted** Republicans, have set the whole national fabric on fire” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110).

Stanley P. Hirshon quotes Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, as saying:

“The Abolitionists of the North stole the **Niggers** and caused it all. The **Nigger** was well off and happy. How do you know this, Brother Heber? Why God bless your soul, I used to live in the South, and I know! Now they have set the **Nigger** free; and a beautiful thing they have done for him, haven’t they?” (*Lion of the Lord*, p. 267)

The Territory of Utah gave up the practice of slavery along with the slave-holding states, however, the fact that they countenanced it when it was being practiced shows how insensitive they were to the feelings of the Negro people. Even after the slaves were set free the Mormons continued to talk against the Negro. John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, said that the Negroes are a “representation” of the “devil” upon the earth. In the year 1884 Angus M. Cannon stated that the Negroes could not enter the highest celestial glory of the kingdom of God. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported him as saying the following:

I feel it an insult heaped upon Mr. Caine to ask him to go to Washington as our Delegate, because hr [he?] will have to tell Congress that he believes in the highest law known to God and man, but has not had courage to live up to it. . . . I had rather see a **colored man**, who is my friend here, sent to Washington, because he is **not capable of receiving the priesthood, and can never reach the highest celestial glory of the kingdom of God.** This colored man could go and stand upon the floor of Congress as the peer of every man



there, and would be able to say conscientiously that he had not accepted the **doctrine of plurality, because he could not**. This man could **not**, of course, represent the kingdom of God in these valleys of the mountains, but would be a consistent Delegate. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 5, 1884)

The information which we have presented clearly shows that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor and other Mormon leaders did “curry the favor of the world by manifesting a prejudice against the Negro,” and their doctrine concerning the Negro grew out of the prejudice that they had in their own hearts.

### Civil Rights

The Mormon Church has been very slow in allowing the Negroes equal rights. In the *First Year Book in the Seventy's Course in Theology*, written by the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts, and published in 1931, the idea of integration and social equality for the Negro is condemned. Mr. Roberts stated:

Perhaps the most convincing book in **justification** of the south in **denying to the Negro race social equality** with the white race is the one written by William Benjamin Smith, entitled *The Color Line, A Brief in Behalf of the Unborn*, from which the following is a quotation:

Here, then, is laid bare the news of the whole matter: Is the south **justified** in this **absolute denial of social equality** to the **Negro**, no matter what his (personal) virtues or abilities or accomplishments?

We affirm, then that the south is **entirely right** in thus keeping open at all times, at all hazards, and at all sacrifices an **impassible social chasm between black and white**. This she must do in behalf of her blood, her essence, of the stock of her Caucasian race. . . . The moment the bar of **absolute separation** is thrown down in the south, that moment the bloom of her spirit is **blighted forever**, . . . That the negro is **markedly inferior** to the Caucasian is proved both craniologically and by six thousand years of planet-wide experimentation; and that the commingling of **inferior with superior** must lower the higher is just as certain as that the half-sum of two and six is only four. (*The Color Line*, pp. 7-12)

(*First Year Book in the Seventy's Course in Theology*, pages 231-233)

Mark E. Petersen, a present-day Apostle in the Mormon Church, made these statements:

The discussion on civil rights, especially over the last 20 years, has drawn some very sharp lines. It has blinded the thinking of some of our own people, I believe. They have allowed their political affiliations to color their thinking to some extent, and then, of course, they have been persuaded by some of the arguments that have been put forth. . . . We who teach in the Church certainly must have our feet on the ground and not be led astray by the philosophies of men on this subject. . . .

I think I have read enough to give you an idea of what the Negro is after. He is not just seeking the opportunity of sitting down in a cafe where white people eat. He isn't just trying to ride on the same streetcar or the same Pullman car with white people. It isn't that he just desires to go to the same theater as the white people. From this, and other interviews I have read, it appears that the Negro seeks absorption with the white race. He will not be satisfied until he achieves it by **intermarriage**. That is his objective and we must face it. We must not allow our feeling to carry us away, nor must we feel so sorry for Negroes that we will open our arms and embrace them with everything we have. Remember the little statement that we used to say about sin, “First we pity, then endure, then embrace.”. . .

Now let's talk **segregation** again for a few moments. Was segregation a wrong principle? When the Lord chose the nations to which the spirits were to come, determining that some would be Japanese and some would be Chinese and some Negroes and

some Americans, He engaged in an act of **segregation**. . . . When he told Enoch not to preach the gospel to the descendants of Cain who were **black**, the Lord engaged in **segregation**. When He **cursed** the descendants of Cain as to the Priesthood, He engaged in **segregation**. . . .

Who placed the Negroes originally in darkest Africa? Was it some man, or was it God? And when He placed them there, He **segregated** them. . . . The Lord segregated the people both as to blood and place of residence. At least in the cases of the Lamanites and the Negroes **we have the definite word of the Lord Himself** that He placed a dark skin upon them as a curse—as a punishment and as a sign to all others. He forbade intermarriage with them under threat of extension of the curse. (2 Nephi 5:21) And He certainly **segregated** the descendants of Cain when He cursed the Negro as to the Priesthood, and drew an absolute line. You may even say He dropped an Iron curtain there. . . . Now we are generous with the Negro. We are willing that the Negro have the highest kind of education. I would be willing to let every Negro drive a Cadillac if they could afford it. I would be willing that they have all the advantages they can get out of life in the world. **But let them enjoy these things among themselves**, I think the Lord segregated the Negro and who is man to change that segregation? It reminds me of the scripture on marriage, “what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Only here we have the reverse of the thing—**what God hath separated, let not man bring together again**. (*Race Problems as They Affect the Church*, an address by Apostle Mark E. Petersen, delivered at the Convention of Teachers of Religion on the College Level, Brigham Young University, August 27, 1954)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

Certainly the caste systems in communist countries and in India, for instance, are man made and are not based on true principles.

However, in a broad sense, **caste systems** have their **root and origin** in the **gospel** itself, and when they operate according to the **divine decree**, the resultant restrictions and **segregation are right and proper and have the approval of the Lord**. To illustrate: Cain, Ham, and the whole negro race **have been cursed with a black skin**, the mark of Cain, so they can be identified as a **caste apart**, a people with whom the other descendants of Adam should not intermarry. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958, pp. 107-108)

This teaching has deeply affected the attitude of the Mormon people toward the Negro. George A. Meyer made the following criticism of this teaching:

“The saddest part about holding to, and teaching such a doctrine, is not that it keeps Negroes from a position of honor in the Church . . . The tragedy consists in what the doctrine does to the minds of church people who accept it. Psychologists know that it is practically impossible for a person who has been taught in childhood that God put a curse on certain people to be able to accept those people in normal, civilized, unselfconscious association. If, in addition, the curse is related to a black skin, certain prominent facial features, the impossibility is heightened. Add to that, the denial of the right of such people to perform what the child's **religion** tells him is the most lofty privilege, that of being a priest in his God's service, and the Child's mind is filled with a subtle kind of poison.”

“A person who has been taught such ideas in Sunday School, during his most impressionable years, can scarcely avoid becoming insensitive to the many injustices and discriminations that exist in our society for the people **he believes his God has cursed**. This insensitivity towards the pain and hurt and indignity inflicted upon fellow human beings, is one of the hardest things to understand about Mormon people, who themselves know that they too, in times past, were a minority that received harsh and discriminatory treatment from fellow citizens. . . .” (*A Critique of Mormonism and the Negro*, by George A. Meyer, quoted in *A Negro on Mormonism*, pp. 23-24)

Jim Todd made this observation:

The tragedy of this denial of the LDS priesthood is not that it is unfair to the handful of Negroes actually in the LDS church. The odious part of this doctrine is that it serves to rationalize all other forms of temporal discrimination. Therefore, this denial indirectly affects all Negroes who come in contact with members of the LDS Church. . . .

The indirect cost of this doctrine in human misery and wasted potential can only be guessed at. (*The Daily Utah Chronicle*, University of Utah, November 22, 1966)

Wallace Turner makes these interesting observations concerning this matter:

The most serious problem facing the LDS church today is the Negro question. . . . Priesthood membership is a requisite for an office in management of the church's temporal affairs. So Negroes are barred from office. As we will understand in the unraveling of the theology, the Mormon discrimination against the Negro is the ultimate that can be had on racial grounds. (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 218-219)

The LDS church practices racial discrimination. It clings to that practice in a nation which is going through terrible struggles to overcome the pernicious influence of other organizations with anti-Negro bias. . . .

So long as the LDS church clings to this racist practice, it is a political and social cancer . . . the overwhelming Mormon response to the current drive by Negroes to better their condition in American life has been indifference, inattention, irritation and smug self-satisfaction that few Negroes live in the Mormon centers. (*Ibid.*, pp. 228-229)

So the ultimate effect of this aspect of LDS doctrine is as racist as anything asserted by the Theodore Bilbos and Robert Sheltons in the bigoted corners of the southern states. . . . the LDS church actually is one of the most influential organs of racial bigotry in the United States. . . . there exists a current of powerful strength that for generations has carried racial bigotry wherever the missionaries carried the Restored Gospel of Joseph Smith.

True, this is all done in a cloak of Christian piety and concern for the brotherhood of man. Seldom is there any surface cruelty. Yet until the federal government outlawed slavery, the Mormons bought and sold Negroes in Salt Lake City. (*Ibid.*, pp. 244-245)

David L. Brewer made this comment: “. . . the Utah situation has become significant for two reasons: (1) Before 1964, the year this study began, Utah was the only ‘Northern’ state without civil rights legislation. (2) The Mormon church, which prevails in Utah, does not accord religious equality to Negroes” (*Utah Elites and Utah Racial Norms*, University of Utah, 1966, p. 160).

The *Pearl of Great Price* is sometimes quoted in justification of segregation. The Mormon writer Arthur M. Richardson states:

That the seed of Cain were **black and segregated** is verified from the writings of Moses, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

And Enoch also beheld the residue of the people . . . save it were the seed of Cain, for the seed of Cain were **black, and had not place among them**.

Segregation of the Blacks from the Whites has a very ancient, honorable and authoritative history behind it. (*That Ye May Not Be Deceived*, page 9)

D. H. Oliver, who was a Negro attorney in Utah for many years, made this statement:

In medicine, the cause of a disease is first determined and then the proper remedy prescribed for the cure. This same principle is true in the economic life of society.

We all know that racial discrimination does exist in Utah as indicated above and the problem is to determine the cause of such and apply the appropriate remedy. . . .

We all know that the major cause of discrimination against the Negro in Utah springs from a doctrine of the LDS Church which holds that the Negro is cursed and not entitled to the blessings of the Priesthood. (*A Negro on Mormonism*, by David H. Oliver, p. 14)

By reason of their numerical strength the Mormons elect most of the public officials, throughout the entire state, and here is where conflict begins. In most instances these elected public officials, conscious of the spirit concealed behind the walls of the Temple, adhere strictly to the doctrines of their church in the performance of their public duty and thereby refuse to employ or appoint any Negroes in any position of authority or trust. . . . it is claimed that the failure of the 35th session of the Utah Legislature to pass any Civil Rights legislation was due to hidden and behind the scenes opposition from the Mormon Church. . . . Some of our ardent and staunch supporters insist that the Mormons have as much right to their religious beliefs as any, or all, other church groups, and, therefore, should not be censored for what they honestly believe. . . . every man has a right to believe in, and exercise his muscles by swinging his fists in the open air but his right ceases at the point where the other man's nose begins. . . . Any church has a right to believe what it will but it has no right to impose those beliefs on others against their will, and when those beliefs are detrimental to the welfare of others to the extent of infringing on their right to earn a decent living, such a church has no right to use the machinery of the state to enforce those beliefs. (*Ibid.*, pp. 30-31)

During World War II the . . . University of Utah invited Dr. Ralph Bunce to Salt Lake City for a lecture. Reservations were made for him at the Utah Hotel, a Mormon owned enterprise. Upon his arrival, the Hotel refused to accept him, but after much pressure, from high places, he was allowed to stay in the hotel on condition that he have his meals in his room and not come to the dining room. Marian Anderson had the same experience at the same hotel . . .

Congressman Adam Clayton Powell and his wife, Hazel Scott Powell, had a similar experience at the Temple Square Hotel in Salt Lake City. . . . in recent years, the Utah, Newhouse and Temple Square Hotels and many other places of public accommodations in and around Salt Lake City have changed their policy in this respect, for which they are to be congratulated. (*Ibid.*, p. 23)

Dr. Glen W. Davidson gives this information:

The campaign in California last fall to strike down legislation which would bar discrimination in housing was openly supported from the pulpit by a number of local Mormon bishops and stake (district) presidents. This came as a shock to the liberals of the church. It is an even greater embarrassment for them to learn that until the California mission headquarters was moved to Oakland in 1964, the church went to court on several occasions to block Negroes from moving into the San Francisco neighborhood in which the headquarters was located. (*The Christian Century*, September 29, 1965, p. 1184)

A Negro by the name of Daily Oliver wrote the following letter which was published in the *Utah Chronicle* on May 28, 1965:

Dear Editor:

In answer to Mr. Johnson:

I am a Negro who has lived in Salt Lake City for several years too long. Why am I still here? I don't know!!!

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of an experience I had with the LDS Church.

When I was a Boy Scout my troop was located in a local LDS Ward. It was necessary for me to attend meetings in order for me to be a Boy Scout.

Making a long story short, I was in the recreation hall one day when the **Bishop** called me to the side and **told me that I could not come to the recreation**

**hall again.** The reason being **I was a Negro.**

With this experience and **many others** with the LDS Church, I have formed negative attitudes toward your Church. Subjectively, then, my views of the LDS Church cannot be false.

Daily Oliver

The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen related the following:

Some years ago, back in 1936 to be exact, I became acquainted with a Negro family in Cincinnati, Ohio. . . . I went to Church there and became acquainted with the family of a Negro man named Len Hope. Accidentally he had found some of our tracts when he lived down in Mississippi. He read them and became interested. He wrote to the mission headquarters for a Book of Mormon, and by his own study, converted himself. . . . Then they moved up to Cincinnati to escape the "Jim Crow" law.

Up in Cincinnati, some of the members of the Church became extremely prejudiced against this Negro family. They met in a group, decided what to do and went to the Branch President, and said that either the Hope family must leave or they would all leave. The Branch President ruled that Brother Hope and his family **could not come to church meetings**. It broke their hearts. But, the missionaries went out to the Hope home and there conducted Sunday School every Sunday, and served them the Sacrament. (*Race Problems As They Affect The Church*, 1954, p. 6)

On February 9, 1972, *Student Life*, published at Utah State University, printed the following:

What are black students reaction to living in Logan and attending USU?

"Logan, Utah isn't better or worse than anyplace else. I have complaints about Logan, but then I have complaints about other places . . ." Malcom Wharton stated. . . .

Leonard Milliam says that the majority of whites and blacks on this campus don't like each other. "One of the major contributors is the Mormon religion. I think that every single black on this campus resents this."

Bruce Scott said, "As far as my education and football are concerned, I'm glad I came, but as far as being accepted as a person and as a minority person I'm not . . . It's worse than in the South . . . I'm confronted in more ways than I ever would be in the South . . . Here I'm confronted with the 'Religion.' The 'Religion' is an excuse for resenting blacks. It's so different from what I've been used to, where there isn't a majority that doesn't associate with you."

The Mormon Church has found itself in trouble with the NAACP. Dr. Glen W. Davidson relates the following:

Throughout the spring and summer of 1963 the Salt Lake chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. tried unsuccessfully to meet with the members of the first presidency in regard to civil rights matters. Frustrated in its efforts, the chapter decided to picket Temple Square during the 133rd semiannual L.D.S. General Conference in October of that year unless the first Presidency made known its stand on civil rights. . . . The N.A.A.C.P. chapter, which includes a number of Mormons, knew it would need the support of the L.D.S. Church if legislation were ever to be passed guaranteeing basic civil rights for minority groups in Utah. Utah had become the only western state without such laws. (*The Christian Century*, September 29, 1965, p. 1185)

On October 5, 1963, the following statement appeared in the *Deseret News*:

Albert B. Fritz, NAACP branch president, said at a civil rights meeting Friday night that his organization promised not to picket the 133rd Semi-Annual General Conference of the Church on Temple Square.

He added, however, that the **NAACP will picket** Temple Square, next Saturday if the Church does not present an "acceptable" statement on civil rights before that day. (*Deseret News*, October 5, 1963)

The Mormon leaders apparently feared the bad publicity that would result from this demonstration, for on October 6, 1963, Hugh B. Brown, a member of the First Presidency, made a statement to the effect that the church supported civil rights. In 1965, however, the Mormon leaders again found themselves in trouble with the NAACP. Dr. Glen W. Davidson made this statement:

Discussion of the race issue was stymied in the Council of Apostles until the spring of 1965. The Utah state legislature had before it several civil rights bills. Rumor fanned speculation that the church was working behind the scenes for defeat of the bills. . . . Again, after great difficulty representatives of the local chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. were allowed to meet with the first presidency. Again, McKay was absent. . . .

As a compromise—and to get the delegation out of their office—the two counselors agreed to place an unsigned editorial in the *Deseret News* supporting a fair employment and housing bill. Though the editorial was to be unsigned, readers of the church-owned daily would understand it to have the support of the first presidency. But no editorial appeared. Asked why, President Tanner replied, "We have decided to remain silent." . . .

Next day, Sunday, the N.A.A.C.P. organized and led a prayer march which called on Mormon leaders to use their influence in behalf of moral justice. Approximately 300 people participated in the march from the federal office building to the steps of the church administration building. (*The Christian Century*, September 29, 1965, pp. 1185-1186)

This demonstration did not end the Mormon leaders' troubles with the NAACP. On May 3, 1966, this article appeared in the *Deseret News*:

The Salt Lake City board and membership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People issued a sharply worded resolution Monday night attacking The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The resolution charged that the Church "has maintained a rigid and continuous segregation stand."

The resolution also charged that the Church has made "no effort to counteract the widespread discriminatory practices in education, in housing, in employment, and other areas of life." The statement said the discrimination was due, in part, to the "official race policy of the LDS Church."

The statement ended by warning all branches of the NAACP to "be skeptical concerning any favorable support for civil rights by Church members." . . . (*Deseret News*, May 3, 1966)

## The Genesis Group

The Mormon leaders are not only having trouble with the NAACP, but there is reason to believe that some of the blacks within the church itself are at the point of rebellion. Recently a group has been organized which is known as the "Genesis Group." Michael Marquardt has interviewed a member of the Genesis Group and has obtained some important information concerning this group. In his notes of an interview held November 7, 1971, we find the following concerning the Genesis Group:

Set up for Black missionary work. There are at present about 240 baptized members of the Church in the Salt Lake area who are Black. Of these 40 are active. The Group hopes to reactivate Black members in the Salt Lake Area. Main objective is to get the Priesthood and then do missionary work among the Black both in America and throughout the world. . . .

The Genesis Group meets in the same chapel with the Danish and Norwegian Branches of Liberty Stake. June 24, 1971 was the first time that the First Presidency and Twelve have prayed in the Temple about whether Black members of the Church should hold the Priesthood. The First Presidency and Twelve were not in agreement on the question. But they did agree that the Genesis Group should be formed.



Michael Marquardt's notes of an interview with a member of the Genesis Group, held November 14, 1971, contain the following:

Meeting with the Apostles Monson, Hinckley and Packer took place on June 8, 1971 at 8 a.m. The cards were laid on the table and the Apostles were told that the Blacks in the Church wanted the Priesthood. The group who went fasted and prayed before going and wanted to see the "Prophet" but they were told that the Prophet had appointed the three of them as a committee on the Blacks in the Church.

An article concerning the Genesis Group which appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune* has caused some confusion among members of the church. This article was entitled, "Stake Organized for Black LDS in S.L.," and reads as follows:

A stake for black members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been formed in Salt Lake City. The organization, called Genesis Group, is part of the auxiliary program of the Liberty Stake.

Ruffin Bridgeforth Jr., president of the group, said the stake was in total concordance with the Mormon Church. Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson and Boyd K. Packer, members of the Council of Twelve Apostles, set the stake apart Oct. 19.

Darius Gray will serve as first counselor and Eugene Orr as second counselor of the stake

The Liberty Stake has similar programs for Danish, Norwegian, Chinese and Japanese members. Mr. Bridgeforth said there are 25 members in the newest group. He said there are about 200 Negro members of the church in the Salt Lake Valley. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 24, 1971, p. 22B)

This article did not appear in all of the copies of the *Tribune* printed that morning. At any rate, the article caused confusion because it referred to the group as a "stake." Now, if the group were actually a "stake," this would mean that the blacks had received the Priesthood, and that Ruffin Bridgeforth is a stake president—a stake president, of course, has to hold the Priesthood.

That the church did **not** give the Priesthood to the blacks is very plain from an article which appeared in the Church Section of the *Deseret News*. This article does not use the word "stake" or even the word "branch" when referring to the Genesis Group:

An **organization** for black members of the Church, called the Genesis Group, was formed as part of the auxiliary program of Liberty Stake in Salt Lake City. Designed to serve all black members in the Salt Lake Valley, the **group** will meet and conduct Relief Society, Primary and MIA for the benefit and enjoyment of their members, but will attend their respective Sunday School and sacrament meetings in their home wards, where they will retain their membership.

The group will meet in the Third Ward facility at 119 E. 7th South.

A **group presidency** was called, sustained and set apart as follows: President Ruffin Bridgeforth, Darius Gray, first counselor, and Eugene Orr, second counselor.

Some of the officers and teachers for the auxiliaries were also called and set apart.

The **group** will work with the auxiliaries of Liberty Stake. Liberty Stake also has the Danish, Norwegian, Chinese and Japanese branches as part of the stake. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, October 23, 1971, p. 13)

The reader will notice that the Genesis Group is never referred to in this article as a "stake." It is referred to only as a "part of the auxiliary program of Liberty Stake." While the article speaks of the "Danish, Norwegian, Chinese and Japanese **branches**," the word branch is not used with regard to the Genesis Group. It is only a "group." It has a "**group presidency**," not a Stake Presidency nor even a Branch Presidency. This "group presidency" has no Priesthood authority and can only preside over meetings for the women and young people. They must return to their home wards for "their respective Sunday School and sacrament meetings."

The reason that the black people have to return to their own wards for the meetings on Sunday is very clear: these meetings require someone who has the Priesthood. The sacrament is passed twice on Sunday, and black people can neither bless nor pass it. Therefore, they have to return to their "home wards" on Sunday so that the white boys can serve them the sacrament!

At first glance, it would appear that the Genesis Group is moving in the wrong direction—i.e., they seem to be moving toward segregation. As we examine the matter more closely, however, we see that segregation could actually be a victory for the black people. The Mormon Church cannot allow the blacks to become completely segregated because this would mean they would have to give them the Priesthood. Other churches which discriminate against blacks at least allow them to have their own congregations and perform their own ordinances. The Mormon leaders, however, say that the ordinances of the Mormon Church cannot be performed without their Priesthood, and since blacks cannot have the Priesthood they cannot even achieve segregation! If they could perform ordinances for their own people, it would actually be a step toward equality. It is reported that the Genesis Group will soon ask for its own Sunday School. While this appears to be another move in the direction of segregation, it probably should be interpreted as just another step towards the goal of obtaining the Priesthood.

It is reported that the Genesis Group is friendly toward white people and that they are welcomed into the services. From all this we conclude that the Genesis Group really wants Priesthood, and that they are only using segregation as a means of obtaining it.

## Athletes Protest

On April 14, 1968, *The Arizona Daily Star* contained the following statements:

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (AP)—A Mormon Church leader said Saturday that a boycott by eight Negroes of a Brigham Young University track and field meet "is the action by some extremists who have gotten the wrong idea of what the church position is."

The University of Texas—El Paso athletes stayed away from Saturday's competition at the church-operated BYU at Provo, Utah. They said there was a belief on the campus "that the blacks are inferior and that we are disciples of the devil." . . .

President Hugh B. Brown, a member of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Mormon, said the athletes apparently are unclear on the church's doctrine denying Negroes membership in the Mormon priesthood.

"At the present time we do not give Negroes the priesthood. Priesthood, in our view, is leadership. There is **not enough leadership among Negroes** to warrant establishing him as a member of leadership," President Brown said. (*The Arizona Daily Star*, April 14, 1968)

In December 1968, the Brigham Young University was again in trouble with the Negroes. The following is taken from the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (UPI) — San Jose State's black athletes voted Monday to turn in their scholarships because of the revocation of scholarships of seven football players who did not play in Saturday's game against Brigham Young University.

The football players protested what they called the "racist philosophy" of BYU. The Provo, Utah, university is operated by the Mormon Church which the Negroes said is discriminatory in its tenets. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 3, 1968)

The year 1969 brought even more serious trouble for the BYU football team. Steve Rudman gives this information in an article published in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

The sleek jet bounced down the runway on the outskirts

of Phoenix, screaming to a halt near a modernistic terminal surrounded by palm and eucalyptus trees.

Someone muttered that a protest march would be held before the football game that night. . . .

That evening 250 Arizona State University students, most of them black, marched militantly under torchlight, wearing black armbands and carrying placards protesting the allegedly racist policies at BYU. . . . BYU players were called "racist" by demonstrators on their way to the dressing room, with Mask leading the verbal assault.

"The thing is," Mask said adamantly as he wiped the sweat from his face, "we know BYU is a racist school and we know the Mormons who run it are racist."

"BYU and the Mormons believe we are second-class citizens," echoed Dave Edhoms, another black demonstrator. "It says so in their scripture."

. . . it was a disheartened BYU team that flew back into Salt Lake City later that night. . . . the incident under Arizona's midnight sun on the evening of Oct. 4 was only the beginning of a full-scale racial upheaval and a bitter autumn of discontent. . . . the BYU team bus rolled toward Laramie on a chilling Friday afternoon, Oct. 17, . . . at that moment in Laramie a crisis of intense magnitude was developing. Fourteen black football players, six of whom were starters, had been dismissed from the team by Coach Lloyd Eaton.

Sympathizing with a Black Students Alliance protest of BYU, the players wished to wear black armbands in their game with the Cougars. Eaton had informed his players any open demonstration would not be tolerated.

Early Friday morning, wearing armbands, the players entered Memorial Fieldhouse to discuss the matter with Eaton. When he saw the blacks he threw them off the team. . . .

Two hours before game time the BSA began its boycott. An original estimate of 50 to 60 students began to protest, but as kickoff time neared the number swelled despite cold weather and a blanket of snow on the ground. . . .

"We know BYU and the Mormons demean a person on the basis of skin color. We can join their church but we can't advance because we are black. Now is that discrimination, or not?" Black asked.

The effect of this second protest was obvious in the Cougars' performance against the depleted Cowboys. Wyoming wiped out BYU, 40-7. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 30, 1969)

On October 29, 1969, this information appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

PHOENIX, ARIZ. (AP)—Several Western Athletic Conference athletic directors Tuesday warned of a possible break-up of the conference because of racial policies at Brigham Young University, *The Arizona Republic* reported.

"There is a distinct possibility that this could break up the WAC," Sports Editor Verne Boatner said he was told by a "prominent" athletic director. . . . A telephone survey of seven on the eight ADs indicated BYU will be on the spot at the meeting, Boatner said. . . .

One AD reportedly said he'd "just as soon see" BYU withdraw from the conference.

Steve Rudman gives this interesting information in his article:

. . . tension festered around the Western Athletic Conference to the point that WAC Commissioner Wiles Hallock was forced to admit: "I think this thing is growing to crisis proportions." . . .

But while the winds of discord swirled through the league, the BYU campus remained unaffected. . . .

"Most students are unconcerned. They look at it as a matter that the church will have to decide. You have to understand we are taught unquestioning obedience," said Jim Briedl, a BYU junior. . . .

Two days before facing BYU, San Jose State, with the backing of Coach Joe McMullen, unanimously voted to wear armbands in the game with the Cougars. . . .

Some irate BYU students decided black armbands were nonsense and voted to wear red armbands because San Jose does not actively recruit Indians. BYU has a large Indian population.

So the Spartans played BYU wearing black armbands, and in the stands BYU students wore red ones.

"I think it's a shame San Jose doesn't have Indians," a BYU sophomore, Joe Detral, said. "I think it's stupid that other schools protest against us because we don't have blacks when those schools don't have Indians like we do." . . .

But BYU's dean of students, J. Elliott Cameron, had a different opinion: "I think these BYU kids are real naive. They don't realize what this means elsewhere." . . .

But the biggest blow occurred the following week when Stanford, a member of the Pacific-8 Conference, severed all relations with BYU. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 30, 1969)

On November 13, 1969, the *Salt Lake Tribune* announced that Stanford University had decided not to play Brigham Young University in any games after December 1970. In this issue we find the following statements:

STANFORD, CALIF. (UPI)—Stanford University announced Wednesday it will schedule no new athletic or other competitions with Brigham Young University because of alleged racial discrimination by the Mormon Church. . . .

President Kenneth Pitzer said Stanford . . . will not schedule any further meetings, including debates and other non-athletic competition.

"It is the policy of Stanford University not to schedule events with institutions which practice discrimination on a basis of race or national origin, or which are affiliated with or sponsored by institutions which do so," he said.

Top officials of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which sponsors BYU, have told Stanford University officials that the church currently has policies stating that no Negro of African lineage may have the right of priesthood. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 13, 1969)

Obert C. Tanner, professor of philosophy at the University of Utah, called Stanford's action "easily the sharpest criticism of the Mormon religion in this century" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 7, 1970).

Ernest L. Wilkinson, who was President of BYU at that time, was very disturbed with Stanford's action. In a speech delivered in the Devotional Assembly at BYU, Dr. Wilkinson stated:

During the past year or two, Brigham Young University has received national attention because of protests and boycotts involving our athletic teams. . . . we have never refused to play any team regardless of the race, religion, or color of the opposing team members and have never attempted to dictate the racial composition of opposing teams. . . . students from every state in the nation and 56 foreign countries have selected BYU as the university of their choice.

Their color ranges from black to brown to yellow to white. Every race and so-called minority group is represented. . . . True, there are not many black students on our campus. Just how many there are I do not know . . . as far as we know there is **not** a single negro family residing in the entire county in which BYU is located, and this we are told by Negroes is an important factor in the decision black students make in not coming to BYU.

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

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

While it is true that the BYU has had black athletes, the record for recruiting them in the past has not been too impressive. The *Salt Lake Tribune* gave this information concerning this subject: "BYU has had no varsity black athletes since the late 1950s when two Negroes were

on the track team. No Negroes have ever played on the varsity football or basketball teams, school officials have said. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 26, 1969)

Since the demonstrations in 1969, Brigham Young University has recruited a few black athletes.

At any rate, many people felt that Dr. Wilkinson had misrepresented the situation at BYU. The following appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on January 7, 1970:

In an open letter to the presidents of Stanford and Brigham Young universities, Obert C. Tanner, professor of philosophy at the University of Utah, criticized both university administrations. . . .

In a comment directed toward the Brigham Young University president, he said, "You should not say there is no discrimination at BYU. There is, and especially so, since it would attempt to identify God with this discrimination."

We have quoted President Wilkinson as saying that BYU welcomed black athletes "provided they satisfy our entrance requirements and are willing to abide by our standards." Tom Hudspeth, who was head football coach at BYU, has made some very revealing statements concerning this matter. He admits that in the past Negro athletes have been discouraged from coming to BYU and that one of the "rules" was that there was to be no "inter-racial dating." The following appeared in the *Daily Herald*, published at Provo, Utah:

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

"The shame of all this is that these young men are victims of circumstance. The shame of it is that many of these young men are being forced into the situation. The only answer is to stand fast, and we are going to do that. We will **not** change our policies," he declared.

Negro Here

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

"If this doesn't work out, we won't have to hang our heads; it wasn't meant to be," he declared. . . .

Coach Hudspeth declared that the young Negro man is from a junior college in Oklahoma. He was located through relatives of the Hudspeths who are on the staff there. "We felt we could work out something to relieve a little of the pressure. This is the only way we have changed our policy," he said. . . .

Coach Hudspeth indicated that "a lot of people are **mad at me** right now because they feel we are giving in." . . . "When we played Arizona State, they had to pay an extra \$5800 for control. You can't take this out of a tight athletic budget and survive. We are trying to show the other universities that we want to cooperate with them." . . .

Coach Hudspeth reviewed the football team's experiences, telling how they had to be escorted by the police when they played at San Jose. (*The Daily Herald*, Provo, Utah, February 16, 1970)

## A Serious Situation

In 1970 there were a number of protests against BYU. On January 10, 1970, the *Deseret News* reported:

TUCSON, ARIZ. (AP)—Two top student body officers at the University of Arizona were charged Friday with inciting to riot in connection with a violent protest during the Arizona-Brigham Young basketball game Thursday night.

Student Body President Mark Ginsbert and Student Vice President Bill White were among nine students charged in connection with a demonstration . . .

In a statement released late Friday, Harvill said charges will be filed against about a dozen persons.

The demonstration was the latest in a series [of] protests against The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) because the church bars Negroes from its priesthood. (*Deseret News*, January 10, 1970)

Just five days later the *Deseret News* carried these statements:

TUCSON, ARIZ. (UPI)—Some 3,000 University of Arizona students participated Wednesday in a two-hour rally, demanding that the school sever relations with fellow Western Athletic Conference member Brigham Young University. (*Deseret News*, January 15, 1970)

On February 6, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that at Fort Collins, Colorado, the BYU team was met with the "most violent demonstration" it had ever encountered:

FORT COLLINS, COLO.—The most violent demonstration yet against Brigham Young University by black students protesting the Provo school's allegedly racist policies took place here Thursday night . . .

The protest of BYU by the blacks was expected to be peaceful, but it quickly turned into something much more as black students scuffled with Colorado State University police . . .

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

The violence occurred as campus police tried to remove the blacks from the floor.

During the scuffle, a photographer from the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver was struck on the head with a metal object and was taken to a Fort Collins hospital. . . .

Fighting erupted in one corner of the court and shortly before the two teams were scheduled to come back on the floor to resume the game, an object described as a Molotov Cocktail, huge and flaming, was tossed on the court. . . .

Fans kept the players on their toes by tossing eggs onto the court at various times during the game. This required official time-outs, during which attendants were out to clean up the mess. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1970)

On March 9, 1970, the *Deseret News* contained an article which stated:

SEATTLE (UPI)—The University of Washington announced late Sunday night athletic relations with Brigham Young University would be dropped when present contracts run out in 1972. . . .

When informed of the action, President Ernest L. Wilkinson of BYU said the University of Washington had apparently broken its promise to take no action without conferring with BYU.

The next day the *Deseret News* printed an article in which we find the following:

The Black Students Union pressed the administration of the University of Washington for more concessions today, demanding that athletic ties with Brigham Young University be severed immediately. . . .

"If there is good reason to end the contract in 1972 there is good reason to end it now," a Black Student Union spokesman said.

Some 3,000 students, led by the BSU, paraded peacefully on the school's campus in Seattle Monday over the issue of alleged racism at BYU. (*Deseret News*, March 10, 1970)

Just two days later, March 12, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

SEATTLE—Fourteen persons were injured Wednesday as demonstrators swarmed through University of Washington buildings, using hit-and-run tactics that disrupted campus offices and classrooms.

It was the fourth day of demonstrations, supporting a Black Student Union demand that the university immediately sever all relations with Mormon operated Brigham Young University. . . .



Newsmen estimated the size of the crowd at 500-700 persons but a UW spokesman placed it at 200-300.

Nearly 2,000 other students milled around the area where demonstrators had assembled. . . . A university spokesman said some of the injured were being treated for possible fractures.

On May 27, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

SEATTLE (AP)—The University of Washington’s human Rights Commission has recommended ending present athletic contracts with Brigham Young University, . . .

The 18-member commission, which includes members of the faculty, staff and students, was formed about two months ago follows a series of demonstrations on the campus in response to a Black Student Union demand that relations with the Mormon-operated Utah school be terminated immediately.

In April of 1970, Harry Edwards warned the Mormon leaders that they must change the anti-Negro doctrine or there would be even more trouble for BYU:

Harry Edwards, the man most responsible for mounting discontent against Brigham Young University athletic teams, vowed in Salt Lake City Friday that “Things will get worse unless Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) doctrine is changed.” . . .

“A change of doctrine which forbids Blacks to hold the priesthood and places them in an inferior human role, is the only action by Mormon authorities which will prevent escalation of activity against BYU,” Edwards challenged. . . .

“If the doctrine were changed—even on the installment plan—I think the problem could be settled before next fall. I started this thing against BYU, and I think I could go on national television and have it stopped.”

Referring to members of the press, Edwards said: “If things don’t get better by next fall, those who travel with BYU should invest in hard hats and asbestos suits.” . . .

“Unless the Mormon dogma is changed, we are dedicated to force athletics to go completely under at BYU. And whatever conference BYU is in will be destroyed.” (*Deseret News*, April, 4, 1970)

Officials at BYU have done everything they could to prevent demonstrations, and so far they have been rather successful. Nevertheless, many black students still feel that the protests should continue. The following information appeared in the *Casper Star-Tribune* on January 19, 1972:

LARAMIE—A protest by the Black Students Alliance at the University of Wyoming against alleged “racist” policies of the Mormon church, took a new twist Tuesday with the issuing of four different leaflets attacking the church. . . .

The leaflets attacked the alleged racist policies of the Mormons, claiming that the blacks could not become priests. . . .

Page Three declared the necessity of demonstrating at sporting events with Brigham Young University, the Mormon-run university at Provo, Utah. It asks rhetorically, “Why should an institution of higher learning play host to a known racist opponent at the cost of all students at the University of Wyoming.”

In another article in the same issue we find the following:

“If it wasn’t this (attacks against the LDS Church), they’d be attacking somebody else,” commented W. Reed Green, president of the Casper Stake of the Mormon Church.

Commenting on the favorite charge of the BSA that blacks are prohibited from becoming priests, Green told the *Star-Tribune*, “We accept it that way, they’re going to have to accept it that way, too

“It may change in time, but the Black Students Alliance pressure isn’t going to change it.”

### Church Rejects Violence

In 1970 the tense situation with regard to the Negroes caused a great deal of fear among the people of Salt Lake City. On February 22, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported: “Chief Deputy Andrus said that communications have been intercepted which indicate that at least two militant groups are planning violence in the Salt Lake area. . . .

The following day the *Tribune* contained an editorial in which these statements appeared:

A movement to organize church groups and even entire parts of the city into “vigilante strike-forces” has been reported in Salt Lake City. Just what or whom this bungalow brigade is planning to “strike” isn’t clear, one of the main reasons the idea of such a people’s posse is so dangerous. . . . No matter what kind of patriotic sounding name is tacked on a group of citizen enforcers, it is still a common mob that flows as passion directs without reason and without jurisdiction.

Persons attempting to expand the vigilante-type movement in the Salt Lake area apparently are using scare tactics in an effort to create a threat that is long on fear but short on fact. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 23, 1970)

On March 3, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported the following:

FARMINGTON—Use of scare tactics, emotionalism and doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [sic] as a means of forming neighborhoods into “vigilante strike-forces” was labeled dangerous and inadvisable by Davis County officials Monday.

The action followed a briefing by Salt Lake County Civil Defense officials on the activities of a group known as Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET).

Davis County Sheriff Kenneth Hammon denounced formation of any neighborhood security forces, saying “no vigilante groups of any type are needed in Davis County to assist law enforcement officers”. . . .

NET groups, apparently forming statewide within the last few weeks, have been claiming association with Civil Defense and law enforcement agencies and the LDS Church, said Walter J. Michelsen, Salt Lake County Civil Defense director.

Alvin Britton, Salt Lake County Civil Defense information officer, said 90 percent of the NET programs are well intentioned, but the advocating of turning neighborhoods into armed fortresses with security forces is inadvisable. . . .

Mr. Britton said NET leaders have claimed local government is no longer reliable for protection and for citizens to protect themselves by whatever means necessary.

“Though weapons are never advocated,” Mr. Britton said, “The group ends with that as an end product.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, March 3, 1970)

The same day the *Tribune* published this information concerning the Neighborhood Emergency Teams, the Mormon leaders decided to issue a statement concerning this matter. Fortunately, the church leaders chose to dissociate themselves from this organization. The *Deseret News* reported:

The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today stated that the Church has no connection with the Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET), nor does it approve of its members being active in such vigilante groups. . . .

Salt Lake County Civil Defense officials said at a briefing in Farmington Monday night that the NET group was using scare tactics, emotionalism and references to the Church as a means of organizing neighborhoods into vigilante strike forces. . . . (*Deseret News*, March 3, 1970)

The Mormon leaders are certainly to be commended for not endorsing any of the vigilante groups which were founded at this time. Had they done so, it probably would have led to serious problems with the black people.

For more information on the demonstrations and vigilante groups see our book, *Mormons and Negroes*.

### Appeasement

Instead of resorting to violence, the Mormon leaders seem to be choosing a course of appeasement. For instance, the following appeared in the *Denver Post* on November 15, 1969:

The Rev. Roy Flournoy . . . called for reform of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in

what he alleged is a practice of racism against blacks. . . .

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

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

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

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

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

"I believe racism has been forced upon Mormons by its leaders, and isn't the philosophy of the people," Flournoy said. (*Denver Post*, November 15, 1969)

The reader will notice that the Church of the Black Cross called for a boycott "of Mormon goods, such as record albums of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir." Shortly after this article appeared the Mormons decided to bring some Negroes into their choir. Wallace Turner states:

Recently the Mormon Tabernacle Choir took in **two Negro** women as second sopranos, and reportedly, is about to welcome a Negro tenor. (*The New York Times*, January 25, 1970)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On June 13, 1970, the *Deseret News* reported the following:

The bonds of brotherhood between members of the Church and a Negro congregation in Salt Lake City were fastened this week with a plea "to let all America see that blacks and whites can live peacefully together."

Some 500 persons representing the leadership of the Church, including President Joseph Fielding Smith, and of the Church of God in Christ participated in a banquet Wednesday night, climaxing the month-long "Operation Good Samaritan."

The project started when Rev. M.A. Givens Jr., minister of Deliverance Temple, Church of God in Christ, asked officials of the LDS Church to assist his congregation in raising funds to complete construction of their church building in Salt Lake City.

The Presiding Bishopric accepted the opportunity as a challenge to the Mormon youth to raise at least \$30,000 for the building. Youths in 566 wards of the 71 stakes in the Salt Lake and Bountiful areas

accepted the challenge and went to work on a variety of fund-raising projects.

Presiding Bishop John H. Vandenberg told the banquet-goers that with 14 more stakes to report, the youths have already raised \$32,949. He said that 28,000 young men and women participated in the project. . . .

Music for the banquet was provided by Mrs. Jessie Evans Smith, wife of President Smith, who sang two solo numbers, and the all-Negro Utah Community Choir, which also preformed two selections. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, June 13, 1970)

Although we feel that this was a good move and that many members of the Mormon Church participated in this project in a sincere effort to help the Negroes, the deed would have been more impressive if it had been performed ten or twenty years ago. Even some members of the church felt that their leaders were trying to buy off the Negro people. In a letter to the editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Bill Morrison stated:

Editor, Tribune: I noticed with incredulity an article in *The Salt Lake Tribune* (June 10) entitled "Negro Faith, LDS Join In 'Deliverance' Fund." The substance of the article was that the LDS Church was aiding in the construction of the Deliverance Temple, a building owned by the Church of God in Christ, a Negro denomination.

Since I am LDS and take my religion seriously, I question the wisdom of my church leaders giving material or other aid for the purpose of building up another church. A fundamental concept of any religion is that the reason for its existence is that it, and it alone, harbors the truth necessary for salvation. The Mormon Church adheres to this, but is engaging in support of the growth of another religion. . . . the LDS Church should focus on consolidating its position rather than being concerned with building up the congregations of other churches. The money raised for building Deliverance Temple could have gone to a non-sectarian use such as aid for the mentally retarded or those physically unable to help themselves.

The question appears to be one of aiding the Negro rather than one of aiding a different religion. Would the Mormon Church give \$32,000 for construction of a Catholic cathedral? A Jewish synagogue? Probably not.

Why the Negro? The Mormon Church has **discriminated against the Negro** since its inception. Let's drop all the rhetoric excusing this and admit it. The aid therefore appears to be a case of LDS Church leaders, in their weakness, attempting to placate the Negro.

If the purpose of this aid isn't tacit support of another religion but rather an expression of guilt or an attempt at placation, does this mean that the general authorities believe God has erred in not allowing the Negro to hold the priesthood in the LDS Church? (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 23, 1970)

On December 5, 1970, the *Deseret News*, Church Section, printed an article which contained the following:

Members of the Fresno Stake continue to lead out in programs to strengthen relationships between themselves and Negro congregations of churches in the Merced area.

Last year, members of two of the Merced wards spent many hours working with Negro members of the New Hope Greater Baptist Church in remodeling a Baptist chapel which had been 17 years in building.

This month, the stake members joined with the Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Zion Church (Methodist) in a benefit concert for the members of the Mt. Pisgah Church congregation. . . .

All proceeds from the concert went to the Mt. Pisgah Church. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, December 5, 1970, p. 15)

Regardless of the motives of the Mormon leaders in performing this deed, we feel that it is a step in the right direction.

It would appear, then, that the Mormon leaders have recently made a number of concessions to avoid trouble with the black people. While these actions are to be commended,

they have still not come to grips with the real problem. Until the church allows the Negro to hold the Priesthood the situation remains very explosive.

### Dissatisfaction

That many members of the Mormon Church are dissatisfied over the doctrine is very evident. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

Yet, because of the popular beliefs and traditions of the world, there are at least two points of doctrine and history of this Church about which **many LDS themselves**—to say nothing of many non-members—feel ill at ease or critical. One of these is **its doctrine** regarding the **Negro**. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, part 1, p. 7)

On March 8, 1960, Sterling McMurrin gave a speech at the Trinity A.M.E. Church in Salt Lake City. In this speech he stated:

I am a member of the Mormon Church, and though I am not especially orthodox in the Mormon religion, I feel very close to my church and have a great love for my people. I feel very keenly the situation in which the Mormon people find themselves, entertaining a religious doctrine of racial discrimination, which certainly is unworthy of a Church and unworthy of a religion and, I believe myself, unworthy of what is in many respects the praiseworthy and great tradition of the Mormon Church. I frankly deplore the entertainment of such a doctrine and the attitudes that may accompany it in my Church. I have a very sincere hope that in some way or another this belief will eventually be dissolved in the teachings of the Mormon Church and the beliefs of the Mormon Church, and whatever practical attitudes that are conducive to what I would regard as immoral in our social life may result from this doctrine be thereby overcome.

... One of the difficulties, I think, is that the Mormon Church has always been involved in the notion of revelation, and it is one thing to have an interpretation of the Bible changed after 50 years or so if you decide some other interpretation is more satisfactory and thus change the picture and belief, but it is another thing to be a Mormon and some way or other get it established that this is a divine revelation. We don't change revelation in the same manner than (that?) you change Bible interpretation. I say this in spite of the fact that I really believe, if I don't die in the very near future, I will live to see the time when this doctrine is dissolved. I don't mean repudiated. The Mormon Church is like the Catholic Church, it doesn't repudiate doctrines that at one time or another were held to be revelation or absolute truth. They didn't repudiate the doctrine of polygamy. I use the word dissolve, and I imagine by some technique they will dissolve the doctrine on the Negro, rather than repudiate it. . . . I have discussed this with some of the leading officials of the Mormon Church and I find very often there is far more of a liberal attitude in the matter than many people would suspect, and one of the leading officials of the Church told me not very long ago (and by a leading official I mean a general authority, not a bishop or a stake president)—he told me not very long ago that he did not believe that the Negroes were under any kind of curse and as far as he was concerned this was not a doctrine of the Church, and never was, but certainly a number of people believe that it is and was. This is not a kind of solid front being set up by an institution against the Negroes, but it is a situation which is shot through with all kinds of ambiguities with regard to the problem and an institution in which there are many people of very liberal attitudes who simply do not believe the doctrine and who are embarrassed by it. To them it is a problem to be got rid of. I am not speaking for the heretics and the liberals, nor the occasional liberal Mormons who may affiliate with the N.A.A.C.P., but that is the attitude of a very great number of orthodox Mormons who have a moral feeling that dictates that this kind of theological nonsense should not be palmed off on the people. It is not only nonsense, but bad nonsense; it is immoral. ("The Mormon Doctrine and the Negro," a speech by Sterling McMurrin, March 8, 1960)

The November 1, 1963, issue of *Time Magazine* contained a letter by Donald Ira French, Jr. In this letter Mr. French stated:

Sir: As an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it has long seemed incredible to me that a church with so much forward vision in social welfare and higher education can be so **backward** in its outlook on a segment of the human race that is also supposed to be among our brothers. . . .

The revelation that the church is talking about with respect to the Negro and the priesthood **should have been sought 50 years ago—not now when we are forced into looking for one**. Even if a revelation should come now, we have compromised our position because it looks as if we have been forced into seeking it, which will be true.

On December 30, 1963, a newspaper reported that the President of the Mormon branch in Eccles, England, had resigned his position because of the Mormon Church's policy of discrimination against the Negroes:

EXETER, England, Dec. 30 (UPI)—A 25-year-old elder of the Mormon church said today he resigned because of a "color bar" operating within the church.

Richard Riley said he quit as president of the Mormon branch at Eccles, England, and no longer attended meetings. . . .

Riley said Pacific islanders with dark skins can "enjoy full privileges of the church because they have no Negro blood," but Africans are barred from these privileges.

"How they can make an exception in one case but not in the other stuns me," he said. "Quite simply it is a color bar."

Wallace Turner observed:

A ferment is working in the Mormon community over the Negro question, particularly among the intellectual element. The mistreatment of Negroes by the LDS church is the reason given by many intellectuals who candidly admit that they have become silent, concealed apostates.

Even among many who cling tenaciously to their belief, there is a swelling opinion that the church is dead wrong on this issue. . . .

J. D. Williams, . . . can swiftly announce his faithful adherence to the LDS church and just as swiftly reverse his position on the Negro matter. (*The Mormon Establishment*, p. 246)

Paul Hughes, publisher's consultant of *Reveille Magazine*, wrote an article in which he stated:

George Romney has precipitated a crisis in the Mormon Church that may well rank with the plague of the locusts, and this time there are no providential gulls in sight. . . . Romney can point to a commendable civil rights record. . . . As one of the Latter-day Saints, Romney is compelled at the same time to point to a church which officially sanctifies race prejudice and which declares today, as it has for over a century, that people with black skins are inferior creatures because that's just the way the Lord wants them.

This may eventually fragment Romney into warring halves. More important, it could thrust the Mormons, who have always referred proudly to themselves as a "peculiar people," completely outside the pale of American life. There is, however, a third threat which is not nearly as well known: Interior tensions, accelerating now for many years, **may shatter the Church beyond all redemption**. . . . the Mormons themselves do not know exactly how they painted themselves into this suffocating corner. They quote vague traditions. They refer to conflicting scriptural justifications. They consult their highest officers, and the truth is that they don't really know, either. (*The Oregonian*, Portland, Oregon, April 2, 1967)

In 1967, Interior Secretary Stewart Udall wrote a letter which was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. The following statements appeared in this letter:



It was inevitable that national attention would be focused on what critics have called the “anti-Negro doctrine” of the L.D.S. Church. As the Church becomes increasingly an object of national interest, this attention certain to intensify, for the divine curse concept which is so commonly held among our people runs counter to the great stream of modern religious and social thought.

We Mormons cannot escape persistent, painful inquiries into the sources and grounds of this belief. Nor can we exculpate ourselves and our Church from justified condemnation by the rationalization that we support the Constitution, believe that all men are brothers, and favor equal rights for all citizens.

This issue must be resolved . . . It must be resolved because we are wrong and it is past the time when we should have seen the right. A failure to act here is sure to demean our faith, damage the minds and morals of our youth, and undermine the integrity of our Christian ethic. . . .

My fear is that the very character of Mormonism is being distorted and crippled by adherence to a belief and practice that denies the oneness of mankind. We violate the rights and dignity of our Negro brothers, and for this we bear a measure of guilt; but surely we harm ourselves even more.

What a sad irony it is that a once outcast people, tempered for nearly a century in the fires of persecution, are one of the last to remove a burden from the most persecuted people ever to live on this continent. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1967, pp. 5-6)

A number of Mormons responded to Stewart Udall’s letter. Some were in agreement with him. For instance, Lowry Nelson stated: “Let nobody doubt that Stewart Udall has spoken for thousands upon thousands of his concerned and thoughtful fellow churchmen” (*Ibid.*, Autumn 1967, p. 8).

On the other hand, a number were opposed to Udall’s statements. Paul C. Richards made these comments:

Mr. Udall must think the Church is made up of extremely gullible people. Otherwise he never would have set himself up as he did to try to influence the members.

The Church is either true or it isn’t. If it changes its stand on the strength of the “great stream of modern religious and social thought,” it will be proven untrue. If that happens, the more serious members would do well to join the Cub Scouts. It’s cheaper and there is less work and less criticism. . . .

If the Church is true, it will hold to its beliefs in spite of its members. If it is false, more power to the easy-way-out philosophers who claim to know the “imperious truths of the contemporary world.” (*Ibid.*, p. 6)

On June 22, 1968, the *Ogden Standard-Examiner* printed an article in which the following appears:

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The Mormon Church will lose tens of thousands of members because it refuses to modify its “anti-Negro policies and practices,” a former U.S. Commissioner of Education predicted Friday evening. . . .

A Mormon himself, McMurrin spoke at a banquet of the Salt Lake City chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

“In the future, if I read correctly the signs of the times, the Church will completely lose tens of thousands of its members who will refuse to identify with an institution which fails to come to grips with one of the foremost moral problems of our times,” the educator said. . . .

He expressed difficulty understanding “how people who are otherwise typically intelligent and moral can believe and defend such crude immoral nonsense.” . . .

He expressed belief the time would come when “the Mormon people for the most part will have to abandon their crude superstitions about Negroes because their children forced them to.”

But he said there will be those who will remember “with sadness and moral embarrassment the day when their Church could have done great things to hasten the achievement, but failed.” (*Ogden Standard-Examiner*, June 22, 1968)

In a letter published in *Dialogue*, Allen Sims made these comments:

This last General Conference stands as damning proof of the proposition that the Mormon Church stands impotent to face the great moral issues of our times . . .

I for one refuse to allow myself to be put at the mercy of events and history. I cannot wait for my Church to recognize the issues—it is too late for that. . . .

An undercurrent of racism finds welcome acceptance in this Church. A member unable to cure his tobacco habit will find himself subject to a number of formal and informal sanctions. But a member unable to kick the hate habit finds no sanctions or help. But he quickly finds that he now can hate and feel righteous about it through a number of thinly disguised myths, fairy tales, and rationalizations available for misuse in the Church. It is this adherence to this kind of priority scale and myth that insures the irrelevance and impotency of any action the Church takes. . . . If it is the case that the Church is to remain the captive of the disease that grows within it, then I must discard it as I would a garment that has long ceased to serve its purpose and usefulness. . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 6-8)

## A Burning Issue

The *Los Angeles Times* for August 27, 1967, carried an article in which the following appeared:

The deeply rooted Mormon attitude apparently discriminating against Negroes because of their race is becoming a burning issue in that church—and beyond the church. . . .

The increasing heat of racial pressures in the country has brought it into focus as one of the few uncracked fortresses of discrimination.

Wallace Turner stated: “The bigots and race baiters who make up much of the radical right want to make common cause with the LDS church in regard to the Negro” (*The Mormon Establishment*, p. 324).

The Mormon Apostle Ezra Taft Benson has openly opposed the civil rights movement. The *Deseret News* reported him as saying:

LOGAN, UTAH—Former agriculture secretary Ezra Taft Benson charged Friday night that the **civil rights movement** in the South had been “**fomented almost entirely by the Communists.**”

Elder Benson, a member of the Council of the Twelve of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, said in a speech at a public meeting here that the **whole civil rights movement was “phony.”** . . .

“The whole slogan of ‘civil rights’ as used to make trouble in the South today, is an exact parallel to the slogan of agrarian reform which they used in China,” he added. . . .

“The pending ‘civil rights’ legislation is, I am convinced, about 10 per cent civil rights and 90 per cent a further extension of socialistic federal controls,” Elder Benson said, “It is part of the **pattern for the Communist take-over of America.**” (*Deseret News*, December 14, 1963)

At the 135th annual conference of the Mormon Church, April 1965, Ezra Taft Benson made the following statement:

“What are we doing to fight it? Before I left for Europe I warned how the communists were using the civil rights movement to promote revolution and eventual takeover of this country. When are we going to wake up? What do you know about the dangerous civil rights agitation in Mississippi! do you fear the destruction of all vestiges of state government?”

**“Now brethren, the Lord never promised there would not be traitors in the Church.**”

**We have the ignorant, the sleepy and the deceived who provide temptations and avenues of apostasy for the unwary and the unfaithful. but we have a prophet at our head and he has spoken. Now what are we going to do about it?**

Do Homework

“Brethren, if we had done our homework and were faithful we could step forward at this time and help save this country.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 7, 1965, p. A-5)

This speech evidently caused the Mormon leaders a great deal of trouble. A member of the Mormon Church wrote a letter to the editor of the *Utah Chronicle* stating that Ezra Taft Benson had told a “lie” and that he was “no longer worthy of his high office, . . . and should be removed” (*The Daily Utah Chronicle*, April 12, 1965). When the Apostle Benson’s speech was reprinted in the *Improvement Era* (the Official organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), 112 words were deleted without any indication. It reads as follows:

What are you doing to fight it?

Brethren, if we had done our homework and were faithful, we could step forward at this time and help save this country. (*The Improvement Era*, June 1965, p. 539)

The leaders of the Mormon Church are beginning to realize they are faced with a serious dilemma. Even though the church is winning friends among the segregationists, this is no real consolation since segregation is losing ground throughout the nation. Jan Shippis stated:

Understandably, with the pressure on the South for integration, an increasing number of Southerners have turned to the Mormon Church with its belief in the inferiority of the Negro race in order to try to shore up and preserve lifelong emotional beliefs. (*The Colorado Quarterly*, Autumn 1962, p. 189)

Dr. Glen W. Davidson stated:

A second reason President Brown feels that the Church of the Latter-day Saints needs to change its practice is to offset the influx of die-hard segregationists into the church in this country. From interviews with recent converts in the south, and to a degree in the rest of the nation as well, I have found his fears well founded. A number of former Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists confess to becoming Mormons because, as one woman put it, “I’m fed up with being told by some preacher that these nigras are equal to me.” A number of missionaries working in the south this summer claim that there has never been more interest in Mormonism and that “our race doctrine is of the greatest interest.” Conversion statistics from the area confirm this claim. (*The Christian Century*, September 29, 1965, p. 1184)

## A New Revelation?

If the Mormon Church should decide to give the priesthood to the Negro they will be making a doctrinal change which could cause dissension within the church (especially among the segregationists who have been drawn to the church because of its doctrine of discrimination against the Negro). To make a doctrinal change of this magnitude would be to place all of the other doctrines of Mormonism in question.

On October 28, 1865, the Mormon Church paper *Millennial Star* printed an article which stated that “*Mormonism is that kind of religion the entire divinity of which is invalidated, and its truth utterly rejected, the moment that any one of its leading principles is acknowledged to be false, . . .*”

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

If we as members of the Church are going to pick and choose among the Prophet’s teachings, and say “this one is of God, we can accept it, but this one is of man, we will reject that,” **then we are undermining the whole structure of our faith, . . .** (*Mormonism and the Negro*, p. 19)

Regardless of the consequences, it would appear that at least some of the Mormon Church leaders have felt that a change must be made. In the *Western Edition of the New York Times* for June 7, 1963, Wallace Turner stated that the Mormon Church leaders were seriously considering the consequences of making a change:

SALT LAKE CITY, June 3—The top leadership of the Mormon church is seriously considering the abandonment of its historic policy of discrimination against Negroes. . . .

One of the highest officers of the church said today that the possibility of removing this religious disability against Negroes has been under serious consideration.

“We are in the midst of a survey looking toward the possibility of admitting Negroes,” said Hugh B. Brown, one of the two counselors serving President David O. McKay in the First Presidency of the Mormon church.

“Believing as we do in divine revelation through the President of the church, we all await his decision,” Mr. Brown said.

Mr. Brown, a 79-year-old former attorney, said he believed that if the change were made, it would be a doctrinal revision for Mormonism of a magnitude matching the abandonment of polygamy in 1890.

“The whole problem of the Negro is being considered by the leaders of the church in the light of racial relationships everywhere,” Mr. Brown said. “We don’t want to go too fast in this matter. We want to be fair.” (*Western Edition of the New York Times*, June 7, 1963)

In a telephone conversation, June 7, 1963, Mr. Brown stated that he was misquoted in the part concerning the change in policy, however, he expressed approval of the article by saying it was “on the whole very fair.” In our book *Mormons and Negroes*, pages 58-59, we present evidence to show that Hugh B. Brown was not misquoted.

On October 27, 1963, the following appeared in the *Arizona Star*:

At least one Negro leader, Charles Nabors, feels Utah “has potentially the worst race problem in the United States.” . . .

“If a state of one million people can’t include 5,000 Negroes in its social, economic and political structure in a Christian, democratic, civilized way,” he says, “the state is in a completely deplorable condition.” . . . Many Mormons believe the Negro is a descendant of Cain and therefore carries the curse of God put on Cain for slaying his brother Abel.

There are some references to this in Mormon literature.

However, Hugh B. Brown, 79-year-old counselor to Church President David O. McKay and one of the three top officials of the church, said **he knows of no firm church doctrine that prevents the Negro from having right of the priesthood.**

“He simply is not in sufficient numbers in the church and is not advanced to the position where he could assume leadership,” Brown said.

Just when the Negro will be ready, he said, “we have no way of knowing on earth. Any change has to come as the result of revelation from God. **And revelation doesn’t come on request.**” (*Arizona Daily Star*, October 27, 1963)

Wallace Turner gives the following information:

Every scrap of information I’ve gathered about Mormons and Negroes points to Hugh Brown as the liberal voice at the top of the church. I suspect that when he told me those things in that interview in 1963, he hoped the change was to come.

However, the odds are all against its coming anytime soon in the terms he described—a revelation by the president of the church. David O. McKay is the most liberal LDS president in sight for a long time to come. Yet, he made it plain in 1964 that he felt it unlikely that any revelation would come . . . the question was asked directly, in the proper words to discover whether the prophet, seer, and chief revelator thought doctrine on Negroes would be changed to allow them to hold the priesthood. He said: “Not while you and I are here.” (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 261-262)

Actually, there is good reason to believe that David O. McKay did not really believe that Negroes were cursed by God, although this was not publicly known until just before his death. On August 26, 1968, Sterling McMurrin wrote a letter to Llewelyn R. McKay, David O. McKay's son, in which he stated:

I am writing this letter, with copies to your brothers Lawrence, Edward, and Robert, to tell you of a conversation with your father in the Spring of 1954. He had requested the meeting, which was in the Auerbach building of the University. . . .

I recall telling you of this conversation not long after it took place, but I'm interested now in detailing a small part of it in writing, as I believe it is of such importance that it should be part of your family record. . . .

Our discussion centered on the question of orthodoxy and heresy and the general problem of dissent in the Church. The views which President McKay expressed to me on these matters were remarkably liberal and deserve to be known by the general membership of the Church.

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

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

I told President McKay that I thought his statement on the Negro issue was of major importance and that it should be made public both in print and in a Conference statement in order to clear up the confusion of thousands of people in the Church believing in the "divine curse" teaching. To this he gave no reply except to reiterate his position, saying, "There is **no such doctrine** and as far as I am concerned there never was."

I am able to report your father's words with near accuracy because they were strongly impressed upon my memory and because within a few hours after our meeting I made a detailed recording of the entire discussion.

This matter, of course, is of very great importance to the Church and its future, considering not only the moral quality of our religion, which is relieved of a great burden if there is no official doctrine, but also the problem of eventual change in the practice of withholding full fellowship from Negroes. Such a change could be somewhat difficult if there were an official doctrine.

Your father showed great wisdom in taking this position and it has been a disappointment to me that the Church has not clarified the issue on the terms which he stated. . . . I frankly wish I could feel free to make President McKay's statement to me on this subject a matter of public record, as I believe this would be a very good thing for the Church and would help to clear up a great deal of confusion in the minds of many of its members.

You know of my sincere esteem and affection for your father. I hope that you will express them to him. I leave to your own good judgment whether or not you show him this letter. (Letter written by Sterling M. McMurrin to Llewelyn R. McKay, dated August 26, 1968, typed copy)

In an article published in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 15, 1970, David O. McKay's son, Dr. Llewelyn R. McKay, confirmed the fact that his father had made the statements Sterling McMurrin attributed to him:

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

Dr. Sterling M. McMurrin, former U.S. Commissioner of Education and now E. E. Erickson Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and dean of the Graduate School at the University of Utah, recalled a conversation in which President McKay also said, "As a matter of fact, there is no doctrine in this church whatsoever that pertains to the Negroes." . . .

The philosophy professor, himself a Mormon, emphasized that he made detailed notes immediately following the 1954 conversation. And on Aug. 26, 1968, he wrote a three-page letter to President McKay's son, Dr. Llewelyn R. McKay, recalling the church leader's belief that Negroes were not cursed by God.

Copies of the letter were sent to President McKay's three other sons, David Lawrence McKay, Dr. Edward R. McKay and Robert R. McKay.

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

Letter Confirmed

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

Three days after this statement was published President McKay died. It is strange that David O. McKay chose to remain silent on such an important subject. We must remember, however, that it was McKay who announced the mission to Nigeria in 1963. If this mission had been successful, the entire doctrine concerning the Negro would probably have been changed. This matter was still troubling the Mormon leaders in 1966, for Hugh B. Brown, David O. McKay's first counselor, wrote a letter in which he stated:

I understand your anxiety in these matters, sympathize with your view point, but can only say that the discussions had by the General Authorities of the Church have **not** yet brought a satisfactory answer to the vexing problems to which you refer. . . .

The specific question to which you refer, having to do with the giving the priesthood to the Negro, is one which must be resolved by the spirit of revelation, and I am convinced that that will come in the own due time of the Lord. . . . Postponing of the granting of the priesthood to the Negro while here on earth may seem to be unjust, but there are problems involved affecting many nations which, if we let down the bars now, might involve us in international complications which we would not be able to handle. . . . We, of course, must not attempt to regulate His time piece by ours, and though we become impatient at His reticence, we must continue to believe that He is all-powerful, all-wise and is the Father of all mankind.

We are just now wrestling with the problems in Nigeria, where some five thousand people have applied for baptism into the Church but where the government officials are opposing us and where, if we should baptize them, we would involve ourselves in financial problems which could very well bankrupt the Church. . . . Conditions in the southern part of the United States, in fact, all over the United States, affecting the Negro are such that for us to take positive action might involve us in controversies to which as yet there seems to be no definite inspired answer. (Letter by Hugh B. Brown, dated February 10, 1966)

When George Romney announced that he wanted to run



for the presidency of the United States, national attention was focused on the Mormon leaders to see if they would have a new revelation concerning the Negro. Under these circumstances it would have been almost impossible for David O. McKay to have changed the Negro doctrine. In 1967 *Life Magazine* gave this information:

It would require a revelation through the present Prophet, David O. McKay, to open the priesthood to the few Negro Mormons who presently exist, and First Counselor Brown warns, "I think it would be **detrimental to him for the Church to come out with a revelation** right now. It would have a **reverse effect**"—i.e., that of appearing to revise God's word to assist a possible candidacy. (*Life Magazine*, May 5, 1967, p. 92)

By this time David O. McKay was well into his nineties, and many people began to give up all hope for a revelation under his leadership. On December 15, 1969, the Mormon Church leaders issued a statement in which the following appeared:

In view of confusion that has arisen, it was decided at a meeting of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve to restate the position of the Church with regard to the Negro both in society and in the Church. . . . we believe the Negro, as well as those of other races, should have his full Constitutional privileges . . . Joseph Smith and all succeeding presidents of the Church have taught that Negroes, while spirit children of a common Father, and the progeny of our earthly parents Adam and Eve, were not yet to receive the priesthood, . . .

Were we the leaders of an enterprise created by ourselves and operated only according to our own earthly wisdom, it would be a simple thing to act according to popular will. But we believe that this work is directed by God and that the conferring of the priesthood must await His revelation. . . .

This statement was signed by Hugh B. Brown and N. Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency and was sent to "General Authorities, Regional Representatives of the Twelve, Stake Presidents, Mission Presidents, and Bishops."

By December 25, 1969, less than two weeks after the above statement was prepared, Hugh B. Brown, first counselor to President McKay, had made a statement which seems to contradict the one sent to Church officials. The following is taken from an article which appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

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

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

#### Cause of Rift

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

"Well, that's impossible to predict. He's ill right now." . . . Pres. Brown disclosed Wednesday that Willard Wyman, . . . had contacted him . . . Pres. Brown also disclosed that he had told Wyman that "The church is not prejudiced in any way **but this one, but I think that will change.**" (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 25, 1969)

The Mormon writer John L. Lund argues that the Mormon Church cannot have a revelation to change the Negro doctrine:

Brigham Young revealed that the Negroes will not receive the Priesthood until a great while **after the second advent** of Jesus Christ, whose coming will usher in a millennium of peace.

#### Revelation?

In view of what President Young and others have said, it would be **foolish** indeed to give anyone the false idea that a new revelation is immediately forthcoming on the issue of the Negroes receiving the Priesthood. . . . our present prophets are in complete agreement with Brigham Young and other past leaders on the question of the Negro and the Priesthood. . . .

Social pressure and even government sanctions cannot be expected to bring forth a new revelation. This point is mentioned because there are groups in the Church, as well as out, who feel that pressure on the Prophet will cause a revelation to come forth. It would be wise to emphasize that all the social pressure in the world will not change what the Lord has decreed to be. Let those who would presume to pressure the Prophet be reminded that it is God that inspires prophets, not social pressure. . . . It is not the responsibility nor the stewardship of any person on earth to dictate to the Lord or the Lord's servants when a revelation should be given. . . .

The prophets have declared that there are at least two major stipulations that have to be met before the Negroes will be allowed to possess the Priesthood. The first requirement relates to time. The Negroes will not be allowed to hold the Priesthood during **mortality**, in fact, not until **after** the resurrection of **all** of Adam's children. The other stipulation requires that Abel's seed receive the first opportunity of having the Priesthood. . . . the last of Adam's children will not be resurrected until the end of the millennium. Therefore, the Negroes will **not** receive the Priesthood until after that time. . . . this will **not** happen until **after** the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth. (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, pp. 45-48)

All the social, political, and governmental pressure in the world is **not** going to change what God has decreed to be. (*Ibid.*, p. 109)

If Mr. Lund would take a closer look at the history of the Mormon Church, he would find that social pressure has brought a number of changes in church doctrine. On November 23, 1969, the *New York Times* carried an article in which the following appears:

Reed Durham, a Mormon historian, noted last week that Mormon revelation, like biblical dietary laws, has always been "bound up in history and the needs of particular times."

The revelation on Negroes, for instance, came to Joseph Smith at a time when Mormons in Missouri were under pressures from local slave owners. Polygamy was abandoned when President Wilfred Woodruff had a vision of the disasters that would befall the church if it held on to the practice.

A new revelation on the race issue under social pressure therefore, would not be seen as a repudiation of the divine origins of doctrine but confirmation that truth continually unfolds itself in response to changing conditions and the spiritual fidelity of the Mormon faithful.

"The Mormon who sees revelation as coming out of the clear blue sky," said Dr. Durham, "simply doesn't understand his own history." (*New York Times*, November 23, 1969)

If the Mormon Church should decide to change its policy and allow Negroes to hold the priesthood, it will not be the first time that Mormon doctrine has been revised to fit a changing world.

Twenty-five years before the Mormon Church gave up the practice of polygamy they were declaring that no such change could be made. In the *Millennial Star*, October 28, 1865, the following appeared:

We have shown that in requiring the relinquishment of polygamy, they ask the renunciation of the **entire faith** of this people. . . .

There is no half way house. The **childish babble about another revelation is only an evidence how half informed men can talk.**

As the pressure increased against polygamy, Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto (now claimed to be a revelation)

which suspended the practice of polygamy. In the *National Observer* for June 17, 1963, the following statement appeared:

As Federal pressure enforced a **major doctrinal change** in polygamy, many Mormons consider it **inevitable** that the pressures of the present day will force a major change in the doctrine about the Negro.

One Mormon scholar stated:

It would be inaccurate to contend that the church is not deeply concerned about this problem or attempting to do something. However, since its resolution requires serious examinations of fundamental claims, it is not going to be easy. No matter how the problem is resolved, many people will be offended.

If the pressure continues to increase on the Negro question, the leaders of the Mormon Church will probably have another revelation, or (as Sterling McMurrin said) “by some technique” they “will dissolve the doctrine on the Negro.”

### Joseph Fielding Smith

David O. McKay died on January 18, 1970. He was 96 years old at the time. On January 24, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported: “President Joseph Fielding Smith, 93-year-old president of the Council of Twelve Apostles, Friday became the tenth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

The chances for a new revelation on the Negro under the leadership of Joseph Fielding Smith appear very slim indeed, for he is the man who has been responsible for much of the anti-Negro feelings in the church. In his book, *The Way To Perfection*, Joseph Fielding Smith made these statements:

We have learned through the word of the Lord to Abraham that spirits in the pre-existence were graded. That is, some were more intelligent than others, some more faithful, . . . others among the two-thirds did not show the loyalty to their Redeemer that they should. . . . They were not denied the privilege of receiving the second estate, but were permitted to come to the earth-life with some restrictions placed upon them. That the **Negro** race, for instance, have been placed under restrictions because of their **attitude** in the world of spirits, few will doubt. It cannot be looked upon as just that they should be deprived of the power of the Priesthood without it being a **punishment for some act**, or acts, performed before they were born. (*The Way To Perfection*, Salt Lake City, 1931, pp. 42-43)

Not only was Cain called upon to suffer, but because of his wickedness he became the father of an **inferior race**. A **curse** was placed upon him and that **curse** has been continued through his lineage and must do so **while time endures**. Millions of souls have come into this world **cursed with a black skin** and have been **denied** the privilege of Priesthood and the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel. These are the descendants of Cain. Moreover, they have been made to feel their **inferiority** and have been **separated** from the rest of mankind from the beginning. Enoch saw the people of Canaan, descendants of Cain, and he says, “and there was a **blackness** came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people” . . .

But what a contrast! The sons of Seth, Enoch and Noah honored by the blessings and rights of Priesthood! . . . And the sons of Cain, denied the Priesthood; not privileged to receive the covenants of glory in the kingdom of God! . . . we will also hope that blessings may eventually be given to our **Negro** brethren, for they are our brethren—children of God— notwithstanding their black covering emblematical of **eternal darkness**. (*Ibid.*, pp. 101-102)

The name of Ham is also rather significant, for it means “swarthy” or “black.” It is possible that this is an appellation given to the third son of Noah because of the part he played in preserving through his lineage—and that most likely, as we have tried to show, through his wife Egyptus—the race of blacks upon whom the **curse was placed**. . . . Ham, through Egyptus, continued the **curse** which was placed upon the seed of Cain. Because of that **curse** this **dark** race was **separated** and isolated from all the rest of Adam’s posterity before

the flood, and since that time the same condition has continued, and they have been “despised among all people.”

This doctrine did not originate with President Brigham Young but was taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . we all know it is due to his teachings that the **Negro** today is barred from the Priesthood. (*Ibid.*, pp. 110-111)

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

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

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

Although Joseph Fielding Smith has had to compromise his position somewhat in public statements, he still “insists the Negro cannot be ordained into the priesthood because he is a child of Cain whom god cursed and marked with a black skin for killing his brother Abel” (*The Nashville Tennessean*, May 3, 1965, p. 18).

Wallace Turner made this observation concerning Joseph Fielding Smith:

SALT LAKE CITY, Jan. 24—When the Mormon presidency passed this week to Joseph Fielding Smith, a 93-year-old strict theologian, it ended for a time the hope of church liberals for a change in the practice of refusing membership in the priesthood to Negroes.

Mr. Smith is known throughout the Mormon world for his writings that justify the church policy of limiting Negro participation. . . . (*New York Times*, January 25, 1970)

In the same article Wallace Turner stated:

Among the first acts taken by the new president was the selection of a set of councillors who do not include Hugh B. Brown, a councillor to Mr. McKay and the liberal voice in the hierarchy. This was seen by liberals here as notice that there would be no change in the Negro doctrine.

But other observers, within and without the church, caution that this may not be so.

Joseph Fielding Smith did retain N. Eldon Tanner as his second counselor. This may not be a good sign, however, for in 1967 Tanner was quoted as saying that the anti-Negro doctrine could not be changed:

Even such harsh criticism has done nothing to budge Mormon officials from their adamant position. “The church has **no intention of changing its doctrine on the Negro**,” N. Eldon Tanner, counselor to the First President, told Seattle during his recent visit here. “Throughout the history of the original Christian church, the Negro never held the priesthood. There’s really nothing we can do to change this. It’s a **law of God**.” (*Seattle Magazine*, December, 1967, p. 60)

On January 24, 1970, the First Presidency of the Church held a press conference, but they refused to discuss the anti-Negro doctrine. The following statement appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

Newsmen were advised in advance that the leaders would **not consider any questions regarding the Church’s position on Negroes**. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, January 25, 1970)

It is very obvious that the Mormon leaders are trying to hide from this important question. They will probably find, however, that they will have to face this issue. We

know that the pressure from within the church for a change has been increasing through the years. Several years ago Joseph Fielding Smith admitted that the church leaders had received “a flood of correspondence” from church members asking why the policy cannot be changed:

During the past decade there has arisen in this country, the United States, a wave of “non-segregation,” that is, that there should be an equality in all things between the white races and the black or Negro race. . . . This matter of amalgamation to a great degree has been enforced by the Supreme Court of the United States. This tendency for “equality” in all things, has brought a flood of correspondence from all parts of the Church asking how it is that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands out in opposition and teaches a doctrine of segregation denying the Negro the right to hold the priesthood. Some of these letters border on a spirit of resentment and claim the Church is guilty of a great injustice, since “all men were created free and equal.” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 2, p. 184)

In a letter, dated February 14, 1963, Joseph Fielding Smith declared: “I am getting a **little fed up** on the idea that so many people think I am responsible for the Negro not holding the priesthood.”

### An Honest Solution

The honest solution to the problem facing the Mormon leaders is not to have another “revelation,” but to repudiate the doctrine. They should admit that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders taught doctrines that cannot be accepted as coming from God.

The reader will remember that Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, said that slavery was a “**divine institution**,” and that the Civil War could not free the slaves (see *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 250); however, the Civil War did free the slaves, and Brigham Young was wrong. If Brigham Young was wrong when he said this, what assurance can we have that he was not also wrong when he said the Negroes could not receive the Priesthood?

Brigham Young said that if a person who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the Negro the penalty is “**death on the spot**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110). Obviously, the Mormons do not believe this statement by Brigham Young

or they would be putting many people to death. Brigham Young called this the “**law of God**” and said that “**this will always be so**.” Now, if Brigham Young was wrong about this, what assurance have we that he was right when he said that the Negro could not hold the Priesthood? Why should we disregard this teaching, which Brigham Young called the “**law of God**,” and yet hold to his teaching that the Negro can not have the Priesthood?

Brigham Young’s statement that “**any man having one drop of the seed of Cain in him cannot receive the priesthood**,” is as impossible to believe as his other two statements. At the very time Brigham Young said this Elijah Able (a Negro) was holding the Mormon priesthood. Elijah Able lived longer than Brigham Young, and was still “a member of the Third Quorum of Seventy” in 1883. Thus we see that all during the time Brigham Young was President of the Mormon Church there was a Negro in the priesthood. And at the very time the Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen gave the speech in which he stated that a person with “**one drop of Negro blood**” could not hold the priesthood, Elijah Able’s grandson was an Elder in the Mormon Church.

We are told that 28 million Americans who are classified as white have some Negro ancestry. How would it be possible for the Mormon Church to keep these people out of the priesthood?

### Conclusion

While the Mormon leaders claim that the church is led by revelation, many people are beginning to realize that this claim cannot be substantiated. To accept their “revelation” concerning the Negro, it is necessary to reject the Spirit of God which works within us. The Lord plainly reveals to us, as he did to Peter many years ago, that “**God is no respecter of persons**” (Acts 10:34). To accept the anti-Negro doctrine is to deny the spirit of revelation. If we allow others to do our thinking on this vital issue it could lead to violence or bloodshed.

In this chapter we have shown that even the Mormon leaders admit that there is no real basis for denying Negroes the priesthood other than Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham. Since this is the case, it behooves us to examine this book with a very critical eye. In the next chapter we prove beyond all doubt that the Book of Abraham is a spurious work, and therefore there is no basis for the anti-Negro doctrine.





## President Kimball Gives a New “Revelation” on the Blacks

On June 9, 1978, the Mormon Church’s *Deseret News* carried a startling announcement by the First Presidency which said that a new revelation had been given and that blacks would be allowed to 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, p. 1A)

Since we have probably printed more material critical of the Mormon anti-black doctrine than any other publisher, the new revelation comes as a great victory and a vindication of our work. We printed our first criticism of this doctrine in 1959. This was certainly not a popular cause to espouse in those days. (In fact, at one time a Mormon threatened to punch Sandra in the nose over the issue.) Those of us who have criticized the Mormon Church for its racial teachings have been ridiculed for attempting to change the doctrine. Mormon apologist Armand L. Mauss wrote:

My plea, then to the civil rights organizations and to all the critics of the Mormon Church is: get off our backs! ... agitation over the “Negro issue” by non-Mormon groups, or even by Mormon liberals, is likely simply to increase the resistance to change. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, pp. 38-39)

John L. Lund said that “Those who believe that the Church ‘gave in’ on the polygamy issue and subsequently should give in on the Negro question are not only misinformed about Church History, but are apparently unaware of Church doctrine. ... Therefore, those who hope that pressure will bring about a revelation need to take a closer look at Mormon history and the order of heaven” (*The Church and the Negro*, 1967, pp. 104-5). On page 109 of the same book, Mr. Lund emphasized that “those who would try to pressure the Prophet to give the Negroes the Priesthood do not understand the plan of God nor the order of heaven. Revelation is the expressed will of God to man. Revelation is not man’s will expressed to God. All the social, political, and governmental pressure in the world is not going to change what God has decreed to be.”

## Brigham Young Misrepresented

We feel that the Mormon Church’s change on the doctrine concerning blacks is a very good move because it will undoubtedly help blacks obtain equality in Utah and will probably prevent much bloodshed and trouble. Nevertheless, we must point out that Brigham Young and other leaders have been misrepresented in order to make the change palatable to the Mormon people. For instance, the church’s *Deseret News* would have us believe that the change was a fulfillment of a prophecy uttered by Brigham Young:

The announcement Friday fulfilled statements made by most LDS Church presidents since Joseph Smith that blacks would one day obtain the full blessings of the church, including the priesthood. Speaking against slavery, Brigham Young once told the Utah Legislature, “. . . the day will come when all that race (blacks) will be redeemed and possess all the blessings which we now have.” (*Deseret News*, June 10, 1978, p. 1A).

While it is true that Brigham Young believed that blacks would eventually receive the priesthood, he made it clear that

this was not to happen until **after** the resurrection. The context of the speech which the *Deseret News* cites reveals that Brigham Young believed it would be a sin for the church to give blacks the priesthood before the “last of the posterity of Able” had received it. He went on to say that if the church gave “all the blessings of God” to the blacks prematurely, the priesthood would be taken away and the church would go to destruction. This address is preserved in the Church Historical Department. Michael Marquardt has provided a typed copy (which retains the spelling errors of the original). We extract the following from Brigham Young’s speech:

What is that mark? you will see it on the countenance of every African you ever did see upon the face of the earth, . . . the Lord told Cain that he should not receive the blessings of the priesthood nor his seed, until the last of the posterity of Able had received the priesthood, until the redemption of the earth. If there never was a prophet, or apostle of Jesus Christ spoke it before, I tell you, this people that are commonly called negroes are the children of old Cain . . . they cannot bear rule in the priesthood, for the curse on them was to remain upon them, until the resedue of the posterity of Michal and his wife receive the blessings, . . . until the times of the restitution shall come . . . Then Cain’s seed will be had in remembrance, and the time come when that curse should be wiped off. . . .

I am as much opposed to the principle of slavery as any man in the present acceptance or usage of the term, it is abused. I am opposed to abusing that which God has decreed, to take a blessing, and make a curse of it. It is a great blessing to the seed of Adam to have the seed of Cain for servants. . . . Let this Church which is called the kingdom of God on the earth; we will summons the first presidency, the twelve, the high counsel, the Bishoprick, and all the elders of Israel, suppose we summons them to appear here, and here declare that it is right to mingle our seed, with the black race of Cain, that they shall come in with us and be pertakers with us of all the blessings God has given to us. On that very day, and hour we should do so, the preisthood is taken from this Church and kingdom and God leaves us to our fate. The moment we consent to mingle with the seed of Cain the Church must go to desstruction,—we should receive the curse which has been placed upon the seed of Cain, and never more be numbered with the children of Adam who are heirs to the priesthood untill that curse be removed. (Brigham Young Addresses, Ms d 1234, Box 48, folder 3, dated February 5, 1852, located in the LDS Church Historical Department)

The Mormon people are now faced with a serious dilemma; if they really believe Brigham Young was a prophet, then it follows from his statement that the church has lost the priesthood, been put under “the curse” and is going to destruction! In spite of Brigham Young’s emphatic warning against giving blacks “all the blessings God has given us,” the present leaders have announced that blacks will now receive “all of the privileges and blessings which the gospel affords” (*Deseret News*, June 9, 1978).

After the First Presidency made their statement, many people became confused over the church’s position on interracial marriage. It soon became apparent, however, that the church’s ban on marriage to blacks had been lifted. Joseph Freeman, the first black man ordained to the priesthood after the change, indicated that he wanted to be sealed in the temple to his wife who was not of African descent. Church spokesman Don LeFevre said that such a marriage would be possible and that although the church did not encourage interracial marriage, there was no longer a ban on whites marrying blacks:

That is entirely possible, said Mr. LeFevre. . . . “So there is no ban on interracial marriage. If a black partner contemplating marriage is worthy of going to the Temple, nobody’s going to stop him—if he’s marrying a white, an Oriental . . . if he’s ready to go to the Temple, obviously he may go with the blessings of the church.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 14, 1978)

On June 24, 1978, the *Tribune* announced that “Joseph Freeman, 26, the first black man to gain the priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Friday went in the Salt Lake Temple with his wife and sons for sacred ordinances . . . Thomas S. Monson, member of the church’s Quorum of Twelve Apostles, conducted the marriage and sealing ceremonies [sic].”

In allowing temple marriage between whites and blacks, the church is completely disregarding what President Young referred to as “the law of God in regard to the African race.” The reader will remember that President Young taught that the “penalty” for interracial marriage “under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110). Since Brigham Young taught that this “law of God” could never be changed, the new policy will present a serious problem for some Mormons.

Although we have no way of knowing exactly how many interracial temple marriages have been performed since the change in policy, there is reason to believe that a number have taken place. As early as June 8, 1978, Brigham Young University newspaper, *The Universe*, reported that “Debbie Hall, an elementary education staff member from Seattle, Wash., said a good friend of hers, who is black, is a member of the church and married a white girl. ‘It’s going to be neat to see them go through the temple,’ she said.” In the same issue we find the following: “Mrs. Frazier, and her five children are all black but her husband John is white and an Elder in the church. . . . One event that Mrs. Frazier said she has long yearned for is temple marriage and the chance to see her children be able to pass the sacrament.”

On page 4 of the same issue of *The Universe*, we find that a black Mormon by the name of Robert L. Stevenson “married Susan V. Bevan about six weeks ago. She is white and also LDS.” The BYU paper quoted Stevenson as saying: “We are already planning our temple marriage.”

At any rate, the Church Section of the *Deseret News* for June 17, 1978, says that “former presidents of the Church have spoken of the day when the blessings of the priesthood would come to the blacks.” A quotation from a sermon by Brigham Young which appeared in the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, is cited, but when we go to the original book we find that it has been taken out of context. In this sermon Brigham Young plainly taught that blacks could not receive the priesthood until all of Adam’s other children received it:

Cain slew his brother . . . and the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the flat nose and black skin. . . . How long is that race to endure the dreadful curse that is upon them? That curse will remain upon them, and they never can hold the Priesthood or share in it until all the other descendants of Adam have received the promises and enjoyed the blessings of the Priesthood and the keys thereof. Until the last ones of the residue of Adam’s children are brought up to that favourable position, the children of Cain cannot receive the first ordinances of the Priesthood. They were the first that were cursed, and they will be the last from whom the curse will be removed. When the residue of the family of Adam come up and receive their blessings, then the curse will be removed from the seed of Cain, and they will receive the blessings in like proportion. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 290-291)

Brigham Young also taught this doctrine in other published sermons:

When all the other children of Adam have had the privilege of receiving the Priesthood, and of coming into the kingdom of God, and of being redeemed from the four quarters of the earth, and have received their resurrection from the dead, then it will be time enough to

remove the curse from Cain and his posterity . . . he is the last to share the joys of the kingdom of God. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 143)

They will go down to death. And when all the rest of the children have received their blessings in the Holy Priesthood, then that curse will be removed from the seed of Cain, and they will then come up and possess the priesthood, and receive all the blessings which we now are entitled to. (*Ibid.*, vol. 11, p. 272)

In 1949 the First Presidency of the Mormon Church issued a statement in which they cited Brigham Young’s teaching that blacks cannot receive the priesthood until after the resurrection (see *Mormonism and the Negro*, by John J. Stewart and William E. Berrett, 1960, part 2, p. 16). Joseph Fielding Smith, who served as the tenth president of the Mormon Church in the early 1970s, taught that blacks would never hold the priesthood as long as “time endures” (*The Way to Perfection*, p. 101).

In a meeting held in Barratt Hall on October 11, 1958, Joseph Fielding Smith commented that “the Lord will, in due time, remove the restrictions. Not in this world but the time will come. . . .” N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency who finally signed the statement granting blacks the priesthood, was completely opposed to the idea in 1967:

“The church has no intention of changing its doctrine on the Negro,” N. Eldon Tanner, counselor to the First Presidency told Seattle during his recent visit here. “Throughout the history of the original Christian church, the Negro never held the priesthood. There’s really nothing we can do to change this. It’s a law of God.” (*Seattle Magazine*, December 1967, p. 60)

Mormon writer John L. Lund claimed that if the president of the Mormon Church gave a revelation that blacks were to hold the priesthood, members of the church would accept it, but he emphasized that such a revelation would not be forthcoming because “present prophets are in complete agreement with Brigham Young and other past leaders on the question of the Negro and the Priesthood”:

Brigham Young revealed that the Negroes will not receive the Priesthood until a great while after the second advent of Jesus Christ, whose coming will usher in a millennium of peace. . . .

In view of what President Young and others have said, it would be foolish indeed to give anyone the false idea that a new revelation is immediately forthcoming on the issue of the Negroes receiving the Priesthood. . . . our present prophets are in complete agreement with Brigham Young and other past leaders on the question of the Negro and the Priesthood. President McKay was asked by a news reporter at the dedication of the Oakland Temple, “When will the Negroes receive the Priesthood?” He responded to the question over a national television network saying, “Not in my lifetime, young man, nor yours” . . .

Social pressure and even government sanctions cannot be expected to bring forth a new revelation...all the social pressure in the world will not change what the Lord has decreed to be. . . .

The prophets have declared that there are at least two major stipulations that have to be met before the Negroes will be allowed to possess the Priesthood. The first requirement relates to time. The Negroes will not be allowed to hold the Priesthood during mortality, in fact, not until after the resurrection of all of Adam’s children. The other stipulation requires that Abel’s seed receive the first opportunity of having the Priesthood. . . . Negroes must first pass through mortality before they may possess the Priesthood (“they will go down to death”). Reference is also made to the condition that the Negroes will have to wait until after the resurrection of all of Adam’s children before receiving the Priesthood . . . the last of Adam’s children will not be resurrected until the end of the millennium. Therefore, the Negroes will not receive the

Priesthood until after that time . . . this will not happen until after the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth. . . .

The second major stipulation that needs to be met . . . is the requirement that Abel's seed receive the opportunity of holding the Priesthood first. . . .

The obvious question is, "When will Abel's seed be redeemed?" It will first of all be necessary that Abel marry, and then be resurrected, and ultimately exalted in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom so that he can have a continuation of his seed. It will then be necessary for Abel to create an earth for his spirit children to come to and experience mortality. These children will have to be "redeemed" or resurrected. After the resurrection or redemption of Abel's seed, Cain's descendants, the Negroes, will then be allowed to possess the Priesthood. (*The Church and the Negro*, pp. 45-49)

On pages 109-110 of the same book, John L. Lund reiterates:

First, all of Adam's children will have to resurrect and secondly, the seed of Abel must have an opportunity to possess the Priesthood. These events will not occur until sometime after the end of the millennium.

As late as 1974 Apostle Bruce R. McConkie questioned the spirituality of church members who believed it was time for a new revelation on the blacks. In a conference message delivered October 4, 1974, Apostle McConkie said:

Am I valiant in the testimony of Jesus if my chief interest and concern in life is laying up in store the treasures of the earth, rather than the building up of the kingdom? . . .

Am I valiant if I am deeply concerned about the Church's stand on who can or who cannot receive the priesthood and think it is time for a new revelation on this doctrine? . . .

Am I valiant if I engage in gambling, play cards, go to pornographic movies . . . (*The Ensign*, November 1974, p. 35)

It is interesting to note that after the revelation was given Apostle Bruce R. McConkie actually gave a speech in which he chastised those "disbelieving people" who were reluctant to accept the new revelation because it contradicted things taught in the past:

There are statements in our literature by the early brethren which we have interpreted to mean that Negroes would not receive the priesthood in mortality. I have said the same things, and people write me letters and say, "You said such and such, and how is it now that we do such and such?" And all I can say to that it is time disbelieving people repented and got in line and believed in a living, modern prophet. Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or President George Q. Cannon or whomsoever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with a limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that now has come into the world. . . . We have now had added a new flood of intelligence and light on this particular subject, and it erases all the darkness. . . . It doesn't make a particle of difference what anybody ever said about the Negro matter before the first day of June of this year (1978). ("All Are Alike Unto God," by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve, pp. 1-2)

Even though most Mormons claim they are happy with the doctrinal change with regard to blacks, there is evidence that the "revelation" came as a real shock. A class at Brigham Young University which conducted a "random telephone Survey" of Utah County residents found that 79 percent of those interviewed did not expect a change at this time. Furthermore, many people compared the news to an announcement of some kind of disaster or death:

Some 45 percent of those who heard of the doctrine from personal sources expressed doubt that the news was true. This compares with only 25 percent of those who learned from media sources. Sixty-

two percent of the former group expressed shock, compared with 52 percent of the latter. . . .

Those surveyed appeared surprised by the announcement, Haroldsen said. Thirty-nine percent said they did not think "it would ever happen"—that the priesthood would ever be given to blacks.

Another 40 percent expected it years in the future, after Christ's return, during the Millennium, or "not in my lifetime." . . .

In trying to explain how they reacted to the news, 14 persons compared its impact with that of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Another 13 compared it to the news of the death of an LDS Church president. Eight compared it to a natural disaster, especially the Teton dam break.

Others compared the news with the death of a family member or friend, with a declaration of war, or other major political event. (*The Daily Universe*, June 22, 1978)

The Mormon people apparently realized the deep doctrinal implications this change involved, and therefore they associated it with death or disaster. If they were really pleased with the change, why did they not relate it with a happy event like marriage, the birth of a child or the end of a war? We feel that this survey unwittingly reveals what church members really thought of the change.

After the "revelation" was announced a number of Mormons who could not accept the new teaching left the church. A full-page advertisement attacking the change was published in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on July 23, 1978, by a group calling themselves "Concerned Latter-day Saints." From this article it would appear that members of this group are also disturbed because of the earlier doctrinal change relating to plural marriage.

### Better Late Than Never

Writing in the *New York Times*, June 11, 1978, Mario S. DePillis observed: "For Mormonism's antiblack policy a revelation was the only way out, and many students of Mormonism were puzzled only at the lateness of the hour." That the Mormon Church was forced into the revelation is obvious to anyone who seriously examines the evidence. We have already pointed out that athletic teams from the church's Brigham Young University were the target of very serious protests and that in 1969 Stanford University announced it would "schedule no new athletic or other competitions with Brigham Young University." Immediately following the announcement of the new "revelation," Gary Cavalli, athletic director for Stanford University, said, "I think the ban will be lifted" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 21, 1978).

In 1974 the Mormon doctrine of discrimination against blacks brought the Boy Scouts into a serious confrontation with the NAACP. The Boy Scouts of America do not discriminate because of religion or race, but Mormon-sponsored troops did have a policy of discrimination. On July 18, 1974, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

A 12-year-old boy scout has been denied a senior patrol leadership in his troop because he is black, Don L. Cope, black ombudsman for the state, said Wednesday. . . . Mormon "troop policy is that in order for a scout to become a patrol leader, he must be a deacon's quorum president in the LDS Church. Since the boy cannot hold the priesthood, he cannot become a patrol leader."

Mormon leaders apparently realized that they could never prevail in this matter and a compromise was worked out:

Shortly before Boy Scout officials were to appear in Federal Court Friday morning on charges of discrimination, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints issued a policy change which will allow black youths to be senior patrol



leaders, a position formerly reserved for white LDS youths in troops sponsored by the church. . . . An LDS Church spokesman said Friday under the “guidelines set forth in the statement, a young man other than president of the deacons quorum could (now) become the senior patrol leader if he is better qualified.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, August 3, 1974)

Since 1976 the Mormon Church was repeatedly embarrassed by one of its own members who became alienated over the anti-black doctrine and decided to take matters into his own hands. On April 3, 1976, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that Douglas A. Wallace “ordained a black into the priesthood Friday, saying he did so in an attempt to force a revision in Mormon doctrine about the Negro race. . . . Wallace said he has long been bothered by the Mormon Church’s bias against blacks, and he feels the time has come to challenge it. He said often all that is required to change a policy is for someone to break out of tradition . . . he hopes there are no recriminations against him for his action, such as excommunication.”

On April 13, 1976, the *Salt Lake Tribune* revealed that “Douglas A. Wallace was excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Sunday for ordaining a black man into the church’s priesthood.” After a confrontation with church personnel at an April conference session, Mr. Wallace was ejected from the Tabernacle. Later he was served with “a court order barring him from attending conference” (*Ibid.*, October 4, 1976).

Although we did not agree with some of Mr. Wallace’s ideas on religion, we did not consider him to be dangerous and we were rather surprised to notice the close surveillance the police kept him under when he walked along the public sidewalk outside of Temple Square. The fear of the threat Mr. Wallace presented to the church seems to have led to a tragic incident where a policeman was accidentally shot and permanently paralyzed. This occurred at the time of the church’s conference held in April, 1977. The Salt Lake City police had placed a stakeout around a home where Wallace was staying and at 4:20 A.M. on a Sunday morning one of the policemen accidentally shot his partner. At first the police “denied” that they had Mr. Wallace under surveillance (see *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 5, 1977), but when Wallace pressed for an investigation the police were forced to admit the truth about the matter:

Salt Lake City police officers admitted Thursday that the accidental wounding of an undercover officer occurred during surveillance of Mormon dissident Douglas A. Wallace. . . . Reports released Thursday by both the county sheriff’s office and the county attorney show that six officers were on stakeout around the John W. Fitzgerald home . . . where Mr. Wallace was staying. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 8, 1977)

Douglas Wallace claimed that the Mormon Church “was behind April police surveillance . . . that led to the accidental shooting of a Salt Lake City police officer” (*Ibid.*, September 17, 1977). Finally, David Olson, the disabled police officer, took exception to a press release issued by the church. In a letter to the editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 18, 1978, Mr. Olson attacked President “Spencer W. Kimball for his incorrect press release concerning the police involvement combined with the LDS church’s efforts to restrict Douglas A. Wallace from the temple grounds, specifically the Tabernacle, on April 3, 1977. His denial of these actions is wrong. Any man who can take such actions and still call himself a prophet deserves more than I to be confined to this wheelchair.”

Officer Olson apparently could not face the thought of being paralyzed for the rest of his life, and on March 25, 1980, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that he “committed suicide early Sunday morning, according to Murray Police.”

Douglas Wallace filed lawsuits amounting to millions of dollars against the Mormon Church, and although he was not able to prevail against the church in the courts, the publicity surrounding the suits caused the church no end of trouble. We feel that his actions and the embarrassment they caused the church played a part in bringing about the decision to have a new “revelation.”

Another Mormon who put a great deal of pressure on the church is Byron Marchant. Mr. Marchant took a very strong stand against racism in the church. *The Dallas Morning News* for October 20, 1977, reported: “The man who cast the first vote in modern history against a leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was excommunicated and fired as chapel janitor.” When Mr. Marchant tried to distribute literature at Temple Square at the next conference he was arrested “on charges of trespassing” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, April 3, 1978). Mr. Marchant published a sheet in which he called for a demonstration against the church’s policy: “Next October Conference (1978) I will join all interested in a march on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. . . every person and/or group concerned about Utah Racism is encouraged to speak out and attend the October protest.” Mr. Marchant’s threat of a demonstration at the next conference may have caused Mormon leaders to think more seriously about having a new revelation. We feel that the church was wise to change its policy before the demonstration because the issue was so explosive that the slightest incident could have touched off a riot where innocent people could have been injured.

However this may be, when the Mormon Church yielded, Mr. Marchant dropped a civil suit filed “against Church President Spencer W. Kimball” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 10, 1978). Another article in the same issue of the *Tribune* observed that “the last three years have also seen repeated attempts by church dissidents to subpoena Mormon leaders into court proceedings, with the central issue often related to the church’s belief about blacks.”

Besides all the problems the church was having with dissidents, it was faced with an impossible situation in Brazil. Even the church’s own *Deseret News* admitted that “a major problem the church has faced with its policy regarding blacks was in Brazil, where the church is building a temple. Many people there are mixed [mixed?] racially, and it is often impossible to determine whether church members have black ancestry” (*Deseret News*, June 10, 1978).

Mormon leaders have been aware of this problem for some time. Lester E. Bush, Jr., gave this revealing information in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1973, p. 41:

The decision to deny the priesthood to anyone with Negro ancestry (“no matter how remote”), had resolved the theoretical problem of priesthood eligibility, but did not help with the practical problem of identifying the “blood of Cain” in those not already known to have Negro ancestry. . . .

The growth of the international Church was clearly bringing new problems. Brazil was particularly difficult. . . . J. Reuben Clark, First Counselor to George Albert Smith, reported that the Church was entering “into a situation in doing missionary work...where it is very difficult if not impossible to tell who has negro blood and who has not. He said that if we are baptizing Brazilians, we are almost certainly baptizing people of negro blood, and that if the Priesthood is conferred upon them, which no doubt it is, we are facing a very serious problem.”

The hypocrisy of the situation in South America was pointed out in 1966 by Wallace Turner:

A different thing is going on in South America where Mormon missionaries are pushing ahead full throttle. There the former careful selection to keep out “white Negroes” has been allowed to slide a little. . . . “There is no question but that in Brazil they have been ordaining priests who are part Negro,” said one careful observer. (*The Mormon Establishment*, 1966, p. 261)

With the opening of the new temple in Brazil, the situation would have turned into a real nightmare. Actually, the church has had the same problem in the United States. Patriarch

Eldred G. Smith remarked:

I had a young lady who was blonde a[n]d no sign or indications visibly of the Negro line at all, but yet she was deprived of going to the Temple. . . . We have these conditions by the thousands in the United States today and are getting more of them. If they have any blood of the Negro at all in their line, in their veins at all, they are not entitled to the blessings of the Priesthood. . . . No limit as to how far back so far as I know. (*Patriarchal Blessings*, Institute of Religion, January 17, 1964, p. 8)

The reader will remember that *Time Magazine* for June 30, 1958, page 47, pointed out Dr. Robert P. Stuckert reached the conclusion that of 135 million Americans classified as white in 1950, about 28 million (21 percent) had some African ancestry. The church's stress on genealogical research placed many members of the church in a very embarrassing position when they discovered they had black ancestors. Such information, of course, had to be covered up. This situation caused a great deal of unnecessary guilt among members of the church who diligently followed the teaching concerning the necessity of genealogical research.

### New "Revelation" Evades the Real Issues

O. Kendall White, Jr., made these interesting observations several years before the revelation was given:

Since they believe in "continuing revelation," Mormons have a mechanism that enables them to reverse previous positions without repudiating the past. . . . That the church will invoke such a mechanism to resolve the racial issue is not too unlikely. . . . this approach has a serious drawback. It is the tendency not to acknowledge the errors of the past. While revelation could be used to legitimate a new racial policy and to redefine Mormon relations with black people, Mormons might still be unwilling to condemn the racism involved in their history. They might be inclined to argue that Mormons in earlier periods were under a different mandate than the one binding them. This obviously implies that the church is never wrong. Thus, change may come through the notion of continuing revelation, but the racist aspects of Mormon history will not necessarily be condemned. (*The Journal of Religious Thought*, Autumn-Winter, 1973, pp. 57-58)

It would appear that church leaders have done exactly what Mr. White warned against; they have used revelation as a means of side-stepping the real issues involved. Mario S. DePillis pointed out that "the revelation leaves unsolved other racist implications of the Book of Mormon and the *Pearl of Great Price*—scriptures that are both cornerstones and contradictions" (*New York Times*, June 11, 1978).

One issue that Mormon leaders now seem to be dodging is that concerning skin color. As we have pointed out earlier, Mormon theology has always taught that "a black skin is a mark of the curse of heaven placed upon some portions of mankind" (*Juvenile Instructor*, vol. 3, p. 157). The Book of Mormon itself is filled with the teaching that people with dark skins are cursed (see our discussion of this matter on page 262 of this book).

Another matter which the new revelation allowing blacks to hold the priesthood does not resolve is the teaching concerning pre-existence. In the past Mormon leaders have stressed that blacks were cursed as to the priesthood because of "unfaithfulness in the spirit—or pre-existence." Should a faithful Mormon continue to believe that blacks were unrighteous in a pre-existent state? It will be especially interesting to see how church leaders explain this matter to blacks in the church. Monroe Fleming, for instance, was converted to the church many years ago. President Joseph Fielding Smith explained to him why he could not hold the priesthood, but since the new "revelation" he is being encouraged to be ordained. Now, was Mr. Fleming really unfaithful in a pre-existent state or did church leaders just make a mistake in the past

when they said he could not hold the priesthood? Church leaders should explain if they believe black babies born after the new "revelation" was given were inferior spirits in a preexistent state.

Now that they have abandoned the idea that blacks cannot hold the priesthood, they should explain if they are giving up some of their teachings on the pre-existence. They should also explain if they are repudiating the Book of Mormon teaching that a dark skin is given by God as a "curse." By giving a "revelation" on the blacks without explaining its implications, the Mormon leaders are leaving their people in a dense doctrinal fog. If the church continues to hide behind a purported revelation on the blacks and fails to come to grips with its racist doctrines, thousands of people are going to continue believing these doctrines and the church will be plagued with racism for many years to come.

### Does the Revelation Really Exist?

One thing that should be noted about the new "revelation" is that the church has failed to produce a copy of it. All we have is a statement by the First Presidency which says a revelation was received. Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet, printed many of his revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and other church publications, and the early Mormon Church even mocked the Catholics because they did not allow the revelations given by their popes to enter the "sacred canon." In refusing to canonize or even make public the new "revelation" on blacks, the Mormon leaders are now practicing the very thing the Catholics were accused of doing. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for June 13, 1978, reported:

Kimball refused to discuss the revelation that changed the church's 148-year-old policy against ordination of blacks, saying it was a "personal thing." . . . Kimball said the revelation came at this time because conditions and people have changed. "It's a different world than it was 20 or 25 years ago. The world is ready for it," he said.

We seriously doubt that President Kimball will ever put forth a written revelation on the bestowal of priesthood on blacks. We doubt, in fact, that any such document exists. What probably happened was that the leaders of the church finally realized that they could no longer retain the anti-black doctrine without doing irreparable damage to the church. Under these circumstances they were impressed with the fact that the doctrine had to be changed and this impression was referred to as a revelation from God. In a letter to the Editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 24, 1978, Eugene Wagner observed:

. . . was this change of doctrine really a revelation from the Lord, or did the church leaders act on their own? Why don't they publish that revelation and let the Lord speak in his own words? All we saw was a statement of the First Presidency, and that is not how a revelation looks.

When God speaks the revelation starts with the words: "Thus sayeth the Lord . . ." It seems when the Lord decides to change a doctrine of such great importance he will talk himself to the people of his church. If such a revelation cannot be presented to the members it is obvious that the first presidency acted on its own, most likely under fear of public pressure to avoid problems of serious consequences and to maintain peace and popularity with the world.

At the 148th Semiannual Conference of the Mormon Church, members of the church were asked to "accept this revelation as the word and will of the Lord," but the only document presented to the people was the letter of the First Presidency, dated June 8, 1978 (see *The Ensign*, November 1978, p. 16).

Some Mormons have put forth the rumor that the power of God was manifested as on the day of Pentecost when President

Kimball gave the “revelation.” Kimball himself seems to be trying to dispel this idea. The following statement about the “revelation” appeared in *Time* on August 7, 1978, page 55:

In other renditions it came complete with a visitation from Joseph Smith. . . . In an interview, his first since the announcement, Kimball described it much more matter of factly to *Time* staff writer Richard Ostling: “I spent a good deal of time in the temple alone, praying for guidance, and there was a gradual and general development of the whole program, in connection with the Apostles.”

For some time after the anti-black doctrine was changed, Mormon leaders were reluctant to inform their own people of the details surrounding the giving of the “revelation.” Finally, six months after the event, the church news staff asked President Kimball if he would “care to share with the readers of the Church News any more of the circumstances under which that was given?” President Kimball’s answer is very revealing. He makes no reference to a voice or any written revelation; in fact, his statement gives the impression that it was only a feeling or an assurance that he received:

It went on for some time as I was searching for this, because I wanted to be sure. We held a meeting of the Council of the Twelve in the temple on the regular day. We considered this very seriously and thoughtfully and prayerfully.

I asked the Twelve not to go home when the time came. I said, “Now would you be willing to remain in the temple with us?” And they were. I offered the final prayer and I told the Lord if it wasn’t right, if He didn’t want this change to come in the Church that I would be true to it all the rest of my life, and I’d fight the world against it if that’s what He wanted.

We had this special prayer circle, then I knew that the time had come. I had a great deal to fight, of course, myself largely, because I had grown up with this thought that Negroes should not have the priesthood and I was prepared to go all the rest of my life till my death and fight for it and defend it as it was. But this revelation and assurance came to me so clearly that there was no question about it. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, January 6, 1979, p. 4)

In his speech “All Are Alike Unto God,” pages 2-3, Apostle Bruce R. McConkie told how the “revelation” was received. His description indicates that there was no spoken or written revelation—only a very good “feeling”:

The result was that President Kimball knew, and each one of us knew, independent of any other person, by direct and personal revelation to us, that the time had now come to extend the gospel . . . to . . . the black race. . . . The Lord could have sent messengers from the other side to deliver it, but he did not. He gave the revelation by the power of the Holy Ghost. Latter-day Saints have a complex: many of them desire to magnify and build upon what has occurred, and they delight to think of miraculous things. And maybe some of them would like to believe that the Lord himself was there, or that

the Prophet Joseph Smith came to deliver the revelation . . . which was one of the possibilities. Well, these things did not happen. The stories that go around to the contrary are not factual or realistic or true, . . . I cannot describe in words what happened; I can only say that it happened and that it can be known and understood only by the feeling that can come into the heart of man. You cannot describe a testimony to someone.

In putting forth his new “revelation” on blacks, President Kimball will not admit to any wrongdoing on the part of the church: “There are members of the Church who had brought to President David O. McKay their reasons why it should be changed. Others had gone to Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee and to all the former presidents and it had not been accepted because the time had not come for it” (*Deseret News*, Church Section, January 6, 1979, p. 15). We feel that it is wrong to fail to accept any blame and to attribute such a “revelation” to God. It makes it appear that God has been a racist for thousands of years, and that Mormon leaders by “pleading long and earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the upper room of the Temple” have finally persuaded God to give blacks the priesthood. The truth of the matter, however, is that “God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34-35). It is the Mormon leaders who have kept blacks under a curse. They have continually and stubbornly opposed the advancement of black people, threatening and excommunicating those who differed with them on the matter. Finally, when their backs were to the wall, the Mormon leaders were forced to change their position.

### Impact of Revelation

Some people believe the Mormon Church is not sincere in opening priesthood advancement to blacks. We feel, however, that even though the Mormon leaders have failed to face some important issues, they have made a major concession which will gradually weaken racism throughout the church. The *Deseret News*, Church Section, January 6, 1979, reported that “Brother (Helecio) Martins (a black member) is now a member of the stake presidency.”

We feel that one of the important reasons the church decided to confer priesthood on blacks was that the anti-black doctrine was hurting missionary work. With a change in this policy, we anticipate that the church will make many more converts. On the other hand, many members of the church have become disillusioned because of the church’s handling of the racial issue, and the new “revelation” has tended to confirm in their minds that the Lord had nothing to do with the whole matter. For those Christians working with Mormons, this may really prove to be an opening for effective witnessing.





## 22. Fall of the Book of Abraham

The Book of Abraham was supposed to have been written on papyrus by Abraham about 4,000 years ago. According to Mormon writers, this same papyrus fell into Joseph Smith's hands in 1835. He translated the papyrus and published it under the title, "The Book of Abraham." The Book of Abraham was accepted by the Mormon Church as scripture and is now published as part of the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the church.

If the papyrus were really written by Abraham, as the Mormons claim, its discovery was probably one of the most important finds in the history of the world. To say that the papyrus would be worth a million dollars would be greatly underestimating its value, for it would be older than any portion of the Bible. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, one of the church's most noted scholars, commented:

The Mormon people are especially blessed with scriptures that have a very interesting archaeological background. . . . If a manuscript were to be found in the sands of Egypt written in Egyptian characters with the title of "The Book of Abraham," it would cause a sensation in the scholarly world. Our people do profess to have such a scripture containing but five chapters which was written by Abraham who came from Ur of the Chaldees and eventually went down into the land of Egypt. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, 1938, Salt Lake City, p. 39)

On page 83 of the same book, Dr. Sperry states:

The little volume of Scripture known as the Book of Abraham will some day be reckoned as one of the most remarkable documents in existence. . . . the author or editors of the book we call Genesis lived after the events recorded therein took place. Our text of Genesis can therefore not be dated earlier than the latest event mentioned by it. It is evident that the writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, of which our printed Book of Abraham is a copy, must of necessity be older than the original text of Genesis. I say this in passing because some of our brethren have exhibited surprise when told that the text of the Book of Abraham is older than that of Genesis.

From this it is plain to see that if the Book of Abraham is an authentic record of Abraham its value to the world could not be estimated. If, on the other hand, the papyrus was not really written by Abraham, then Joseph Smith was guilty of misrepresentation, and a shadow of doubt is cast upon the Book of Mormon and other writings which he claimed were scripture.

### The Papyri Rediscovered

For many years Joseph Smith's collection of papyri were lost, but on November 27, 1967, the Mormon-owned *Deseret News* announced:

NEW YORK—A collection of pa[p]yrus manuscripts, long believed to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871 was presented to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints here Monday by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. . . .

Included in the papyri is a manuscript identified as the original

document from which Joseph Smith had copied the drawing which he called "Facsimile No. 1" and published with the Book of Abraham. (*Deseret News*, Nov. 27, 1967, p. 1)

The Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley made this statement concerning the papyri:

On November 27, 1967, the Metropolitan Museum of Art presented to the Church as a gift certain Egyptian papyri once owned by the Prophet Joseph Smith. This was a far more momentous transaction than might appear on the surface, for it brought back into play for the first time since the angel Moroni took back the golden plates a tangible link between the worlds. What we have here is more than a few routine scribblings of ill-trained scribes of long ago; at least one of these very documents was presented to the world by Joseph Smith as offering a brief and privileged insight into the strange world of the Patriarchs. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 171)

The importance of this find cannot be overemphasized, for now Joseph Smith's ability as a translator of ancient Egyptian writing can be put to an absolute test.

The pages which follow contain pictures of all eleven pieces of papyri which were given to the Mormon Church by the Metropolitan Museum. They are taken from the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter, 1968.

### "Caught Flat-Footed"

In February, 1968, the *Improvement Era* announced that there was an "unprecedented interest generated throughout the church by the recovery of 11 pieces of papyrus that were once the property of the Prophet Joseph Smith." Many members of the Mormon Church felt that Joseph Smith's work had been vindicated. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, however, warned his people to be cautious:

We ought to be very careful in our estimation of these things. I[t] would be better for us to take a conservative view now, than go out on a limb and say they prove more than they actually do. . . . we ought not to overrate the importance of this discovery. It would be better to be conservative, then [than?] to be overly expansive in our estimate of the value of the papyrus sheets. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, pp. 6-8)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, who is supposed to be the Mormon Church's top authority on the Egyptian language, warned his people that there was trouble ahead. On December 1, 1967, the *Daily Universe*, published at Brigham Young University, reported these statements by Dr. Nibley:

"The papyri scripts given to the Church do not prove the Book of Abraham is true," Dr. Hugh Nibley said in an academics Office-sponsored assembly Wednesday night. "LDS scholars are caught flat footed by this discovery," he went on to say.

According to Dr. Nibley, Mormon scholars should have been doing added research on the *Pearl of Great Price* years ago. Non-Mormon scholars will bring in questions regarding the manuscripts



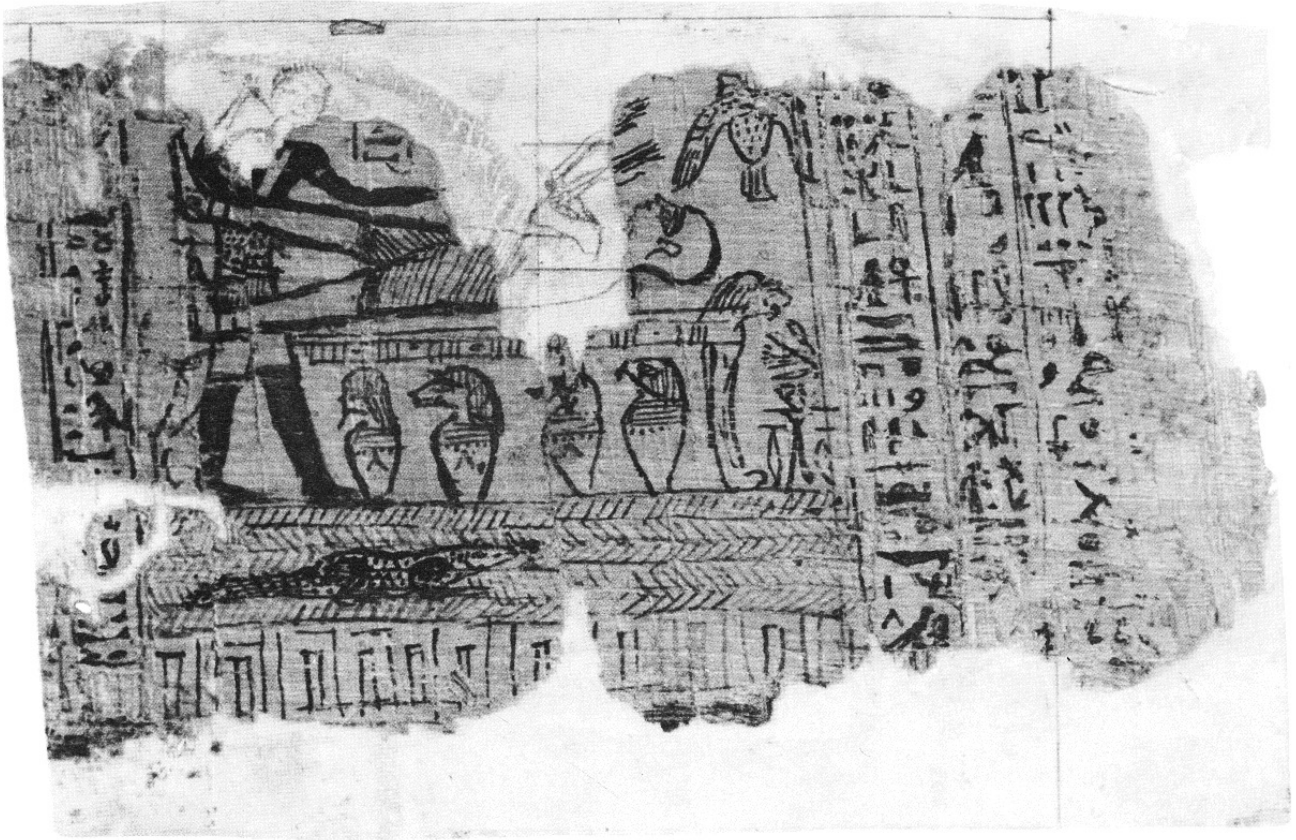


Photo No. 1 — This is a photograph of the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used for Facsimile No. 1 in the *Book of Abraham*. A color photograph of this same fragment is found in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40.

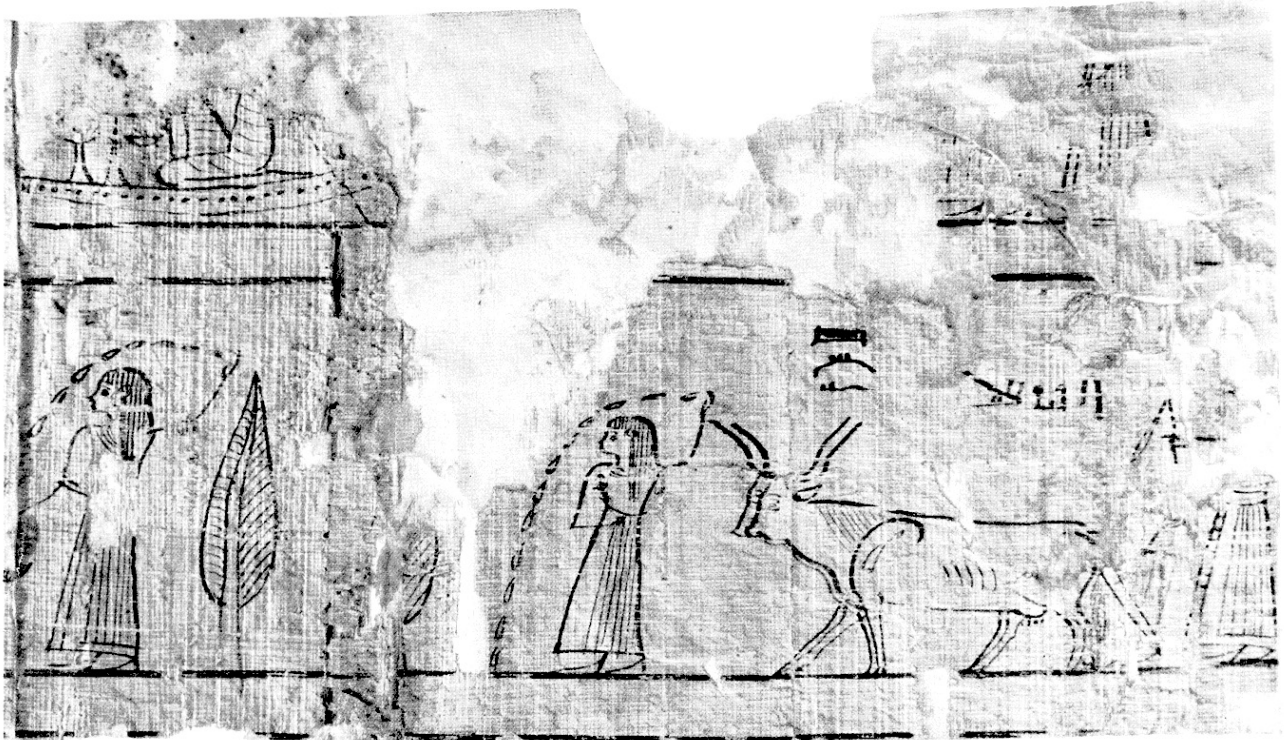


Photo No. 2 — Dr. Hugh Nibley labels this "II. Plowing scene" in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-A.



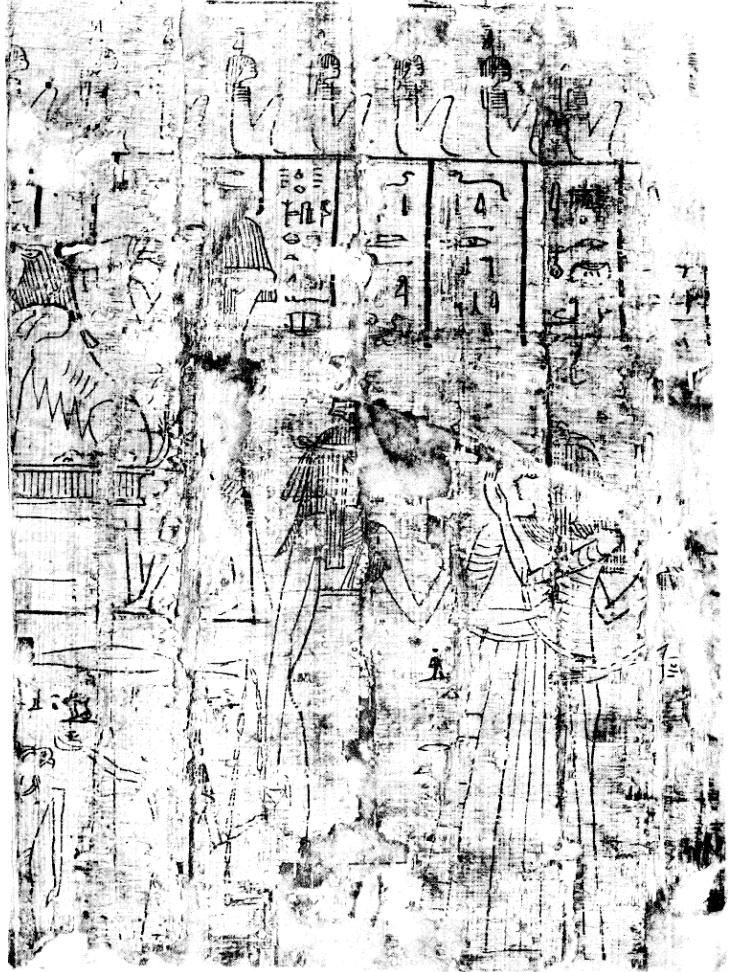
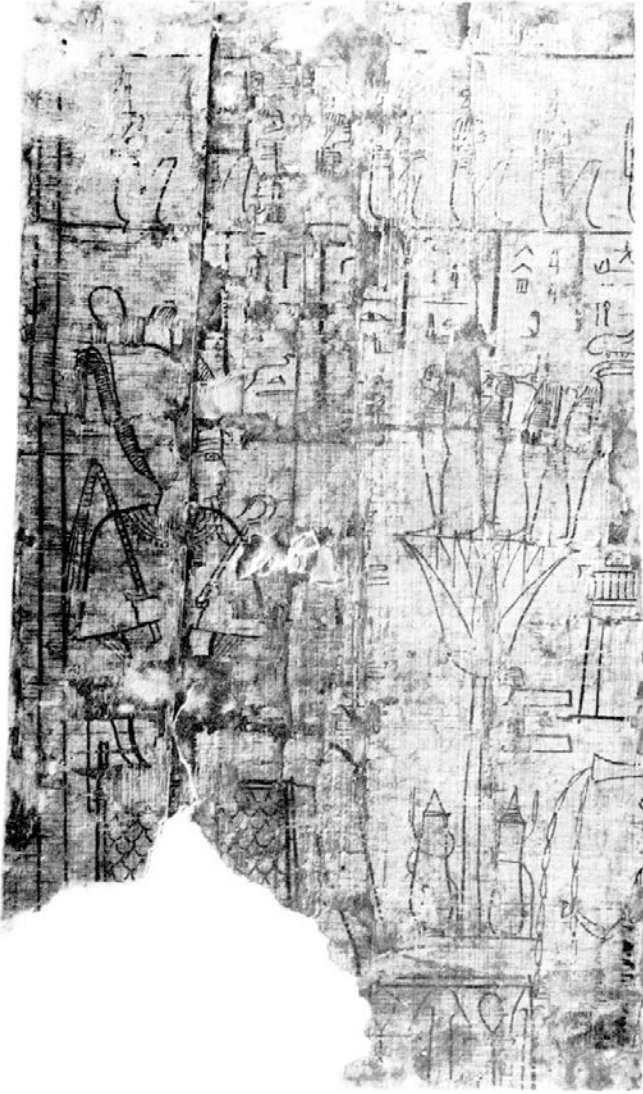


Photo No. 3 — Dr. Nibley labels this “V. The serpent with legs.” (See *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-E.)



Photo No. 4 — Dr. Nibley labels this “IV. Framed Trinity papyrus.” (See *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-D.)





Photos No. 5 and 6 —These two fragments are part of the same scene. Dr. Nibley labels them "III A. Court of Osiris (on throne)" and "III B. Court of Osiris (Thoth recording)". (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, pages 40-B and 40-C.)



Photo No. 7 — Dr. Nibley labels this “VII. Man with staff (entering into glory)”. (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-G.)



Photo No. 8 — Dr. Nibley labels this “VI. The swallow.” (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-F.)



Photo No. 9 — Dr. Nibley labels this "VIII. Inverted Triangle." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-G)

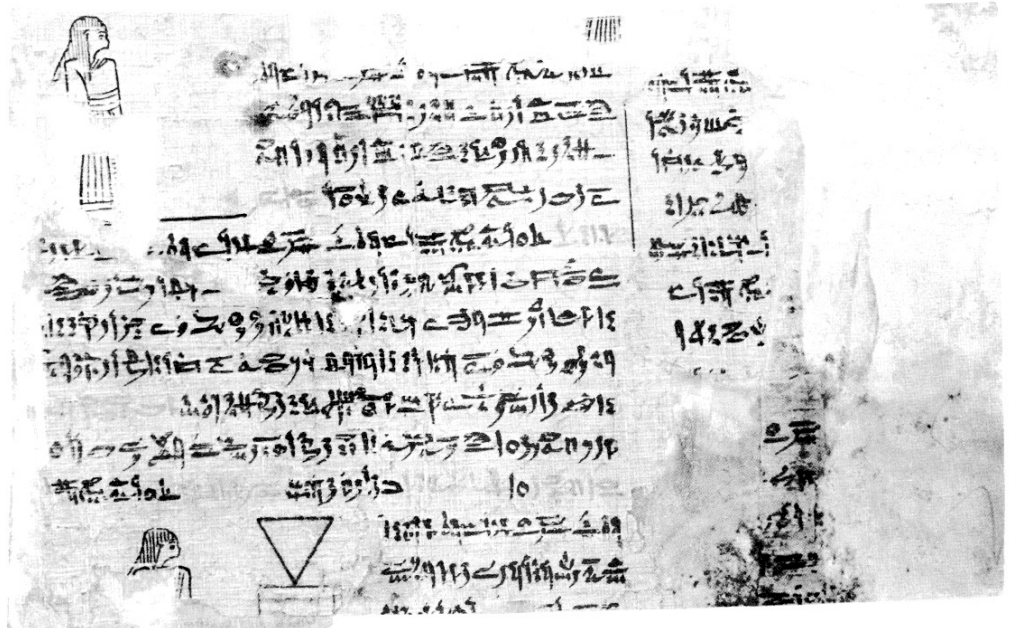


Photo No. 10 — Dr. Nibley labels this "X. Hieratic text, the 'Sensen' papyrus, labeled 'first one' (unillustrated)." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 41)

Photo No. 11 — This is by far the most important fragment, because Joseph Smith used it as the basis for the text in the Book of Abraham. Dr. Nibley labeled it "XI. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 41)





which will be hard to answer because of lack of scholarly knowledge on the subject. . . . Dr. Nibley said worldly discoveries are going to “bury the Church in criticism” if members of the Church don’t take it upon themselves to become a people of learning. . . . Mormons ought to know as much or more as others, “but they don’t,” Dr. Nibley said, quoting Brigham Young. (*Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, December 1, 1967)

Dr. Nibley also made this remark:

. . . a few faded and tattered little scraps of papyrus may serve to remind the Latter-day Saints of how sadly they have neglected serious education. . . . Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the moment of truth the Mormons have to face the world unprepared, after having been given a hundred years’ fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 171-172)

Although these are strange words to be coming from the man whom the Mormon leaders have chosen to defend the “Book of Abraham,” they are certainly the truth.

In order to understand the problems involved it is necessary to give a history of the papyri.

### History of Papyri

Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* contains the following account of the discovery of the papyri:

The records were obtained from one of the catacombs of Egypt, . . . by the celebrated French traveler, Antonio Sebolo, . . . He entered the catacomb June 7, 1831, and obtained eleven mummies. . . . Previous to his decease, he made a will of the whole, to Mr. Michael H. Chandler, . . . they were received at the Custom House, in the winter or spring of 1833. . . . On opening the coffins, he discovered that in connection with two of the bodies, was something rolled up with the same kind of linen, saturated with the same bitumen, which, when examined, proved to be two rolls of papyrus, previously mentioned. Two or three other small pieces of papyrus, with astronomical calculations, epitaphs, & c., were found with others of the mummies. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 348-349)

Although there are errors in this statement, it gives the Mormon account of the origin of the papyri.

After receiving the mummies, Mr. Chandler traveled about exhibiting them. According to the *History of the Church*, Mr. Chandler arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, on July 3, 1835. Joseph Smith became interested in the papyri, but Mr. Chandler refused to sell the manuscripts unless he could also sell the mummies. The Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

. . . Mr. Chandler told him that he would not sell the writings, unless he could sell the mummies, . . . Mr. Smith inquired of him the price which was a considerable sum, and finally purchased the mummies and the writing, . . . (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 16)

After the Mormons purchased the papyri, Joseph Smith examined them and declared that they were the writings of Abraham and Joseph of Egypt:

Soon after this, some of the Saints at Kirtland purchased the mummies and papyrus, . . . I commenced the translation of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt, etc.,—a more full account of which will appear in its place, as I proceed to examine or unfold them. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236)

In 1842 Joseph Smith published his translation of the “Book of Abraham” in the *Times and Seasons*. Three drawings from the Book of Abraham were included in this work.

While Joseph Smith had the papyri many people were allowed to see them. On February 19, 1843, Charlotte Haven wrote the following to her mother:

From there we called on Joseph’s mother, . . . she lit a candle and conducted us up a short, narrow stairway to a low, dark room under the roof. On one side were standing half a dozen mummies, to whom she introduced us, King Onitus and his royal household,—one she did not know. Then she took up what seemed to be a club wrapped in a dark cloth, and said “This is the leg of Pharaoh’s daughter, the one that saved Moses.” . . . Then she turned to a long table, set her candlestick down, and opened a long roll of manuscript, saying it was “the writing of Abraham and Isaac, written in Hebrew and Sanscrit,” and she read several minutes from it as if it were English. It sounded very much like passages from the Old Testament . . . she said she read it through the inspiration of her son Joseph, . . . in the same way she interpreted to us hieroglyphics from another roll. One was Mother Eve being tempted by the serpent, who—the serpent, I mean—was standing on the tip of his tail, which with his two legs formed a tripod, and had his head in Eve’s ear. I said, “But serpents don’t have legs.”

“They did before the fall,” she asserted with perfect confidence. (*Overland Monthly*, December 1890, pp. 623-24)

Josiah Quincy, who visited Joseph Smith at Nauvoo, gave this information:

The prophet referred to his miraculous gift of understanding all languages, . . .

“And now come with me,” said the prophet “and I will show you the curiosities.” . . . There were some pine presses fixed against the wall of the room. These receptacles Smith opened, and disclosed four human bodies, shrunken and black with age. “These are mummies,” said the exhibitor. “I want you to look at that little runt of a fellow over there. He was a great man in his day. Why, that was Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt!” Some parchments inscribed with hieroglyphics were then offered us. They were preserved under glass and handled with great respect. “That is the handwriting of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful,” said the prophet. “This is the autograph of Moses, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron. Here we have the earliest account of the Creation, from which Moses composed the First Book of Genesis.” The parchment last referred to showed a rude drawing of a man and woman, and a serpent walking upon a pair of legs. I ventured to doubt the propriety of providing the reptile in question with this unusual means of locomotion. “Why, that’s as plain as a pikestaff,” was the rejoinder. “Before the Fall snakes always went about on legs, just like chickens. They were deprived of them, in punishment for their agency in the ruin of man.” We were further assured that the prophet was the only mortal who could translate these mysterious writings, and that his power was given by direct inspiration. . . . “Gentlemen,” said this bourgeois Mohammed, as he closed the cabinets, “those who see these curiosities generally pay my mother a quarter of a dollar.” (*Among the Mormons*, edited by William Mulder and Russell Mortensen, New York, 1958, pp. 136-137)

For other interesting statements by those who saw the papyri see our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 2, pages 121-122.

### Deciphering Egyptian

In Joseph Smith’s time the science of Egyptology was in its infancy. Therefore, Joseph Smith’s work as a translator could not be adequately tested. The knowledge of hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic Egyptian writing had been lost many centuries before, and it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that there appeared much hope of deciphering these strange writings. Just before the turn of the century (1799) some French soldiers found a stone with Greek, demotic and hieroglyphic writings upon it. Alan Gardiner makes this statement concerning it:

Such a clue was at last provided when some French soldiers, working on the foundations of a fortress at Rosetta, came across a trilingual inscription in Greek, demotic, and hieroglyphic (1799).

This inscription ever since famous under the name of the Rosetta stone, proved from its Greek portion to be a decree in honour of the young king Ptolemy Epiphanes, which the priests of Egypt caused to be erected in all the temples of the land (196 B.C.). (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Sir Alan Gardiner, London, 1964, p. 12)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry made this comment concerning the Rosetta stone:

A knowledge of Greek has never been lost to mankind and for that reason scholars could easily decipher the Greek portion of the stone. . . . It was soon recognized by scholars that what was said in Greek was also repeated in the hieroglyphic and demotic columns just above it. Thus it was thought that the Egyptian characters could be compared with the Greek and the general sense of them made out. In other words it was recognized that the Greek portion of the Rosetta Stone was a key which could help unlock the meaning of the Egyptian characters. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Sidney B. Sperry, pp. 32-33)

Although others had worked with the Rosetta stone, Jean Francois Champollion was the man who was “destined to win immortal fame as the decipherer of the hieroglyphs” (*Egyptian Grammar*, p. 13).

E. A. Wallis Budge gives us this information:

The progress of Egyptology suffered a severe set-back by the death of Young on May 10th, 1830, and by the death of Champollion on March 4th, 1832, and there was no scholar sufficiently advanced in the science to continue their work. (*An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, vol. 1, p. xii)

In 1837, . . . Birch . . . decided to attempt to publish a “Hieroglyphical Dictionary.” . . . publishers were not eager to spend their money on a dictionary of a language of which scarcely a dozen people in the whole world had any real knowledge. (*Ibid.*, p. xvii)

From the information given above it is plain to see that there was little chance of Joseph Smith’s work coming into conflict with the science of Egyptology during his lifetime. There was one purported test of Joseph Smith’s ability in 1835. B. H. Roberts stated:

The Prophet translated some of the hieroglyphics Mr. Chandler submitted to him, whereupon that gentleman certified as to the agreement of the Prophet’s translation with that which had been made by scholars in other places where the mummies and papyrus rolls had been exhibited. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 2, p. 126)

Mr. Chandler’s certificate reads as follows:

Kirtland, July 6, 1835

This is to make known to all who may be desirous, concerning the knowledge of Mr. Joseph Smith, Jun., in deciphering the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic characters in my possession, which I have, in many eminent cities, showed to the most learned; and, from the information that I could ever learn, or meet with, I find that of Mr. Joseph Smith, Jun., to correspond in the most minute matters.

Michael H. Chandler, . . .

(*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 234)

This statement by Mr. Chandler does not amount to much when we consider the fact that he was not an Egyptologist himself. It is very unlikely that he had any reliable information concerning the meaning of the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Mormon scholar Sidney Sperry made this interesting comment: “Now I do not know how Mr. Chandler could possibly know whether the Prophet’s translation was correct or not” (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, BYU, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 4).

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt admitted that Mr. Chandler could not have known much about the Egyptian language:

Mr. C. had also obtained from learned men the best translation he could of some few characters, which however, was not a translation, but more in the shape of their ideas with regard to it, their acquaintance with the language not being sufficient to enable them to translate it literally. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, p. 65)

Thus we see that Chandler’s endorsement of Smith’s work is of no real value, especially when we consider the fact that he was the man who sold the Mormons the mummies and papyri for “a large sum of money.”

Joseph Smith was murdered in 1844, and within a few years the Mormons came out west. Joseph Smith’s mother as well as his widow refused to go west, and therefore the Mormon Church lost control of the collection of papyri. Nevertheless, Joseph Smith had included three drawings in his Book of Abraham, and also gave an interpretation of much of the material which appeared in these drawings.

By the year 1860 the science of Egyptology had advanced to the point where some people felt that it could be used to test Joseph Smith’s ability as a translator. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts related the following:

It is due to the reader to say that fragments of the Book of Abraham, the facsimiles published with this chapter, were submitted to a young French savant in 1860, . . . The young French savant of the Museum of the Louvre, to whom the facsimiles of the fragments of the Book of Abraham were submitted, was M. Theodule Deveria. His explanations differ from the translations made by Joseph Smith, but of the merits of M. Deveria’s translation the writer can form no judgment. . . . (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, B. H. Roberts, vol. 2, p. 130, footnote)

Deveria not only accused Joseph Smith of making a false translation, but also of altering the scenes shown in the facsimiles. Actually, Deveria must have done a good job, for an Egyptologist made this statement in a letter dated August 29, 1967; “. . . I made a translation of as much as I could read of the facsimiles in the PGP; it is no great improvement on that published by Deveria about 100 years ago.”

## Spalding’s Attack

Deveria’s work on the Book of Abraham seemed to have little influence on the Mormons. In 1912, however, another attack was made on the Book of Abraham. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts explains:

In 1912 a widespread interest was awakened in the Book of Abraham by the publication of a brochure, by Rt. Rev. F. S. Spalding, D.D. Episcopal Bishop of Utah, under the title *Joseph Smith, Jun., as a Translator*. The bishop submitted the facsimiles of some of the parchment pages from which the Book of Abraham had been translated, . . . to a number of the foremost of present day Egyptian scholars. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 138)

Dr. Hugh Nibley admitted that Spalding “enlisted the services of the most formidable roster of scholars that have ever declared against Joseph Smith as a prophet, . . .” (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 20)

On page 23 of *Joseph Smith, Jr., As a Translator*, F. S. Spalding reproduced a letter from Dr. A. H. Sayce of Oxford, England. In this letter Dr. Sayce commented: “It is difficult to deal seriously with Joseph Smith’s impudent fraud . . . Smith has turned the Goddess into a king and Osiris into Abraham.”

Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie of the London University stated:

To any one with knowledge of the large class of funeral documents to which these belong, the attempts to guess a meaning are too absurd to be noticed. It may be safely said that there is not one single word that is true in these explanations. (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As a Translator*, p. 24)

James H. Breasted, Ph.D., Haskell Oriental Museum, University of Chicago, stated:

To sum up, then, these three fac-similes of Egyptian documents in the “Pearl of Great Price” depict the most common objects in the mortuary religion of Egypt. Joseph Smith’s interpretations of them as part of a unique revelation through Abraham, therefore, very clearly demonstrates



that he was totally unacquainted with the significance of these documents and absolutely ignorant of the simplest facts of Egyptian Writing and civilization. (*Ibid.*, pp. 26-27)

Dr. Arthur C. Mace, who was the Assistant Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Dept. of Egyptian Art, stated:

I return herewith, under separate cover, the “Pearl of Great Price.” The “Book of Abraham,” it is hardly necessary to say, is a pure fabrication. . . . Joseph Smith’s interpretation of these cuts is a farrago of nonsense from beginning to end. Egyptian characters can now be read almost as easily as Greek, and five minutes’ study in an Egyptian gallery of any museum should be enough to convince any educated man of the clumsiness of the imposture. (*Ibid.*, p. 27)

Rev. Prof. S.A.B. Mercer, Ph.D., Western Theological Seminary, Custodian Hibbard Collection, Egyptian Reproductions, stated:

. . . the author knew neither the Egyptian language nor the meaning of the most commonplace Egyptian figures; neither did any of those, whether human or Divine, who may have helped him in his interpretation, have any such knowledge. . . . the explanatory notes to his fac-similes cannot be taken seriously by any scholar, as they seem to be undoubtedly the work of pure imagination. (*Ibid.*, p. 29)

When Spalding’s pamphlet first appeared the Mormon leaders were very upset. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry relates:

I well remember when that attack came out, and to say that it stirred up our general authorities is to put it mildly. The brethren were very much concerned about the faith of our young people, . . . I well remember at the time how, in my religion class, Dr. John A. Widtsoe’s brother, Osborne J. B. Widtsoe—a great man—tried to tell the young people about the situation, and attempted to save us from leaving the Church. (*Pearl of Great Price*, December 10, 1960, Brigham Young University, 1964 edition, p. 2)

Dr. Sperry also gave this information concerning the attack by Spalding:

When the latter appeared it literally produced a sensation in the Church. The writer well remembers how as a student then in high school all the teachers and brethren generally were talking about it. In the excitement many of them stated that they felt it was impossible to answer Mr. Spalding because he had made out such a good case against Joseph Smith as a translator. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, p. 73)

In the *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, page 2, Dr. Sperry made this comment:

Well as I look back on this experience, I have to smile quite a little, because frankly we were more interested in the girl we were going to date the next Friday night for the dance than we were about losing our faith. I think very few of us lost our faith for a moment because of that attack made upon the *Pearl of Great Price*.

### “Dr. Webb”

The Mormon leaders did not know how to deal with Spalding’s pamphlet. Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that there “were no Egyptian scholars in the church of the Latter-day Saints who could make an effective answer to the conclusions of the eight scholars who in various ways pronounced against the correctness of Joseph Smith’s translation of the Egyptian parchments that so strangely fell into his hands; . . .” (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 139).

The Mormons, however, did receive help from a man who called himself “Robert C. Webb, Ph.D.” Fawn M. Brodie claimed that Robert C. Webb’s real name was “J. E. Homans,” and that he was “neither an Egyptologist nor a Ph.D.” (*No Man Knows My History*, 1957, p. 175). It is rather obvious that if Mrs. Brodie is correct in this matter, the Mormon leaders were guilty of deception. Strange as it may seem, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, confirmed the fact that Robert C.

Webb was “no Ph.D.” In the *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, held in 1960, Dr. Sperry answered a number of questions. At one point in the discussion he was asked about Robert C. Webb:

Question: What did Mr. Webb do for the Church? He was not a member?

Answer: He was not a member of the Church. We had him at Brigham Young University to lecture, in old Room 260 in the Joseph Smith building. I might state that that man was converted to the Church. However, there were certain things that held him back. The elders in New York on one occasion were going to baptize him on a Saturday afternoon. Dr. Talmage arrived in town on Wednesday, and he told the elders: “You leave him alone.” So, he did not come into the Church, but he did do a great job of defending our cause. I think in many respects that he did the best job of any one in defending the Church’s interests at that particular time.

He wrote a wonderful book, *Case Against Mormonism*, under the name of Robert C. Webb, Ph.D. I regret that the brethren let him put down Robert C. Webb, Ph.D., because he was no Ph.D. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 9)

On page 6 of the same publication, Dr. Sperry stated that Dr. Webb’s “real name was J. C. Homans.”

M. Wilford Poulson, who was on the faculty at the Brigham Young University, related the following to us: At one time “Dr. Webb” attended a meeting at the BYU. After the meeting was over, Mr. Poulson asked “Dr. Webb” if he would like to see the fine collection of books in the Brigham Young University Library. “Dr. Webb,” however, indicated that he was much more interested in having a smoke. Since smoking is frowned upon at the BYU, they had to take a walk away from the campus. Mr. Poulson was able to learn a great deal about “Dr. Webb.” He found out that he was in reality a professional writer who was hired to defend various causes. One of his books was in defense of the liquor industry. This book, of course, was written under another assumed name.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that “‘Dr. Webb’ was an assumed name,” but he defended his work (see *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 139).

Although “Dr. Robert C. Webb” was able to quote from several different languages and make a great display of knowledge, from the viewpoint of an Egyptologist his arguments are very weak. Samuel A. B. Mercer made this comment concerning one of “Dr. Webb’s” interpretations: “His whole symbolical statement is full of errors and is its own refutation. To the layman it is unintelligible and to the expert it is ridiculous” (*The Utah Survey*, September 1913, p. 27).

It is interesting to note that Hugh Nibley is still using R. C. Webb’s material. He refers to him as “the outsider, R. C. Webb” (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 20). In just five articles published in the *Improvement Era* (January to May, 1968) Hugh Nibley refers to R. C. Webb or his work at least 23 times.

The Mormon Church was able to survive Spalding’s attack upon the Book of Abraham because the Mormon people felt that “Dr. Webb” had answered the critics. Prof. N. L. Nelson made these statements in a letter to Spalding:

The fog your critics spread did not hang long. Dr. Robert C. Webb’s masterly explication of these plates restored to me more than your destructive criticisms took away . . .

Dr. Webb has, indeed, vindicated the prophet better than he knew himself. . . . (*Improvement Era*, April 1913, pp. 604-605)

In 1964 we reprinted F. S. Spalding’s pamphlet in a work entitled *Why Egyptologists Reject the Book of Abraham*. Since the Joseph Smith Papyri have been rediscovered they have tended to vindicate Spalding’s work and it may yet get the serious attention it deserves.

### Tragic Neglect

After the excitement over Spalding’s pamphlet died down, the Mormons took little interest in the science of Egyptology. Jean



Capheart, an Egyptologist who visited Salt Lake City, noticed this lack of interest: “Dr. Capheart lauded the Latter-day Saints for their study of Egyptian, wondering at the same time why there is not a greater study of the science as a result of the foundation that their religion has in the authenticity of their Book of Abraham.” (*Deseret News*, as cited in *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., p. 60)

Actually, Mormon scholars have had a strange attitude about the science of Egyptology. There has been a great deal of pretense, but very little attempt to get down to the basic issues involved. Dr. Nibley admits that this is true:

To this day no one has engaged in the type of study necessary to come to grips with the *Pearl of Great Price*, . . . all studies of the *Pearl of Great Price* without exception have been in the nature of auxiliary studies—compendiums, historical background, etc.—or preliminary surveys. . . .

Full-scale college and extension courses, graduate seminars, Churchwide lecture series, stately public symposiums, books, pamphlets, monographs, newsletters, and articles, all done up in fancy bindings usually adorned with reproductions of the Facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price* or with faked Egyptian symbols to intrigue and beguile the public, have all failed to get beyond the starting point of the race, which after all must be run on the long hard obstacle course of Egyptian grammar and epigraphy and not on the lecture platform. The Mormons, it seems, have gone all out for the gimmicks and mechanics of education, but have never evinced any real inclination to tackle the tough, basic questions of evidence raised by the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 24)

In an article published in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley stated:

There is no shortage of people publishing books and articles, holding learned symposiums, and giving classes and lectures in the mysteries of the *Pearl of Great Price*, but the precious papyri themselves, the subject of so much wise discourse through the years, are greeted with an abashed silence. It is said that when the Chinese in their first naval encounters with Europeans found their ships no match for steamboats, they proceeded to erect funnels on the decks of their junks, in which they would burn straw, thus rivaling the formidable appearance of the enemy. The mock steamboats no doubt satisfied the Chinese and made a fine impression as long as they did not have to come up against real steamboats, and such has been their way of our Mormon scholarship, assiduously aping the learning of the world in its safe and comfortable isolation. It would have been possible through the years to have obtained from time to time the services of the world's best Egyptologists and archaeologists for but a fraction the cost of, say, a local billboard campaign to add luster to the image of the University. Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the moment of truth the Mormons have to face the world unprepared, after having been given a hundred years' fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 171-72)

It is interesting to note that the Brigham Young University had copies of “Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” for over 30 years. This work includes pages of Egyptian characters copied from the original papyrus. Yet, strange as it may seem, no one from the BYU has published a translation of this material! On December 11, 1967, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry made this comment about this work:

DR. SPERRY: One of the things that strikes me about this whole business is the importance of our discovery, some 30 years ago, of Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. When we first opened it we found numerous pages of Egyptian material.... There must be a hundred times more material in this volume than there is in the whole of the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, B.Y.U., March 1, 1968, p. 8)

At a “Pearl of Great Price Conference” held in December of 1960, Dr. Sperry stated:

We have a hundred times more Egyptian material than you have in the entire book of Abraham as it is presently printed. Here is another piece of translation. Notice this page, a whole page of Egyptian material. . . . we have an exciting job, brethren and sisters, ahead of us in translating, if it is possible these characters, part of which are hieratic and part hieroglyphic. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., pp. 8-9)

On pages 10-11 of the same book, Dr. Sperry answered a number of questions. Some of his answers are very revealing:

Question: Is there any of the “one hundred times more material” translated, and if so, who has it?

Well, Dr. Clark and I have it. We have not translated it. That is going to be a terrific job, believe me.

. . . .

Question: Does it seem at all likely to you, after the searches you have already conducted, that the manuscript of Joseph and Abraham may still be somewhere, or may still be found?

Answer: That is quite a problem. I think that the record of Joseph, or at least parts of it, are in this material. What a thrill it would be if we could get it translated!

Question: What is the current attitude of the Church leaders toward the translating of this additional information you have found?

Answer: I do not know. I suppose the brethren might let it be published, but that is doubtful at the present time.”

Dr. Sperry had taken some courses in Egyptian at the University of Chicago. If he really felt that these texts supported Joseph Smith’s work, why did he not devote himself to the work of translating them? Dr. Nibley had also taken courses in Egyptian, yet in 1968 he frankly admitted that he “has never spent so much as five minutes with the Egyptian Grammar [i.e., Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar], and does not intend to unless he is forced into it” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 176).

Hugh Nibley and Sidney Sperry spent years working on books and articles in defense of the Mormon Church. Why did they not invest this time in working on these important documents? Could it be that they suspected that this material would not vindicate Joseph Smith’s work?

## Not Out of Date

Marvin Cowan, a Baptist missionary working among the Mormons, was told by different Mormons that the pamphlet by F. S. Spalding was out-dated and that the Egyptologists today would probably give a different opinion concerning Joseph Smith’s translation. After obtaining the names of prominent Egyptologists from the Smithsonian Institution, he sent them the facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price* along with a letter in which he asked if the Egyptian language was “completely decipherable,” and if the facsimiles enclosed were “true Egyptian writing or characters?” He also asked if Joseph’s explanations were “true interpretations of the pictures if they are Egyptian” and if the explanations are incorrect, “what do the three pictures mean?”

In a letter dated March 16, 1966, John A. Wilson, Prof. of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, replied as follows:

We have had previous occasion to comment on the illustrations in Joseph Smith, “The Pearl of Great Price.” Two or three documents are in question as the two oblong illustrations show pictures from the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Whether this is one papyrus or two is immaterial. In illustration No. 1, the god Anubis is preparing a mummified body on a bed. The head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal. Beside the head of the mummy there is a flying bird which represents the Egyptians soul. Under the bed there are four jars into which the soft inner parts of the

body were placed by the ancient Egyptians. Figure 3 is even more common, showing the dead Egyptian led into the presence of the god Osiris for judgment as to his moral character in life. In these the hieroglyphs have been very sketchily copied, and probably could have been read on the original.

Figure 2 is a round disk made of cloth and jesso to be placed under the head of a mummy in the late period of Egyptian culture (after 900 B.C.). It shows the scene customarily on such magical protection for the dead. In this the hieroglyphs can in part be checked and do correspond to those on such pieces as known in various museums. In fact the name of the dead appears as the same as that of Shishak in the Bible.

From the standpoint of the Egyptologist the explanations given with these illustrations are incorrect. The Egyptian language on such documents is decipherable and has appeared in translation in various books. If these copies were more accurate, one could probably read connected texts from them. (Letter from Prof. John A. Wilson, University of Chicago, March 16, 1966, to Marvin Cowan)

In a letter dated March 22, 1966, Richard A. Parker, of the Department of Egyptology at Brown University, replied:

To answer your questions: (1) The ancient Egyptian language can be called completely decipherable. There are some words in the vocabulary whose specific meaning is still undetermined but there are very few whose general meaning remains uncertain. We can read almost any text with a high degree of confidence.

(2) (a) The pictures you sent me are based upon Egyptian originals but are poor or distorted copies. Many of the hieroglyphs are recognizable but so many others have been so poorly copied that the illustrations cannot be read. (b) The explanations are completely wrong insofar as any interpretation of the Egyptian original is concerned.

(c) Number 1 is an altered copy of a well known scene of the dead god Osiris on his bier with a jackal-god Anubis acting as his embalmer. The four jars beneath the couch are four canopic jars with the heads of a human, baboon, jackal and falcon. The bird over Osiris is a ba or soul-bird. There are many variations of this scene in Egyptian monuments.

Number 3 is a poor copy from a scene from some funerary papyrus in which the dead person is conducted by the goddess of truth and another unknown figure into the presence of Osiris seated on his throne with presumably Isis standing behind him. The hieroglyphs are so badly copied that nothing can be made out but this also is a very common scene. (Letter by Richard A. Parker, Dept. of Egyptology, Brown University, March 22, 1966)

After the papyri were turned over to the church by the Metropolitan Museum, Marvin Cowan sent pictures from the *Deseret News* to these same Egyptologists and asked if the photographs of the original papyri would cause them to change their opinions.

In a letter, dated January 5, 1968, John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, stated: “. . . as far as I am concerned I see pieces of two or possibly three different papyri and every one of them looks like a traditional Book of the Dead.”

Marvin Cowan asked Dr. Parker these questions concerning the papyrus Joseph Smith reproduced as Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham:

1. On page seven of the enclosed article is a picture of the papyrus from which Joseph Smith drew facsimile #1. (a) Would you still say this is the god anubis preparing a mummified body? (b) Do you see anything in the picture that would change what you previously told me?

In a letter dated January 9, 1968, Dr. Parker replied:

1. (a) Yes.
- (b) No.

John A. Wilson also continued to maintain that the picture showed “Anubis and the corpse.” (Letter dated Jan. 5, 1968)

Marvin Cowan asked Richard A. Parker this question:

“3. The papyrus pictured at the top of page seven has what appears to be three columns of writing on the right hand side. Smith did not put these on his facsimile. Can you tell me what they are?” Professor Parker replied: “3. The fragments of hieroglyphic texts are clearly funerary. Study of them could no doubt identify their source in the Book of the Dead.”

Thus we see that the Egyptologists have not changed their opinions concerning this matter.

## A Suspicious Discovery

Until 1967 Mormon writers claimed that all of the original papyri Joseph Smith used in his production of the Book of Abraham had been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. William E. Berrett stated:

They were considered as the property of the Smith family and, after the Prophet’s martyrdom, were retained by his wife, Emma. They were later sold by her to a museum at St. Louis, from whence they found their way into a Museum of Chicago. In the great Chicago fire the museum was totally destroyed and with it the precious ancient manuscripts. (*The Restored Church*, p. 144)

While some of the mummies and papyri may have been placed in museums, it now appears that after Smith’s death his widow sold at least part of the papyri to Mr. A. Combs. Eleven pieces from the collection eventually ended up in the Metropolitan Museum. Dr. Fischer, of the Metropolitan Museum, explains how this happened:

FISCHER: Our first knowledge of them goes back to 1918 when our first curator, Dr. A. M. Lythgoe, was shown these fragments by a Mrs. Alice Heusser, a woman who lived in Brooklyn. . . . Her mother had been housekeeper to a person named Combs, and Combs had bought them from the family of Joseph Smith. It is that sale which is mentioned in the letter I referred to. On the death of Mr. A. Combs, they were left to Mrs. Heusser’s mother. . . . they were offered to us by the widower of Mrs. Heusser, Mr. Edward Heusser. We acquired them then in 1947. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, p. 56)

According to the *Improvement Era*, the church became aware that Joseph Smith’s papyri were still in existence in 1966. Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, a non-Mormon, was supposed to have discovered the papyri at the Metropolitan Museum in the spring of 1966. Dr. Atiya states:

“I was writing a book at the time, . . . It must have been in the early spring of 1966. I really forget the date. . . . I was looking for supplementary material.

“While I was in one of the dim rooms where everything was brought to me, something caught my eye, and I asked one of the assistants to take me behind the bars into the storehouse of document so that I could look some more. While there I found a file with these documents. I at once recognized the picture part of it. When I saw this picture I knew that it had appeared in the *Pearl of Great Price*.” (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, p. 13)

Dr. Fischer, however, made it sound like Dr. Atiya’s “discovery” was planned. In an interview with *Dialogue*, he commented:

FISCHER: Frankly, we didn’t know what the Mormon Church’s wishes were. It wasn’t until we discussed the matter with Professor Atiya, who teaches in Salt Lake City at the University of Utah, that we had a possibility of finding out how they felt about it. . . .

DIALOGUE: At what time did Dr. Atiya become aware of the existence of the scrolls?

FISCHER: I would say about a year ago. We know him well; . . . He had come to our department and was looking for illustrations for one of his books. This matter came up in the course of giving him this help. We knew, since he worked in Salt Lake City and was acquainted with leaders of the Mormon Church, that he might very tactfully find out how they felt about it. So we simply informed him about this in confidence, and I think he handled the matter very nicely. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, pp. 56-58)



In a letter dated April 5, 1968, Henry G. Fischer stated:

The moment I found, in Professor Atiya, a means of determining the Church's interest in our papyri, we explored the possibilities of transferring them. I cannot speak for my predecessors, but the reason I "suppressed" information concerning the papyri prior to their transference was simply to avoid involving my institution in doctrinal controversy.

The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd makes these interesting comments in his book, *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, page 333:

The announcement on that long-to-be-remembered Monday, November 27, 1967, literally stunned and surprised countless hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints: . . .

And indeed, there is much more to the story than has been reported. More than even I will report. There are some aspects of the story—due to reasons of propriety and personalities—that should remain out of public discourse for some years yet, simply because it is the wisest course to do so.

Obviously, there exist two different stories—Dr. Atiya's and Dr. Fischer's—about who motivated whom to inform the Church. (*Ibid.*, p. 346)

Although Dr. Atiya is not a Mormon, he is very friendly to the Mormon people. Dr. James R. Clark, of the BYU, stated: "I have learned from conversations that Dr. Atiya knows the *Pearl of Great Price* thoroughly. In fact my informant indicated that he has the entire volume memorized" (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, March 1, 1968). Dr. Atiya, speaking of the rediscovery of the papyri, referred to himself as "the humble impliment directed by the Lord to open this discovery" (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, Salt Lake Institute of Religion, p. 36).

At any rate, Dr. Atiya stated that he contacted the church leaders. Glen Wade gives this information:

Dr. Atiya obtained photographs of the material in the file and returned to his home in Salt Lake City. He immediately got in touch with his good Mormon friend, Taza Peirce, and told her in confidence what he had discovered. A few days later the two of them met with President N. Eldon Tanner and the photographs were displayed. Later, the photographs were sent to Brigham Young University for inspection by Professor Hugh Nibley, who confirmed that the papyri were from the Mormon collection. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 53)

Although the Mormon leaders tried to keep it secret, the fact that the papyri were still in existence began to leak out. In a letter dated August 9, 1966, an Egyptologist stated: ". . . there is good reason to think that some, at least, of the papyri are still in existence, despite the persistent stories about their having been destroyed in a fire around 1871."

A year later this same Egyptologist revealed the following in a letter:

As usual, reality was improved somewhat in the retelling of facts. Joseph Smith's collection of papyri (I would guess it at about 30 items, including the three from which the woodcuts in the *Pearl of Great Price* were made) was disposed of after his death. The official version, that the whole lot was destroyed in a fire in a private museum in the 1870's is certainly false (I suspect consciously so). I do not know what happened to about two thirds of the collection, though I would not be surprised if they are in the LDS archives in Salt Lake (or at BYU?), but obviously no one will ever know. About 10 or 11 pieces passed through several hands and eventually ended up in a museum, which, however, has never put them on exhibit, though a few professionals have been told about them in confidence and have been shown photographs, but not sufficiently long to study and translate them. In the summer of 1966, Prof. Nibley showed me enlargements of the photographs; they had been obtained by a third party and passed on to Prof. Nibley, who was evidently interested in purchasing the

papyri, which included the embalming scene reproduced (with many imaginative restorations since the original is badly damaged) in the *PGP*. The published woodcuts are execrable, but the handwriting on the originals is bad enough, though there is no question that they are late (probably Roman Period) MSS of the Book of the Dead and similar funerary literature, and Prof. Nibley, who had already had the time to study the photographs, had identified several chapters of the BD (unfortunately I can't remember the numbers off hand). (Letter dated August 29, 1967)

Dr. Nibley claims that it is the non-Mormons who have suppressed the truth about the papyri:

At no time have the manuscripts not been just as available to Egyptologists as they are now to members of the Church. Since the Church obtained them, they have been made available to everyone. It is not the Mormons who have kept the documents out of the hands of the scholars but the other way around. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, p. 65)

As far as we can determine, the Egyptologists who knew about the papyri seemed to feel that they were doing the Mormons a favor by keeping the facts about the papyri secret. When one Egyptologist was pressed for information on this subject, he wrote:

If it keeps the Mormons happy to hide a few papyri that are probably of interest to no one but themselves, why not? . . . I regret that my position in this matter must be essentially frustrating and seem stubbornly pigheaded to those to whom combatting the Mormons is a matter of great importance. (Letter dated September 2, 1967)

A man who talked with this Egyptologist claimed that he "does not like to talk about the Mormons and claims that for the last year will not even talk about the subject since everyone wants to quote him. This he absolutely refuses to have happen, since Nibley is a close friend" (Letter dated October 10, 1967). This Egyptologist had apparently been aware of the existence of the papyri even prior to the time Dr. Atiya made his purported "discovery." In a letter written in January, 1968, he remarked:

You must understand that the photographs are not new to me. I saw them originally a number of years ago in the Metropolitan Museum, then again in the summer 1965. . . . The newspaper article contains little that is new and a number of details about the discovery and donation that I am a little suspicious of.

According to Jay M. Todd, Dr. Nibley now claims that some Egyptologists were aware of the papyri as early as 1902:

Dr. Hugh Nibley has said in private discussion that as early as 1902 some Egyptologists in America have known about the location of some papyri owned by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Apparently in 1902 some persons from the Midwest came to the University of Chicago and either showed the papyri to or informed Dr. James Henry Breasted, professor of Egyptology and Oriental history, about the papyri. Since then, the identity and location of the papyri were rather common knowledge among the scholars at the Oriental Institute at Chicago, but a subject which no one would consider passing on to members of the Church. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pp. 347-348)

While Dr. Nibley was willing to admit that Egyptologists have known about the papyri for many years and to accuse them of suppressing these documents, he claimed that "no Latter-day Saint was even aware of their existence until about two years ago. . . . If it had not been for Professor Aziz S. Atiya, we should still know nothing about the papyri; he is in a very real sense their discoverer" (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, p. 65).

We now have evidence to show that some of the Mormons were aware of the existence of the papyri prior to Dr. Atiya's "discovery." One Mormon now admits that he knew of the papyri as early as 1962. In the book, *From the Dust of Decades*, we find the following information:



One student persisted in searching . . . Then one day in 1962 he found what he had been seeking. He did little with his discovery and is now at a loss as to why.

For five years he let this remarkable information virtually rest in his study. Then one day, nearly five years later, another man, not a member, nor a student of Church history, hit the front pages of even the Egyptian capital's greatest daily newspaper, through his discovery of the same documents in the same museum. (*From the Dust of Decades*, Salt Lake City, 1968, p. 104)

The Museum certainly kept an accurate file on the papyri and their origin, for in 1962 it was one of the authors of this book (Whipple) who wrote to the Museum in search of the papyri or information pertaining to parts of the Joseph Smith collection. He quickly received word that the Museum did have some papyri from the Smith collection.

This was the first major breakthrough since the Chicago fire. He asked the Museum for a photo of the material they had. They photographed the now famous original to facsimile No. 1 and sent it to his home in southern California. He opened the manila envelope to discover a copy of the same papyrus Dr. Atiya was to see four years later. The author compared the photo of the Museum original with that in the book of Abraham and declared it authentic. For some inexplicable reason, and perhaps because of a "stupor of thought," he did not feel to contact the proper authorities.

Actually he hoped to go to New York and confirm his find further before announcing it to the general public. It was never a secret. On a number of occasions he showed the slick photo to fireside and seminary groups throughout the southern California region, mentioning only that he had found it in an eastern museum. Excitement resulted at each showing, but no one pressed him for the exact location of the record. He later came to realize that the finding of the material by Dr. Atiya, who is a non-Mormon and a known scholar, gave more meaning and better publicity to the discovery than would have been generated on the basis of the author's discovery. (*Ibid.*, pp. 113-114)

Jay M. Todd admits that Walter Whipple knew of the papyri for about five years before Dr. Atiya's "discovery":

Apparently, as early as 1962 a Latter-day Saint who knew the import and value of the papyri learned of their location . . .

Brother Whipple is a master's degree graduate from Brigham Young University and received his degree on the Book of Abraham some years ago. Normally, few people in the world would know the import of such a find more than such a person. However, in hindsight, perhaps it is better that a scholar such as Dr. Atiya made the discovery. Certainly his name has opened many doors and lent much respect to the discovery. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pp. 350-351)

Although Dr. Nibley said that "no Latter-day Saint was even aware" of the existence of the papyri prior to Atiya's discovery in 1966, we now have evidence to show that Dr. Nibley himself was told that the papyri were still in existence about three years before Atiya's purported "discovery," and that Nibley already knew from another source that some of Joseph Smith's papyri had been located. A friend of Dr. Nibley's gave us this information in a letter dated August 13, 1968:

I saw photographs of them for the first time in 1963, I believe, . . . I wrote to Nibley that some of the Joseph Smith papyri still existed but that I was not at liberty to say where, and he wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri.

This letter proves that Dr. Nibley was aware of the fact that some of Joseph Smith's papyri were still in existence years before Dr. Atiya made his "discovery," although it does not prove that he knew the exact location of the papyri. We have already shown that Dr. Nibley had photographs of the papyri in his possession in 1966. In a letter dated June 27, 1967, however, Nibley claimed he did not know where the original papyri were located. He stated: "I actually don't know where the original PGP Mss are, though I could find out easily enough; so far my ignorance has served me well" (Letter from Hugh Nibley to Dee Jay Nelson, dated June 27, 1967).

Glen Wade says that on August 11, 1967, Dr. Nibley "indicated that he personally did not know their location or ownership but that he was quite certain of their preservation" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 54). It is certainly odd that Nibley would not know the location of the papyri at that time. Dr. Atiya was supposed to have discovered them in the spring of 1966, and they were turned over to the church on November 27, 1967. Dr. Nibley apparently received photographs of the papyri right after the "discovery," for he had them in his possession in the "summer of 1966."

Now that we know more of the facts concerning the discovery of the papyri, we see that Dr. Nibley's statement that "no Latter-day Saint was even aware of their existence" prior to the time Atiya discovered them is untrue. Walter Whipple had found them in 1962, and Dr. Nibley himself was told that the papyri were in existence about three years before the purported discovery, though he may not have known the exact location at that time. The statement that "he [Nibley] wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri" may refer to the fragments found in the Metropolitan Museum, or it could be possible that more of Joseph Smith's collection has been located in another place. The more we learn about this whole transaction the more suspicious we become of Dr. Atiya's purported discovery.

Be this as it may, by October 1967 a number of people were searching for the papyri. Finally, one of Dr. Nibley's friends revealed some numbers that had to do with an indexing system to a friend of ours. This information was sent to us in a letter dated October 10, 1967. According to this same letter, Dr. Nibley's friend claimed that "Nibley got these photos about two years ago through the intermediary of a Prof. Aryah (?), Arabic Studies, at the U. Of Utah." It did not take long to figure out that "Prof. Aryah" was probably Dr. Atiya. A friend of ours called Dr. Atiya, read him the numbers and asked him if he knew where the papyri were located. Dr. Atiya pretended that he did not. He stated that a university in the eastern part of the United States might be able to help us. This statement was evidently an attempt to throw us off the track. This university, of course, answered that they knew nothing about the papyri.

We do not know whether Dr. Atiya told the Mormon leaders that we had access to the numbers, but by this time they must have been well aware that we were about to find out where the papyri were located. We turned the numbers over to Wesley P. Walters—one of the best authorities on Mormon history. It did not take him long to figure out that the indexing numbers were those of a large museum. By November 23, 1967, Wesley P. Walters had written to the Metropolitan Museum. On November 28, 1967, Henry G. Fischer answered his letter:

In reply to your letter of November 23, the first column of numbers (155434-44) refers to our photograph negatives, while the others (47.102.1-11) are accession numbers.

It is curious that you should inquire about these fragments just now, for they were turned over to the Mormon Church yesterday. As you probably know, they once belonged to Joseph Smith and the vignette of one of them appears in his *Pearl of Great Price*. (Letter from Henry G. Fischer, dated November 28, 1967)

The reader will notice that Fischer refers to Walters' "letter of November 23." Now, we may never know just which day Walters' letter was received, but it was only four days later that the Metropolitan Museum presented the papyri to the church. While we cannot prove that Walters' letter forced the transaction, it is logical to assume that neither the church nor the Metropolitan Museum would have wanted the opponents of Mormonism to have been the first to announce the discovery.

Many people have wondered how the church leaders were able to persuade the Metropolitan Museum of Art to give them the papyri. Although the whole transaction is shrouded in secrecy, a few clues have begun to leak out.

Dr. Atiya states that after he learned of the papyri he met with N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church. According to Atiya, President Tanner stated that the church “would do anything or pay any price for them” (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 14). In a speech delivered at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, Dr. Atiya stated: “. . . I tried to persuade the Egyptian people, the Egyptologists, in the Museum of Art to accept a nice little statue which I would buy for them—\$15,000, \$25,000, whatever the price.” In the same speech, Dr. Atiya admitted that “the whole discovery was kept in secret.” In another speech on April 3, 1970, Dr. Atiya remarked:

I said to the fellows in the Egyptological Department, “What do you want to do with these papyri? You’ve mountains of other papyri . . . How about me trying to persuade the Church . . . to give you a nice bust or statue of artistic value from the Dynastic age, in exchange for these worthless things.” . . . I said, “Would you give me permission and authority to play the game on the First Presidency and get you that statue in exchange for these worthless documents?” They said, “Oh yes, yes indeed . . . on the one condition, that you should not divulge the whereabouts of these documents until the whole deal is concluded.”

This . . . put me in the limelight in spite of my own volition. I didn’t want to be in the limelight, but there it is, you see. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, Salt Lake Institute of Religion, pp. 40-41)

Glen Wade made this statement concerning Dr. Atiya’s attempt to get the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum:

His approach included avoiding publicity at all costs. Only Mrs. Peirce had been told of the actual location of the papyri, and she kept the secret well. . . . He first suggested to museum officials that an exchange of gifts might be appropriate, . . . The museum officials soon agreed that the proper home for the collection was with the Church and that even an exchange of gifts would be unnecessary. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 53)

Henry G. Fischer, Curator of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, stated that someone made “an anonymous donation” to the Museum, and because of this donation they were able to give the papyri to the church:

DIALOGUE: Is this a standard practice to give such documents to interested private institutions such as the Church?

FISCHER: I am glad you asked that question, since, technically, we have not given the documents to the Church. As far as the Church is concerned, it is a gift, of course, but it was made possible by an anonymous donation which covered the cost to the Museum. We have not set a precedent for giving away an object; we cannot be in that position.

DIALOGUE: Would you say that the Church does not have complete ownership? Is there a way by which these documents could be called back?

FISCHER: No, absolutely not. They are a gift from the Museum, but the gift was made possible because of an anonymous donation from a friend of ours. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, p. 64)

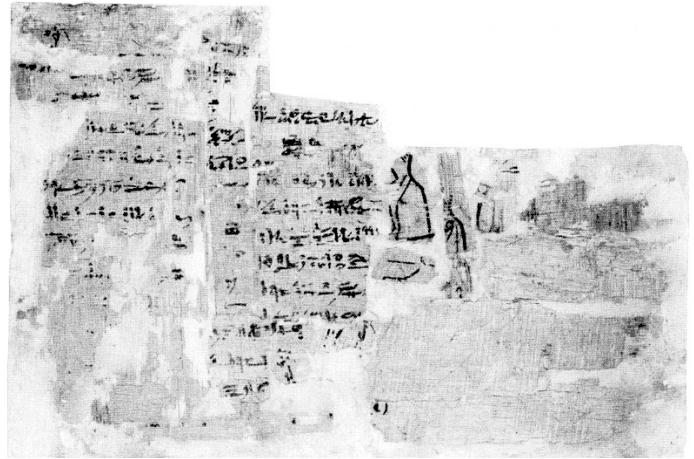
We feel that there is probably much more to this story; the whole matter needs to be clarified.

### Other Papyri Suppressed

Another thing that casts a shadow of doubt on Dr. Atiya’s purported discovery is the fact that the Mormon Church itself has an actual piece of papyrus from Joseph Smith’s collection which they suppressed for 130 years. In 1966 we printed *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, which included a photograph of this fragment. Grant Heward identified it as an actual fragment

of papyrus, and in our paper, *The Salt Lake City Messenger*, for April, 1966, we stated that the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* included a “photograph of an actual piece of papyrus which may be part of the ‘Book of Abraham’ or the ‘Book of Joseph!’” After suppressing the fragment for so many years the Mormon leaders have finally decided to make it available. Dr. Hugh Nibley made this comment concerning it: “This fragment has been preserved in the Church Historian’s Office through the years among Joseph Smith’s papers, including the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, article by Hugh Nibley).

Below is a photograph of this fragment as it appeared in the *Brigham Young University Studies*.



A good photograph of this fragment was also published in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40-H. The Church Section of the *Deseret News* carried this statement on February 10, 1968:

An interesting development in the work going on at BYU by Dr. Hugh Nibley on the papyri fragments turned over to the Church by the New York Museum of Art is the locating of another fragment in the vaults at the Church Historian’s office.

The latest “find” has been in the vaults as long as A. William Lund and Earl E. Olson, assistant Church historians, can remember. Mr. Lund has been in his post since 1911 and worked in the office since 1908. Mr. Olson has been in the historian’s office since 1934.

The fragment is part of a collection the Church has regarding the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar prepared by the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, February 10, 1968, p. 5)

It is strange that the Mormon leaders had to wait for almost two years after we published a photograph of this fragment to announce their important “find.” The reader may wonder why the church leaders did not announce this “find” at the time of the Spalding controversy. The answer now becomes rather obvious, it is in reality a fragment from the Egyptian “Book of the Dead” and has nothing to do with Abraham or Joseph. According to Jay M. Todd, Dr. Nibley admits that it is from the Book of the Dead: “. . . Hugh Nibley asserts that the Church Historian’s fragment is from the Book of the Dead” (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, p. 40-B).

That the Mormon leaders were deliberately suppressing this fragment is very obvious. An Egyptologist told us that a number of years ago he wrote to the Historian’s Office and asked them if they had any of Joseph Smith’s papyri. They replied that they did not.

It is interesting to note that the Mormon writer Jay M. Todd now admits that Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, knew about this fragment for thirty years but was told to suppress this information:

Outside of a few associates, Dr. Clark had kept the fragment a matter of confidence, under instructions from the



Historian's Office, for over 30 years. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 364)

We feel that this may throw a great deal of light upon the reason Walter Whipple did not publicly announce his discovery of the papyri at the Metropolitan Museum in 1962. He had studied under James R. Clark at Brigham Young University, and Dr. Clark had even signed his thesis. Now, if Dr. Clark ever discussed the fragment in the Historian's Office with Walter Whipple, he would have probably told him to keep the matter quiet—that the church did not want critics to learn that any of Joseph Smith's papyri were still in existence. With this type of training at BYU, it is easy to understand that when Walter Whipple later discovered the papyri at the Metropolitan Museum, he had a "stupor of thought" and did not announce the discovery to the world. He probably reasoned that if the church would go to such lengths to hide the small fragment of papyrus which they possessed, they certainly would not want photographs of the 11 fragments to fall into the hands of the critics.

Walter Whipple claims his discovery "was never a secret. On a number of occasions he showed the slick photo [of the original of Fac. No. 1] to fireside and seminary groups throughout the southern California region. . . ."

Mr. Whipple says nothing about contacting his former instructors at BYU or the Church Historian's Office, but even if he had, he probably would have been advised to keep the discovery a "matter of confidence."

However this may be, the Church Historian's Office may still be suppressing important information with regard to the Book of Abraham controversy. It is possible that they have more papyri, drawings of the papyri or other related material. The following is found in the book, *From the Dust of Decades*, page 86:

At least most of the papyri was held by the prophet's widow. A recent article in the *Era* tells of one papyrus fragment held in the Church Historian's office for longer than anyone can remember. A few years ago one visitor to the Church Historian's office was shown two or three other fragments of hieroglyphic drawings. What relationship they have with the one spoken of in the *Era* is unknown. These fragments, with the other one, have a very obscure history.

In a footnote on page 177 of this same book, we learn that it was "Walter Whipple" himself who "viewed these." On page 116 of the same book we find this statement:

Confident that only a portion of the original Smith collection had been retrieved with the Atiya find, scholars have kindled much enthusiasm to search out the remainder of the papyri. Some feel there are possibly 19 pieces, others maintain there are 22 fragments yet to be found.

The reader will remember that we cited the following letter written by a friend of Dr. Nibley's:

I saw photographs of them [i.e., the fragments in the Metropolitan Museum] for the first time in 1963, I believe, . . . I wrote to Nibley that some of the Joseph Smith papyri still existed but that I was not at liberty to say where, and he wrote me about the same time that someone in Utah had located a pile of unpublished Joseph Smith papyri.

Some people feel that the "pile of unpublished papyri" may refer to another discovery which has not been made public. Dr. Nibley himself has hinted on a number of occasions that more papyri have been rediscovered. So far, however, we have not been able to track anything down. It could be, as one Egyptologist has intimated, that the rest of the papyri are already "in the LDS archives in Salt Lake."

### No Gift to Translate

After receiving the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum, the Mormon leaders turned them over "to Dr. Hugh Nibley, scholar, linguist at Brigham Young University, . . . for further research and study" (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, p. 13). This turned out to be a very serious mistake.

To begin with, the fact that the papyri were turned over to Dr. Nibley is almost an admission that the church leaders are not led by revelation as they have claimed. The reader will remember that the church is led by a man who is sustained by the people as "Prophet,

Seer, and Revelator." The Book of Mormon states that a "seer" can translate ancient records: ". . . he has wherewith that he can look, and translate all records that are of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, . . . And whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called seer" (Mosiah 8:13). According to Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Church in 1970, the "seer stone which was in the possession of the Prophet Joseph Smith in early days . . . is now in the possession of the Church" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 225). The Apostle John A. Widtsoe said that if "records appear needing translation, the President of the Church may at any time be called, through revelation, to the special labor of translation" (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, vol. 1, p. 203). Since the church claims to have the "seer stone" and is supposed to be led by a "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator," we might expect a translation by this means. Instead, however, the papyri were sent to Dr. Nibley to be translated by "the wisdom of the world." Thus, it appears that the church does not have the gift to translate languages as it has claimed. It is interesting to note that the Mormon leaders have criticized other churches because they did not have this gift.

In 1878 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

The Prophet translated . . . the Book of Abraham. Thus you see one of the first gifts bestowed by the Lord..the gift to translate, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, the gift of bringing to light old and ancient records. Have any of the other denominations got this gift among them? Go and inquire through all of Christendom... "Can you translate ancient records written in a language that is lost to the knowledge of man?" "No," . . . the universal reply of the Christian denominations, numbering some 400,000,000, would be that they have not the power to do it. . . . you must give us credit of at least professing to have these great and important gifts, . . . any consistent religious man..would say in his own mind, it is more consistent for us to have Revelators, Prophets, Seers and Translators . . . than to depend upon Revelators and Seers of former ages. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 20, pp. 65-67)

Since the Mormon leaders did not seem to have the gift to translate the papyri themselves, they should have turned the job over to qualified Egyptologists. Both Dr. Sperry and Dr. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, had recommended that the church get a noted Egyptologist to work with the papyri (see our *Case*, vol. 2, p. 139). The General Authorities did not follow this recommendation by their own scholars. Instead they turned the whole matter over to Dr. Nibley of Brigham Young University. Now there is little doubt that Dr. Nibley is a brilliant man, and that he knows several different languages. The Editor of the *Improvement Era* claimed that he "actively uses the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Babylonian, Russian, French, German, Arabic and Coptic languages" (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 19). While it may be true that Dr. Nibley knows several different languages, this did not qualify him to deal with the Egyptian language. Samuel A. B. Mercer, who knew several different languages himself, stated that "Egyptian is difficult" (*An Egyptian Grammar*, New York, 1961, Preface). It takes many years of experience for a person to become skilled in working with the Egyptian language. Dr. Nibley has taken some classes in the Egyptian language. In fact, after he received photographs of the papyri, he went back to the University of Chicago to study under Dr. Wilson. He was evidently trying to get a lead over his opponents before the existence of the papyri became generally known. Unfortunately for the Mormon position, however, even this special training was not sufficient to qualify him for the job of translating the papyri.

### Nibley Not An Egyptologist

In the *Improvement Era* for February, 1968, p. 40, the Editor stated that Dr. Hugh Nibley "has been assigned by the Church to direct the investigation and research being done on the material." In the January issue we were assured that Dr. Nibley "is eminently qualified for the project he has undertaken." In the February issue of the same publication we were told that Dr. Nibley was going to



unfold “the meaning of the hieroglyphics and illustrations on these valuable manuscripts” (p. 40-H). In a letter to the Editor of the *Deseret News*, December 27, 1976, Julian R. Durham boasted: “Today the papyri are in the hands of one of the best qualified Egyptologists in the world, Hugh Nibley, a foremost church scholar who has demonstrated on an intellectual basis the capabilities of Joseph Smith in language studies.”

Before Egyptologists published translations of the Mormon Papyri, Dr. Nibley gave only one public demonstration of his ability to unfold the meaning of the Egyptian writing on the papyri. It appears in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 246:

This fragment, . . . belongs to the same roll as the other hieratic papyri, as is apparent from recurring elements of the owner’s name, that appears a number of times in full in the other fragments . . . which may be “translated” as something like “The Osiris Daughter of Min, true of word (or justified, deceased, triumphant, etc., i.e., tested and found true and faithful), declared blessed (as a dead person, the word being written merely by a stroke, since the proper hieroglyph was considered magically dangerous), belonging to Khons (or in the company of Khons, the moon-god), justified.” Or, simply as a name, something like Taimin Mutninesikhonsu.

Dr. Nibley’s translation is used in an article in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40: “The writings on the recently recovered fragment show that all of these Book of the Dead papyri belonged to the lady Taimin Mutninesikhonsu.”

After Egyptologists published their translations of the papyri, it became apparent that Dr. Nibley had made a serious error with regard to the name. He had actually combined two names—i.e., a mother and her daughter—into one name. In addition, he had included characters separating the two names which should have been translated as “born to” or “daughter of” as part of the name. According to Richard A. Parker, Chairman of the Department of Egyptology at Brown University, the characters which Nibley “translated” should actually be read: “Ta-sherit-Min, daughter of Neskhons” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 87). Dr. Nibley, however, has combined the whole thing into one giant name—“Taimin Mutninesikhonsu.” The Egyptologist John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, agreed with Richard Parker on the translation of these characters. He also renders them as two separate names: “Document B is a Book of the Dead composed for a lady named Ta-shere-Min (the Daughter of the god Min’), born to the lady Nes-Khonsu (‘She Belongs to the god Khonsu’)” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 71).

Although Dr. Nibley has never publicly admitted this mistake, an article by Carma de Jong Anderson makes it clear that by June 1968, Nibley had come to accept the fact that the characters should be translated as two names: “According to Dr. Nibley, the princess’ actual given name was Ta-Sherit-Min; she was a daughter of Nesikhonsu” (*The Instructor*, an LDS Church magazine, June 1968, p. 248, footnote).

Although Dr. Nibley had taken some classes in the Egyptian language, he was not qualified to translate the papyri. He admitted this in a letter to Dee Jay Nelson that was dated just a few months before the discovery of the papyri was announced (see photograph on page 308 of this book):

I don’t consider myself an Egyptologist at all, and don’t intend to get involved in the P.G.P. business unless I am forced into it—which will probably be sooner than that. . . . As you know, this is a happy hunting ground for crackpots, and not being certified in anything in particular I only rush in where fools fear to tread. . . . As you know, there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P.G.P.; . . . the nice thing about discussion is that one never knows where it is going to lead—that is why the experts are avoiding it as much as I am; . . . (Letter written by Dr. Hugh Nibley, dated June 27, 1967)

When Dr. Nibley speaks of the “P.G.P.” he is referring to the *Pearl of Great Price* which, of course, contains the Book of Abraham. Even though Nibley claimed that he was not an Egyptologist and that he did not intend to get involved in the

argument concerning the authenticity of the Book of Abraham, he allowed himself to become more deeply involved defending the Book of Abraham than anyone else in the church. He has written articles for the *Improvement Era*, *Brigham Young University Studies*, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* and *Sunstone*.

Dr. Nibley began a series of articles for the *Improvement Era* in January, 1968. This series ran for over two years, and was finally brought to a conclusion with the issue published May, 1970. Although Nibley was supposed to unfold “the meaning of the hieroglyphics” in this series of articles, no translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri ever appeared. It is very obvious that Nibley’s main objective in this series was to blind the eyes of his fellow church members so that they could not see the real issues involved in this matter. Although he used almost 2,000 footnotes, he never did deal with the main problem.

Dr. Nibley gave this excuse for not translating the papyri in an article published in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 251:

We have often been asked during the past months why we did not proceed with all haste to produce a translation of the papyri the moment they came into our possession. Well, for one thing others are far better equipped to do the job than we are, and some of those early expressed a willingness to undertake it. But, more important, it is doubtful whether any translation could do as much good as harm.

In the *Salt Lake Tribune* for November 11, 1973, we criticized Dr. Nibley for not producing a translation of the papyri. He replied that he had prepared a book which “is 800 pages long, but that is not enough to account for keeping the impatient Tanners waiting for six years. What took up all that time was having to find out about a lot of things” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 25, 1973). This book, which many people believed would answer the objections of the critics and save the Book of Abraham, was finally published by the church’s Deseret Book Company in 1975 under the title, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment*. Although the First Presidency of the Church assigned Dr. Nibley to work on the papyri, they were reluctant to give his work any real official endorsement. When John L. Smith asked about Nibley’s new book, Francis M. Gibbs, secretary to the First Presidency, sent him a reply in which he stated: “. . . the writings of Dr. Hugh Nibley concerning the papyri scrolls have been done entirely on his own responsibility and do not have the official approval and sanction of the Church” (Letter dated August 22, 1975).

Although Hugh Nibley’s book is nicely printed and bound, the contents are very disappointing. Of the eleven fragments of papyrus which were discovered, ten of them contain significant Egyptian messages which can be translated. We would expect that any book about the papyri would at least have a translation of all these pieces. Dr. Nibley’s book, however, only contains a translation of two fragments! Nibley’s work on these two fragments does not provide us with any real test of his ability as a translator, since they were already translated by noted Egyptologists seven years prior to the time he published his book. It is interesting to note that Dr. Nibley had previously condemned the Egyptologist Samuel A. B. Mercer for passing up the opportunity of translating a text before other scholars worked on it:

. . . here was his first great chance to shine as a linguist and a scholar. . . . But never a word of translation or commentary from Mercer. . . . as to the linguistic aspects of the thing—complete silence. . . . Indeed, we have been unable to find a translation by Mercer of any Egyptian writing that had not already been translated and published by someone else. (*Improvement Era*, June 1968, p. 18)

Dr. Nibley has given almost a perfect description of his own situation. He has had all the advantages—i.e., classes in Egyptian at the University of Chicago; photographs of the papyri long before the others; and even the original papyri to work with. Yet, up until 1975, he did not contribute anything except a name which proved to be wrong. Finally, after the papyri had “already been translated and published by someone else,” he brought forth his own “translation” of just two of the ten translatable fragments. Among

the fragments which Dr. Nibley has not translated is the original of “Facsimile No. 1” in the Book of Abraham. This fragment contains a number of lines of hieroglyphs which relate to the meaning of the drawing. The reason Dr. Nibley has not translated these lines seems obvious: they show that “Facsimile No. 1” is not a picture of “Abraham fastened upon an altar” as Joseph Smith proclaimed, but rather a picture of an Egyptian by the name of Hor being prepared for burial. We will have more to say about this later.

Those of us who have purchased Dr. Nibley’s writings in the *Improvement Era*, the *BYU Studies* and now his new book, which sells for \$14.95, have spent at least \$30.00. What do we have to show for this investment? We have hundreds of pages of material with thousands of footnotes, but we have a translation of only two of the fragments of papyrus and no answer to the main problems about the Book of Abraham. To say the least, Dr. Nibley’s book contains some very serious errors (see the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, April 1976). Michael Marquardt has prepared a good rebuttal entitled, *The Book of Abraham Papyrus Found: An Answer to Dr. Hugh Nibley’s Book ‘The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment.’*

As we have already shown, Dr. Nibley’s book was published in 1975. In 1979, however, he spoke at the Sunstone Theological Symposium and his statements seem to discredit his own book:

I refuse to be held responsible for anything I wrote more than three years ago. For heaven’s sake, I hope we are moving forward here. After all, the implication that one mistake and it is all over with—how flattering to think in forty years I have not made one slip and I am still in business! I would say that about four fifths of everything I put down has changed, of course. (*Sunstone*, December 1979, p. 49)

Dr. Nibley’s attempt to back off from things he had written before 1976 was the result of criticism he received in a paper written by Edward H. Ashment, a Mormon Egyptologist who

works for the Translation Department of the church. A person who carefully examines this article—especially the footnotes—will find that it is actually a devastating attack on the work of Hugh Nibley. For example, in *BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 95, Nibley claimed that “no clear instances” of restoration have been demonstrated in Facsimile No. 1. To this Ashment responds:

In relation to the lion-couch scene of Facsimile 1 (Plate 1) it has been claimed that “no clear instances” of restoration “have been demonstrated.” However, close examination of the evidence leads to the conclusion that such instances indeed are demonstrable. (*Sunstone*, December 1979, p. 33)

It seems that Ashment has demolished Nibley’s arguments at every turn. In his reply to Ashment Nibley conceded:

Since hearing Brother Ashment I have to make some changes in what I have said already. Do I have to hang my head and go hide or something like that because I have been discredited? These things are being found out all the time. There are lots of things that Brother Ashment pointed out that I should have noticed; but I notice I could point out a lot of things that he has not noticed.... the main thing is to move on into unexplored territory, and go into it with the careful, meticulous examination that he has. (*Ibid.*, p. 51)

Dr. Nibley would have us believe that the science of Egyptology is in a constant state of upheaval. Now, while it is true that there will always be refinements, the basic principles remain the same. We feel that the constant state of confusion that Nibley finds himself in is caused by his attempt to defend a work of Joseph Smith’s own imagination. While our case against the Book of Abraham stands on the same unshakable foundation it did 13 years ago, Dr. Nibley has to constantly change his ideas. First, he was going to answer the critics in the *Improvement Era*. When this did not work, he prepared a book which “is 800 pages long”—actually 305 large

**See graphic on next page**

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
 PROVO, UTAH  
 84601



ERNEST L. WILKINSON, PRESIDENT

COLLEGE OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

June 27, 1967

Dear Bro. Nelson,

Brother, you HAVE been around! But I am willing to bet you that you have reach<sup>d</sup> premature conclusions about the hypocephalus. The Church has actually been able to procure some jars and other artifacts from Qumran, and there MAY be some Ms fragments in the collection: there are complications there that I can't go into. I don't consider myself an Egyptologist at all, and don't intend to get involved in the P.G.P. business unless I am forced into it--which will probably be sooner than that. I actually don't know where the original PG P<sup>r</sup>Ms are, though I could find out easily enough; so far my ignorance has served me well. I see no reason in the world why you should not be taken into the confidence of the Brethren if this thing ever comes out into the open; in fact, you should be enormously useful to the Church. I have an enormous collection of notes which has been building up through the years, and I think there is stuff in it that would surprise and even convince you. As you know, this is a happy hunting-ground for crackpots, and not being certified in anything in particular I only rush in where fools fear to tread. I would like very much to see you (I was in Billings last Thursday!) and hope that we may collide before too long: this is the sort of thing that has to be discussed ~~makshufan wa maktuman~~ <sup>in one place together</sup>. As you know, there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P.G.P.; if they have their way we may have to get together. Well, the nice thing about discussion is that one never knows where it is going to lead--that is why the experts are avoiding it as much as I am; what is even more wholesome, all discussion quickly discloses interesting gaps and defects in the knowledge of even the total authority. What have we to lose?

Yours,  
 Hugh Nibley

A photograph of a letter from Dr. Hugh Nibley to Dee Jay Nelson



printed pages. Four years later, however, he says that “I refuse to be held responsible for anything I wrote more than three years ago.” After all this one would think that Dr. Nibley would give up, but instead he threatens the critics with the possibility of still another book: “Of these things and much, much more we speak in what we hope is a forthcoming book” (*Ibid.*, p. 51).

At any rate, the Mormon leaders evidently did not want non-Mormon Egyptologists to translate the papyri. They could have sent the original papyri to the University of Chicago so that Dr. Wilson could have worked with them, but instead they brought them to the Brigham Young University. In a letter written December 4, 1967, Henry G. Fisher, of the Metropolitan Museum, stated: “We have not been commissioned to translate the papyri, nor do I know of anyone else who has been asked to do so.”

One of the editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* told us that he feared an open confrontation with the Mormon leaders because of the plan to publish the translations. The General Authorities of the church, however, must have realized that it would not be wise to oppose the publication and therefore let the matter pass in silence.

### Dr. Nelson?

Since the Mormon leaders did not want to entrust the papyri to non-Mormon scholars for translation, they dropped them in the lap of Hugh Nibley. Nibley realized that he was not really qualified to make a translation and that he was faced with a serious problem. He sought help, therefore, from a Mormon elder by the name of Dee Jay Nelson. In a letter dated June 27, 1967, he told Nelson that he could “see no reason in the world why you should not be taken into the confidence of the Brethren if this thing ever comes out into the open; in fact, you should be enormously useful to the Church . . . there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P.G.P.; if they have their way we may have to get together.”

On January 4, 1968, Dee Jay Nelson visited with Dr. Nibley at Brigham Young University and examined the original papyri. Dr. Nibley agreed that Nelson should translate the papyri, and he sent a note to N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency, stating that “it would be a good idea to let Prof. Dee J. Nelson have copies” of the papyri. This was before the Mormon leaders allowed photographs of all the papyri to be published. Mr. Nelson translated the papyri, but he was unable to find any mention of Abraham or his religion in any portion of the papyri. He found the names of many pagan gods who were worshiped by the Egyptians but nothing concerning the God of Abraham. After completing his translation, Mr. Nelson contacted us and asked if we wanted to print it. Since the translation proved unfavorable to the church, it was obvious that the church would not print it. When we completed the publication we tried to advertise it in the *Deseret News* but church leaders would not allow the ad to be run.

At the time Nelson made his translation he did not claim to have a doctor’s degree in Egyptology, but stated that he learned the ancient language in Egypt while working under Zakaria Goneim, keeper of antiquities at the Necropolis of Saqqara. Since we knew that Dee Jay Nelson did not have a doctor’s degree, we never referred to him as “Dr. Nelson.” Because of Nelson’s ability, however, some people began to assume that he had such a degree. In 1970 the Mormon scholar Richley H. Crapo, a student of the Book of Abraham controversy, referred to “Dr. D. J. Nelson, a philologist and member of the L.D.S. Church . . .” (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 27). In the same symposium, the Mormon scholar John Tvedtnes corrected the error. He said that Mr. Nelson “has no doctorate,” although he maintained that his “competence in both Egyptian and Semitic languages is unquestioned . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 70). At least one anti-Mormon writer fell into the error of giving Nelson a doctorate, and in answer to him even N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, replied: “. . . you go to rather extensive means to prove this point by referring to translations made by Dr. Nelson . . .” (Letter dated July 22, 1977).

At first Dr. Nibley endorsed Dee Jay Nelson’s work. In a letter dated October 1, 1968, he referred to Nelson’s “admirable work.” In *Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 247, Nibley claimed that Nelson’s study was “a conscientious and courageous piece of work . . . a usable and reliable translation of the available papyri . . .” As time went on, however, it became evident that Nelson was moving further from the church. In 1975 he completely left the church. This put Nibley in a difficult position because he had already endorsed his translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri. Any attack on Nelson’s ability to translate Egyptian would have reflected on Nibley’s own knowledge of the subject since he had already said that Nelson’s work was “admirable,” “conscientious,” “courageous,” “usable and reliable.” Furthermore, Nibley would have found it hard to make an issue over Nelson’s lack of a degree in Egyptology. In defending Dr. Robert C. Webb, the phony Egyptologist who fought for the Mormons, Nibley had written that such things were of no real importance in determining truth:

Thus reassured, Bishop Spalding proceeded to demolish R. C. Webb: “We feel that we should be in a better position to judge the value of the opinions of Robert C. Webb, PhD . . . if we were told definitely who he is . . . If Dr. Talmage . . . would inform us what the author’s real name is, where he received his degree, and what academic position he holds, we should be better able to estimate the value of his opinions.” Here it is again: The bishop is not interested in Webb’s arguments and evidence, but in his status and rank—considerations that are supposed to bear no weight whatever with honest searchers after truth—Nullus in verba! What on earth have a man’s name, degree, academic position, and, of all things, opinions, to do with whether a thing is true or not? (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, p. 22)

As the contention between Nibley and Nelson became more heated, Nibley finally decided to make an issue over his opponents qualifications:

During the past year a large number of people have written me asking me to throw some light on the accusations of fraud and falsification brought against the Book of Abraham by various parties in Salt Lake, and in particular by one D. J. Nelson, a self-styled Egyptologist . . . I say “Self-styled Egyptologist” because I have never been able to discover where Mr. Nelson studied Egyptian, if and where he got his degree, where he has taught, excavated, and above all published. He rightly charges me with being an amateur (so was Edward Meyer), but if that is so fundamental to the question, where are his credentials? (Letter from Hugh Nibley to Pres. Rector, July 22, 1977)

This letter by Dr. Hugh Nibley, which was widely circulated among the Mormon people, had a devastating effect on Dee Jay Nelson. Nelson was already sensitive about the fact that he did not have a degree. Finally, on May 10, 1978, Nelson made a very serious error—he purchased a doctor’s degree from a diploma mill known as Pacific Northwestern University.

On February 13, 1980, we attended a lecture in Brigham City, Utah where we heard Mr. Nelson proclaim he had a Ph.D. in anthropology. We became a little suspicious, however, when he failed to give the name of the school. A few weeks later a woman called us from Arizona and said that Nelson had claimed the school he had attended was in Seattle. When she called information, however, she was unable to locate it. On March 11-12, 1980, we wrote to Nelson asking for documentation which would prove he had a doctor’s degree. Mr. Nelson did send us a photograph of what purports to be his diploma from Pacific Northwestern University. After examining this document and another paper he sent, we became very suspicious that Pacific Northwestern University was not a legitimate university. We contacted a noted educator from the University of Utah who in turn checked with Dr. James Bemis, Executive Director of the Higher Commission of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and found that Pacific Northwestern University was only a “diploma mill of the worst kind.” We confirmed this report by calling the U.S. Postal Department in Seattle and the King County Attorney’s Office.

In the letter of March 11-12, 1980, we made it clear to Mr. Nelson what we would do if his claim concerning a doctor’s degree could not be substantiated:

It is with great sorrow that I sit down to write this letter to you. I feel, however, as the publisher of four of your booklets I am obligated to find out the truth about certain matters. . . . While it is true that I have never published anything about you having a Dr.'s degree, any statements you have made about this matter subsequent to the translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri could have a tendency to reflect upon my integrity in the eyes of many people.

If I were to overlook misrepresentation on the part of non-Mormon writers I would be operating on a double standard. You will no doubt remember what we wrote about "Dr. Webb"—the great defender of the Mormon faith. . . .

If it turns out that you do not have a Dr.'s degree, honesty would demand that I make a public statement to that effect. Otherwise, I would find myself in the same position as the Mormon leaders who concealed the true identity of "Dr. Webb." It is my firm belief that "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." (Matthew 10:26) I feel that the Lord wants Christians to be honest even though it costs us a great deal.

I doubt that the Mormon Church leaders will ever have the courage to directly attack you concerning the issue of credentials because of their use and support of "Dr. Webb." Even Dr. Hugh Nibley defended "Dr. Webb" in the Church's own publication, *Improvement Era*, . . .

At any rate, even though the Mormon Church will probably remain officially silent concerning your credentials, I feel that my conscience will not allow me to keep silent if there is a problem. I realize, of course, that the question of your credentials does not affect the validity of your translation, and that the Church is in a real bind with regard to the matter since its chief defender, Dr. Hugh Nibley, has written that your work is reliable:

The publication of the Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri has now begun to bear fruit. Two efforts at translation and commentary have already appeared, the one an example of pitfalls to be avoided, the other a conscientious piece of work for which the Latter-day Saints owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Dee Jay Nelson. . . . This is a conscientious and courageous piece of work—. . . Nelson has been careful to consult top-ranking scholars where he has found himself in doubt. He has taken the first step in a serious study of the Facsimiles of the *Pearl of Great Price*, supplying students with a usable and reliable translation of the available papyri that once belonged to Joseph Smith. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, pp. 245, 247)

Although we have used your translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri in a number of publications, we do not feel that our case against the Book of Abraham rests upon it. We have the testimony of some of the world's greatest Egyptologists—i.e., Professor Richard Parker of Brown University and Professors Klaus Baer and John A. Wilson (now deceased) of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute. Even before you came on the scene our friend Grant Heward had identified the papyrus Joseph Smith used in the production of the Book of Abraham as the "Book of Breathings"—a pagan funerary document (see *Salt Lake City Messenger*, March 1968). I had studied the Egyptian language on my own before you came to Salt Lake and was able to test your work at various points. I knew therefore that it was generally a "reliable translation" as Dr. Nibley has admitted. . . .

Now, concerning your work at Rocky Mountain College: I have called the school and confirmed that you teach "Egyptology" in the "New Horizons" continuing education program. Lorri Keck, the director of this program, informs me that no credit is given for these classes. (I do not accuse you of hiding this fact, because you previously sent me a "Course Schedule" for Spring, 1976, which said the classes were "non-credit.") Mrs. Keck, however, is disturbed because you have been calling yourself a Professor of Egyptology at Rocky Mountain College. . . . Since the classes you teach are "non-credit," this appears to be somewhat misleading. . . .

I must confess that I feel disappointed and sad because of this whole matter—somewhat like the feeling I had when I realized the

Book of Mormon was not an authentic ancient document but rather a product of the 19th century. In any case, I feel it is my obligation to make this information available to the public. . . . I am convinced that our case against the Book of Abraham is absolutely devastating, and I would not want to weaken it in any way by trying to cover up or remain silent concerning such an important matter. (Letter from Jerald Tanner to Dee Jay Nelson, March 11-12, 1980)

On March 29, 1980, the Ogden *Standard-Examiner* printed an article by Charles F. Trentelman which contains the following:

An investigation of the credentials of Dee Jay Nelson . . . shows he does not hold a doctor's degree from a university . . .

The discovery has caused considerable consternation among his supporters in Salt Lake City. . . . Jerald and Sandra Tanner, publishers of numerous books and papers attacking the LDS Church, say they are concerned by claims made by Nelson in recent months.

Mrs. Tanner said they investigated the claims and found Nelson's diploma was from . . . a diploma mill, an operation that sells diplomas without requiring any schooling . . .

Efforts by the *Standard-Examiner* to contact Nelson have been unsuccessful. His wife says Nelson is in Egypt doing more study. She declined to comment on her husband's credentials except to say Nelson had written a letter to the Tanners, explaining the whole situation . . .

The *Standard-Examiner* . . . was referred to Dr. Klaus Baer, University of Chicago Oriental Institute, as the leading Egyptologist in the country and the man who, if anyone, would know of Nelson . . .

There are two aspects to the question of Nelson, Baer said. One is Nelson's credentials. The other is the translation of the Book of Abraham papyri and Nelson's ability to prepare it.

Baer said that, so far as he knew, Nelson had no formal education in Egyptian, although "he has certainly learned Egyptian somewhere."

"I describe him as having a good amateur knowledge of Egyptian," Baer said, adding that that does not mean Nelson has a poor knowledge. It is just not professional quality, he said.

"He can translate hieroglyphics, but not without error," Baer said. As to the papyri in question, Baer said Nelson's translation is "essentially" correct.

Baer said he prepared a translation of the same papyri, after being contacted by Nelson in 1968, and the translation says basically the same thing. . . .

In his letter to the Tanners, Nelson describes contacting Pacific Northwestern University in 1977 and inquiring about obtaining a doctorate.

The degree was granted after taking some courses and submitting a thesis, Nelson says in the letter. But the school, Nelson admitted, was not accredited.

Mrs. Tanner told the *Standard-Examiner* she and her husband tried to find out about Pacific Northwestern University and learned from federal authorities in Seattle that it had been ordered to shut down, although no charges were brought against it.

But, she said, the Tanners are cutting themselves loose from Nelson, stopping sales of his pamphlets and discontinuing all support of him or his lectures.

Although we quoted Nelson's work rather extensively in the 1972 edition of this book, we believe that it would be unwise to continue quoting him in this edition. This is not to say that his work is without merit. On the contrary, Dr. Baer has been quoted in the Ogden *Standard-Examiner* as saying his translation is "essentially" correct, and in 1968 he remarked:

So far as I know, Nelson, *The Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 42, was the first to point out that the bird above the head of Osiris clearly has a human head and therefore must be his ba [spirit]. In "Facsimile No. 1," it is drawn with a falcon's head, and I must confess with some embarrassment that I also "saw" the falcon's head before reading Nelson's study. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 118, n. 34)



We have also quoted Dr. Nibley as saying that Nelson produced a “reliable translation.” Although we generally agree with Dr. Nibley’s statement on the reliability of Nelson’s translation, we believe he has dishonored himself by falling into the footsteps of “Robert C. Webb,” the fake “Ph.D.” who defended the church. As we have already pointed out, our case is certainly not based on any one man but stands firmly on the science of Egyptology and on the work of some of the world’s greatest Egyptologists.

**Source of Book of Abraham**

As we have previously shown, when the papyri were located many members of the Mormon Church felt that Joseph Smith’s work had been vindicated. We quoted Dr. Hugh Nibley, however, as stating that the papyri “do not prove the Book of Abraham is true” and that LDS scholars are “caught flat footed” by the discovery. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Dr. Nibley said:

When I first saw photos of the papyri I made myself disagreeable by throwing a great deal of cold water around. For publicity they were great, and as far as I can see their main value is still in calling the attention of Latter-day Saints to the existence of scriptures which they have studiously ignored through the years. (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, p. 102)

While Dr. Nibley and a few others may have realized that the papyri could not be used to prove Joseph Smith’s work true, they evidently were not aware of the devastating blow that the papyri were about to deal to the “Book of Abraham.” Within six months from the time the Metropolitan Museum gave the papyri to the church, the Book of Abraham had been proven untrue!

The fall of the Book of Abraham has been brought about by the identification of the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham. Below is a photograph of the right side of this fragment of papyrus.

The identification of this fragment as the original from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham has been made possible by a comparison with *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet*

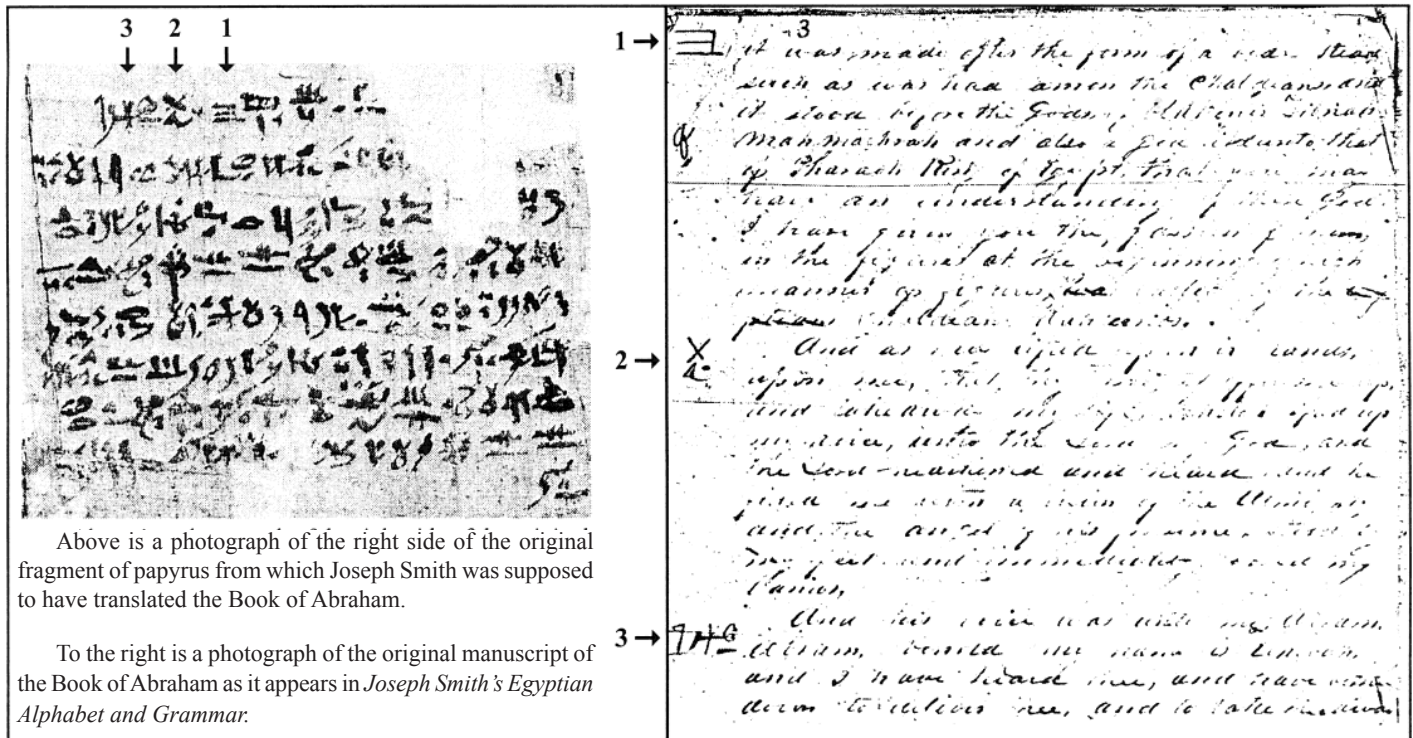
and *Grammar*—a document published by Modern Microfilm Company in 1966. Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, gives this information:

... there are in existence today in the Church Historian’s Office what seem to be two separate manuscripts of Joseph Smith’s translations from the papyrus rolls, ... One manuscript is the Alphabet and Grammar ... Within this Alphabet and Grammar there is a copy of the characters, together with their translation of Abraham 1:4-28 only. The second and separate of the two manuscripts contains none of the Alphabet and Grammar but is a manuscript of the text of the Book of Abraham as published in the first installment of the *Times and Seasons*, March 1, 1842. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, Salt Lake City, 1962, pp. 172-173)

The Mormon leaders were either not aware of the fact that the gift of papyri included the fragment which was the basis for the text of the Book of Abraham, or they hoped no one else would notice it. The following statement appeared in the Mormon paper, *Deseret News*: “As far as has yet been determined, the papyri do not contain any of the original material translated as the Book of Abraham itself” (*Deseret News*, November 28, 1967).

When the Mormon magazine, *Improvement Era*, printed photographs of the papyri, the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham was printed as the very last photograph. It is found on page 41 of the February, 1968, issue, and is labeled: “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ text (unillustrated).”

All of the first two rows of characters on the papyrus fragment can be found in the manuscript of the Book of Abraham that is published in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Below (to the left) is a photograph of the original fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated the Book of Abraham. To the right is a photograph of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham as it appears in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. We have numbered some of the characters on the first line of the fragment of papyrus so that the reader can compare them with the characters found in the handwritten manuscript.



Above is a photograph of the right side of the original fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated the Book of Abraham.

To the right is a photograph of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham as it appears in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*.





The reader will probably be startled at the large number of English words which Joseph Smith “translated” from each Egyptian character. We will have more to say about this later.

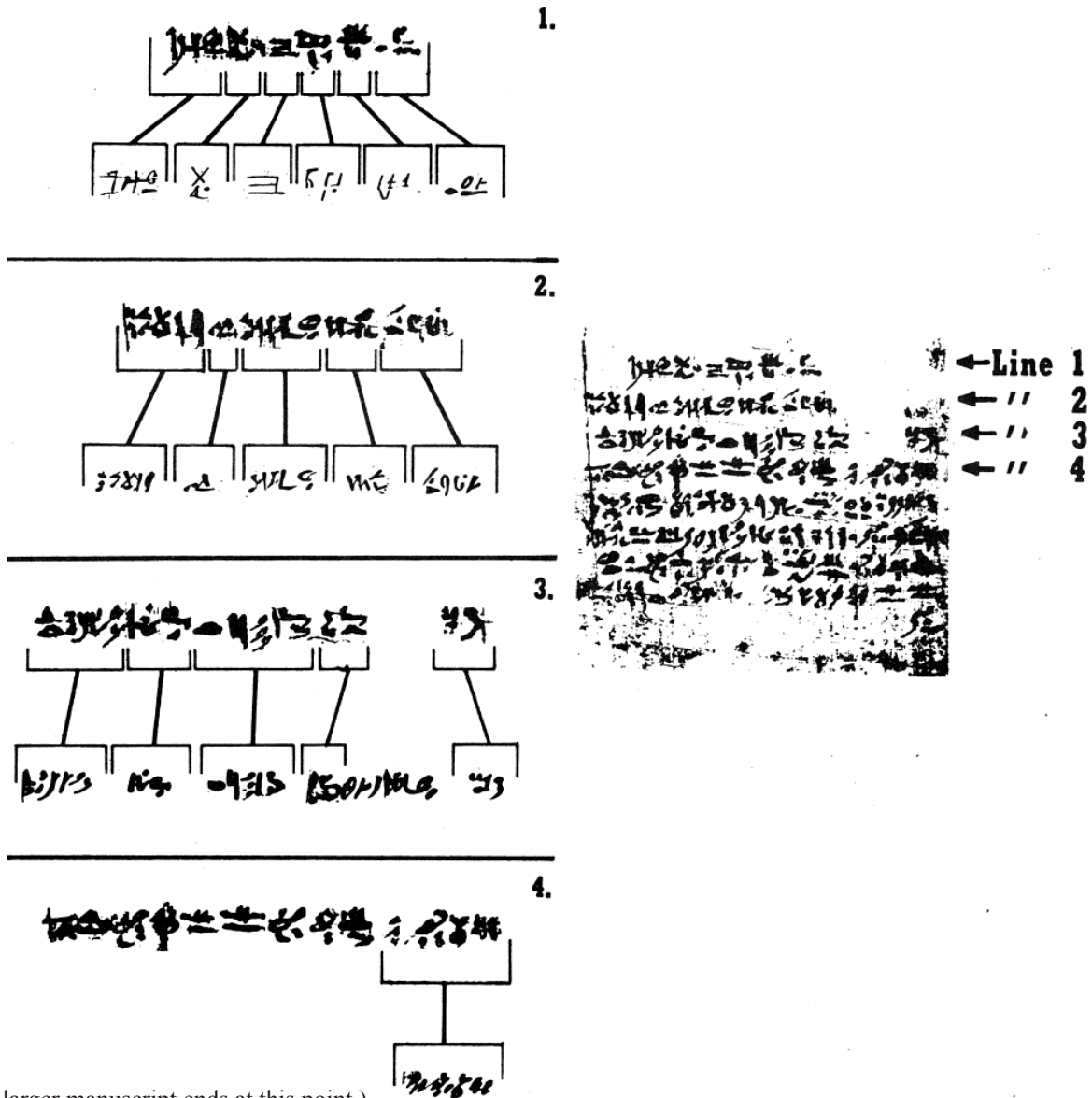
As James R. Clark indicated, there is another manuscript copy of the Book of Abraham in the church Historical Department. Dr. Clark has given this information about this manuscript:

I have in my possession a photostatic copy of the manuscript of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s translation of Abraham 1:1 to 2:18. This manuscript was bought by Wilford Wood in 1945 from Charles Bidamon, son of the man who married Emma after the death of the Prophet. The original of this manuscript is in the Church Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City. The characters from which our present book of Abraham was translated are down the left-hand column and Joseph Smith’s translation opposite, so we know approximately how much material was translated from each character. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., pp. 60-61)

The Brigham Young University had photographs of this manuscript which Grant Heward was able to examine and copy by hand. This manuscript goes further than the one in the “Alphabet and Grammar,” and Mr. Heward has found that the characters on

this manuscript continue in consecutive order into the fourth line of the papyrus. This brings the text to Abraham 2:18. This is very interesting because when Joseph Smith printed the first installment of the Book of Abraham in the *Times and Seasons*, he ended it at this point. We have been able to obtain photographs of this manuscript and can confirm Grant Heward’s statements concerning it. Although a photograph of the first page of this manuscript was published in the *Improvement Era*, September 1937, page 543, the remaining pages were suppressed, and we had a hard time obtaining photographs of them.

In the illustration below we have taken the characters from the handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham and compared them with the characters which appear on the actual papyrus. The first two lines of the papyrus are compared with characters from *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The third and fourth lines are compared with characters from the longer manuscript which we have printed in its entirety in our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 147-151 (see photograph of four pages on page 312 of this book). This illustration proves beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from this fragment of papyrus.



(The larger manuscript ends at this point.)

The reader will notice that Joseph Smith used less than four lines from the papyrus to make 49 verses in the Book of Abraham. These 49 verses are composed of more than 2,000 English words! In his book, *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, page 79, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry informs us that there are “5,470 words” contained in the text of the Book of Abraham. If Joseph Smith continued to translate the same number of English words from each Egyptian character, then the text for the entire Book of Abraham is probably contained on this one fragment of papyrus.

Klaus Baer, an Egyptologist at the University of Chicago, made this comment concerning the “Sensen” fragment:

Joseph Smith thought that this papyrus contained the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 111)

In footnote 11 of the same article Klaus Baer asserts:

This identification is now certain. It was immediately evident that “Facsimile From the Book of Abraham No. 1” of the PGP was copied from P. JS I. The interpretation proposed by Joseph Smith for the first two lines of text in P. JS XI corresponds to Abraham 1:4-2:6, see Heward and Tanner, *Dialogue*, 3 No. 2 (Summer 1968), 93-96, and the discussion on page 129. The fact that the name of the owner is identical in both papyri, and that the left edge of the P. JS I appears to fit the right edge of P. JS XI (see N. 15) — that is, that they are parts of the same scroll — confirms this.

The Mormon scholar Richley Crapo made this observation:

In December of 1967, I was able to examine the original papyri in the vaults of the BYU library and obtain one of the first released sets of photographic copies for extended study. A more careful examination of these revealed the startling fact that one of the papyri of the Church collection, known as the Small Sen-Sen Papyrus, contained the same series of hieratic symbols, which had been copied, in the same order, into the Book of Abraham manuscript next to verses of that book! In other words, there was every indication that the collection of papyri in the hands of the Church contained the source which led to a production of the Book of Abraham. It was naturally this document which I immediately began to translate. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 27)

In a letter dated March 10, 1971, the noted Mormon scholar Thomas Stuart Ferguson frankly admitted that the source for the text of the Book of Abraham had been identified among the papyrus fragments found at the Metropolitan Museum:

We have now published copies of Joseph Smith’s working notebook that he made up during his struggle with the Egyptian papyrus, the notebook having been published under the title, *Joseph Smith’s Alphabet & Grammar*. . . . By study of the *Grammar*, the recovered papyrus, and the illustrations, it is perfectly obvious that we now have the original [sic] manuscript material used by Jos. Smith in working up the Book of Abraham. . . . Since 4 scholars, who have established that they can read Egyptian, say that the manuscripts deal with neither Abraham nor Joseph—and since the 4 reputable men tell us exactly what the manuscripts do say—I must conclude that Joseph Smith had not the remotest skill in things Egyptian—hieroglyphics. To my surprise, one of the highest officials in the Mormon Church agreed with that conclusion when I made that very statement to him on Dec. 4, 1970—privately in one-to-one [c]onversation. . . . Of course the dodge as to the Book of Abraham must be: **“We don’t have the original manuscript from which the Book of Abraham was translated.”** I conclude that we do have it and have translations of it.

Although Dr. Hugh Nibley later reversed his position in an attempt to save the “Book of Abraham,” in 1968 he admitted that the papyrus which Joseph Smith used for the text of the Book

of Abraham had been located. He wrote the following for the *Improvement Era*, May 1968, p. 54:

. . . the presence on the scene of some of the original papyri, including those used by the Prophet in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham and the Facsimiles with their commentaries, has not raised a single new question, though, as we shall see, it has solved some old ones.

Dr. Nibley made this admission in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 102:

But after all, what do the papyri tell us? That Joseph Smith had them, and that the smallest and most insignificant-looking of them is connected in some mysterious way to the *Pearl of Great Price*.

At a meeting held at the University of Utah, Dr. Nibley remarked:

Within a week of the publication of the papyri students began calling my attention, in fact, within a day or two, I think it was Wittorf, called my attention to the fact that, the very definite fact that, one of the fragments seemed to supply all of the symbols for the Book of Abraham. This was the little “Sensen” scroll. Here are the symbols. The symbols are arranged here, and the interpretation goes along here and this interpretation turns out to be the Book of Abraham. Well, what about that? Here is the little “Sensen,” because that name occurs frequently in it, the papyrus, in which a handful of Egyptian symbols was apparently expanded in translation to the whole Book of Abraham. This raises a lot of questions. It doesn’t answer any questions, unless we’re mind readers. (Speech given by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

## Book of Breathings

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March, 1968, we stated that Grant Heward felt that the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his Book of Abraham was in reality a part of the Egyptian “Book of Breathings.” This identification has now been confirmed by several prominent Egyptologists.

In order to understand what the “Book of Breathings” is about we must have some understanding of the Egyptian “Book of the Dead.” E. A. Wallis Budge, who was Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, explained:

From first to last throughout the Book of the Dead, with the exceptions of Kings Senti and Men-Kau-Ra, and . . . the son of Khufu, the name of no man is mentioned as the author or reviser of any part of it. Certain Chapters may show the influence of the cult of a certain city or cities, but the Book of the Dead cannot be regarded as the work of any one man or body of men, . . . the beliefs of many people and periods are gathered together in it. As a whole, the Book of the Dead was regarded as the work of the god Thoth, the scribe of the gods, . . . in the Book of Breathings, in an address to the deceased it is said, “Thoth, the most mighty god, the lord of Khemenu (Hermopolis), cometh to thee, and he writeth for thee the Book of Breathings with his own fingers.” Copies of the Book of the Dead, and works of a similar nature, were placed either in the coffin with the deceased, or in some part of the hall of the tomb, or of the mummy chamber, generally in a niche which was cut for the purpose. Sometimes the papyrus was laid loosely in the coffin, but more frequently it was placed between the legs of the deceased, . . . before the swathing of the mummy took place. (*The Book of the Dead, An English Translation of the Chapters, Hymns, Etc., Of The Theban Recension, With Introduction, Notes, Etc.*, London, 1901, vol. 1, pp. 50-51 of Introduction)

The Egyptologist James Henry Breasted said that “The magical formulae by which the dead are to triumph in the hereafter



become more and more numerous, so that it is no longer possible to record them on the inside of the coffin, but they must be written on papyrus and the roll placed in the tomb. . . . the ‘Book of the Dead’ began to take form. All was dominated by magic; by this all-powerful means the dead might effect all that he desired” (*A History of Egypt*, New York, 1967, pp. 205-206).

In his book, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1969, pages 281-282, Breasted gives this information:

A tendency which later came fully to its own in the Book of the Dead is already the dominant tendency in these Coffin Texts. It regards the hereafter as a place of innumerable dangers and ordeals, . . . The weapon to be employed and the surest means of defence available to the deceased was some magical agency, usually a charm to be pronounced at the critical moment. . . . There was, therefore, a chapter of “Becoming a Magician,” addressed to the august ones who are in the presence of Atum the Sun-god.

On pages 293-296 of the same book, James Henry Breasted makes these comments:

There were sumptuous and splendid rolls, sixty to eighty feet long and containing from seventy-five to as many as a hundred and twenty-five or thirty chapters. . . . The Book of the Dead itself, as a whole, is but a far-reaching and complex illustration of the increasing dependence on magic in the hereafter. . . . Besides many charms which enabled the dead to reach the world of the hereafter, there were those which prevented him from losing his mouth, his head, his heart, others which enabled him to remember his name, to breathe, eat, drink, avoid eating his own foulness, to prevent his drinking-water from turning into flame, to turn darkness into light, to ward off all serpents and other hostile monsters, and many others. The desirable transformations, too, had now increased, and a short chapter might in each case enable the dead man to assume the form of a falcon of gold, a divine falcon, a lily, a Phoenix, a heron, a swallow, a serpent called “son of earth,” a crocodile, a god, and, best of all, there was a chapter so potent that by its use a man might assume any form that he desired.... To call it the Bible of the Egyptians, then, is quite to mistake the function and content of these rolls.

On page 308, Breasted tells us that the “Book of the Dead” is “chiefly a book of magical charms.” Those who have studied the “Book of the Dead” know that it was written by a very superstitious people and is quite different from the religion taught in the Bible. Mormon writers have admitted that this is the case. On page 9 of the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, we find this statement:

The Book of the Dead is a collection of ancient Egyptian funerary texts consisting of spells and incantations understood to assist the soul of the departed dead during his perilous journey through the afterlife. It would thus presumably be pagan in spirit and have nothing to do with any scripture written by Abraham.

The “Book of Breathings” is an outgrowth of the Egyptian “Book of the Dead.” It did not appear until the later stages of Egyptian history—just a few centuries before the time of Christ. E. A. Wallis Budge gives this information concerning the “Book of Breathings”:

The “Book of Breathings” is one of a number of short funeral works, . . . it was addressed to the deceased by the chief priest conducting the funeral service. . . . The “Book of Breathings” represents the attempt to include all essential elements of belief in a future life in a work shorter and more simple than the Book of the Dead.... To give the work an enhanced value it was declared to be the production of Thoth, the scribe of the gods. (*The Book of the Dead, Facsimiles of the Papyri of Hunefer*, Anhai, Kerasher and Netchemet, by E. A. Wallis Budge, London, England, 1899, p. 33)

The fact that the papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his “Book of Abraham” is in reality the “Book of Breathings” cannot be disputed because the name “Book of Breathings” appears clearly on the fourth line of the fragment. Even Dr. Hugh Nibley has translated the words “Book of Breathings” from this fragment of papyrus (see *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 20).

In 1968 two Egyptologists from the University of Chicago’s Oriental Institute, Professors John A. Wilson and Klaus Baer, identified the papyrus as the “Book of Breathings.” Professor Richard A. Parker of Brown University also confirmed the fact that what Joseph Smith claimed was the “Book of Abraham” was in reality the “Book of Breathings.” The editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* wrote the following about this matter:

Richard A. Parker is the Wilbour Professor of Egyptology at Brown University. His primary interest is in the later stages of Egyptian language and history. He remarks that the Book of Breathings is a late (Ptolemaic and Romans periods) and greatly reduced version of the Book of the Dead. No comprehensive study of it has yet been undertaken and no manuscript has yet been published adequately. He would provisionally date the two Book of Breathings fragments in the Church’s possession to the last century before or the first century of the Christian era; . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86)

### Written in Hieratic

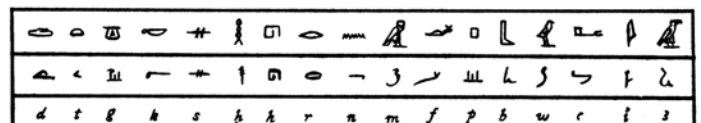
Before we speak of the actual translation of the “Sensen” fragment, it might be helpful to explain a few things about Egyptian writing.

The “Sensen” fragment is written in a script known as hieratic. Hieratic is a very common form of Egyptian writing which Egyptologists are able to translate. The hieratic writing evolved out of a more ancient system of writing known as hieroglyphic. Hieroglyphic writing was a beautiful method of writing, but it took a great deal of time to make each character and was therefore rather impractical.

In his book, *Egyptian Grammar*, pages 442-543, Alan Gardiner shows hundreds of hieroglyphs which the Egyptians used in their system of writing. Some of them are very difficult to draw, and it must have required a great deal of patience to chisel them into stone. Because the hieroglyphic system was so difficult to use, the hieratic system began to evolve. James Henry Breasted says:

. . . elaborate hieroglyphic with its numerous animal and human figures, . . . was too slow and labourious a method . . . The attempt to write these figures rapidly with ink upon papyrus had gradually resulted in reducing each sign to a mere outline, much rounded off and abbreviated. This cursive business hand, which we call “hieratic,” . . . developed into a graceful and rapid system of writing, which showed no nearer resemblance to the hieroglyphic than does our own hand-writing to our print. (*A History of Egypt*, p. 83)

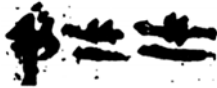
The following are examples of how some of the letters of the Egyptian alphabet were written in hieroglyphs. Directly below each we have shown how they would appear in hieratic, and below this we show how an Egyptologist would transliterate them. The Egyptian letters read from right to left—opposite to English.



The reader will notice that there is a definite relationship between hieroglyphic and hieratic writing. When Egyptologists

are working with hieratic writing they convert it into hieroglyphs before attempting to translate.

Egyptian writing is composed of both phonograms and ideograms. Phonograms are “sound-signs,” and ideograms are “signs that convey their meaning pictorially” (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, pp. 25, 30). Usually a word is composed of one or more phonograms (sound-signs) followed by an ideogram. Alan Gardiner states that in such cases the ideogram “is called a determinative, because it appears to determine the meaning of the foregoing sound-signs and to define that meaning in a general way” (*Egyptian Grammar*, p. 31). The word “sensen” which appears in the text Joseph Smith used for his Book of Abraham will serve to illustrate this matter. (The following is a photograph of it as it appears in the fourth line of this fragment of papyrus.



When this word is converted to hieroglyphs it appears as follows.



In order to read this word we must start at the right side and work to the left. The first letter we find is written in this manner:

⊕ An Egyptologist would transliterate this as *s*. The next letter is found directly below the first and is written as follows: ~~~~~ This is transliterated as *n*. Next we find another *s* and below it another *n*. Thus we have *snsn*. The Egyptians did not write the vowels, and therefore we have to supply them. Egyptologists usually insert the English vowel *e* in these areas. When the vowels are inserted we have the word “sensen,” which means “breathe.” In line four of the fragment of papyrus it is used as part of the name of the book—i.e., “Book of Breathings.”

The last part of this word is the “determinative.” In this case it is a sail. Although it does not enter into the sound of the word, it shows that the word has something to do with wind, breath or air.

While some Egyptian words do not have a determinative, many contain more than one. In fact, there are some words that have three determinatives. Although hieratic writing was easier to use than hieroglyphic, it was still inferior to Greek or Hebrew writing.

### Finding the Key

After Mr. Heward identified the “Sensen” fragment as part of the “Book of Breathings,” he began to translate some of the words found in the text. This was a difficult task because the writing is coarse and somewhat damaged. Nevertheless, he was rather successful in his endeavor. In a letter to Henry G. Fischer, dated March 5, 1968, Grant Heward stated:

On the right side of the fragment . . . I seem to find what my dictionary calls “Lake of Honsu” plus ???! Perhaps “born to” on the right end of the second; “Limbs, heart and funerary wrappings” on the third, and going on to the fourth; It looks like the Book of Breathings in the fourth; I think I see “royal linen and give” in the fifth; “Heart” again on the sixth; “Funerary wrapping and book” on the next; and eternity on the last.

We tried to find the exact location of the text in the papyrus of Kerasher, but we were unsuccessful. Although Dr. Nibley had had photographs of the Mormon Papyri since 1966, he was unable to find the location of the text. He stated:

It has long been known that the characters “interpreted” by Joseph Smith in his Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar are treated by him as super-cryptograms; and now it is apparent that the source of those characters is the unillustrated fragment on which the word Sen-sen appears repeatedly. This identifies it as possibly belonging to those writings known as The Book of Breathings, though that in turn is merely “compilations and excerpts from older funerary spells and burial formulas.” This particular excerpt, if it is such, has still not been located among known versions of the mysterious book. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, p. 249)

On the same page of his article, Nibley commented: “And that is the story—still a lock without a key.”

Fortunately, the key to this story was found just a few months after the papyri were rediscovered. It was not long after Grant Heward started working on this text that he was able to identify enough of the words that we began to get some idea of what the papyrus is about. A man who was familiar with Mr. Heward’s work, found a rendition of a text which contained words similar to the ones Mr. Heward had translated from the Mormon Papyrus. Encouraged by this find, Mr. Heward went to the Brigham Young University Library and found a facsimile of a text which closely resembles the Book of Abraham fragment. He found this text in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique publiée sous la Direction de G. Maspero*, vol. 17, plate XI. This is a copy of Papyrus No. 3284, located in the Museum of the Louvre in Paris. After examining this text we were confident that Mr. Heward had found the key to the Book of Abraham fragment. Since that time Mr. Heward’s work has been verified by prominent Egyptologists. For more information concerning this matter see our *Case*, vol. 2, pp. 157-158.

Dr. Hugh Nibley now acknowledges the fact that Papyrus No. 3284 contains the same basic material as Joseph Smith’s “Book of Breathings” fragments, but he tries to make it appear that the “Book of Breathings” is something special:

Upon their publication in 1967, the Joseph Smith Papyri Nos. X and XI were quickly and easily identified as pages from the Egyptian “Book of Breathings.” . . . its contents closely matched that of other Egyptian writings bearing the title . . . commonly translated “Book of Breathing(s).” A most welcome guide to the student was ready at hand in J. de Horrack’s text, translation, and commentary on a longer and fuller version of the same work (Pap. Louvre 3284) which he published in 1878 along with another version of the text (Louvre No. 3291) and variant readings from a half dozen other Paris manuscripts. . . . the Book of Breathings is before all else, as Bonnet observes, a composite, made up of “compilations and excerpts from older funerary sources and mortuary formulas.” . . . The Book of Breathings is the great time-binder; it comes towards the end of Egyptian civilization and so wraps everything up, right back to the beginning. . . .

The lateness of the “Breathing” documents, instead of detracting from their value actually enhances it. For it not only gives them a chance to embrace the entire funerary literature of the past, but places them in that critical moment of transition in which they are able to transmit much ancient Egyptian lore to early Jewish and Christian circles. . . . The Book of Breathings is not to be dismissed, as it has been, as a mere talisman against stinking corpses; it is a sermon on breathing in every Egyptian sense of the word. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1971, pp. 153, 158, 159, 166)

While it is strange that Dr. Nibley would try to make special claims for the value of the “Book of Breathings,” we are happy to see that he is willing to admit that Joseph Smith’s fragment of papyrus is in reality from that work.

### Three Witnesses Against Book

In the Book of Mormon we find this statement:

And in the mouth of three witnesses shall these things be established; . . . (Ether 5:4)

Joseph Smith’s witnesses to the Book of Mormon were not trained in the science of Egyptology, and therefore they could not possibly know whether Joseph Smith’s “gold plates” were authentic or whether he translated them correctly. Richard L. Anderson gives this information about Book of Mormon witness John Whitmer:

From this peak of conviction, the same man descended to the depths of doubt within three years. . . . Answering in the presence of his anti-Mormon friends, the Book of Mormon witness made two revealing statements. First, he admitted, “I now say, I handled

those plates; there were fine engravings on both sides. I handled them.” When Turley next asked bluntly why Whitmer now doubted the work, the witness indicated his inability to translate the characters on the plates: “I cannot read it, and I do not know whether it is true or not.” From the strict point of view of evidence, this report is most impressive. (*Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses*, 1981, pp. 130-131)

While no qualified translator ever examined the “gold plates” of the Book of Mormon, in the case of the Book of Abraham we have a different story. Three men who have had extensive training in the science of Egyptology have examined the text Joseph Smith used as a basis for the Book of Abraham and have declared that it is in reality the “Book of Breathings”—a pagan text having nothing at all to do with Abraham or his religion. (Actually, to be more precise we should say that it is the instructions for wrapping up the “Book of Breathings” with the mummy.)

The first witness against the Book of Abraham is Dr. John A. Wilson. *The New York Times*, August 31, 1976, gave this information about him:

Dr. John A. Wilson, professor emeritus of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, died yesterday. . . . Dr. Wilson succeeded Dr. James H. Breasted in 1936 as director of the university’s Oriental Institute, holding the post for a decade and later serving as director again in 1960-61.

Although Dr. Wilson did not publish a translation of the Book of Abraham Papyrus, he did examine it, and indicated it was only a “mortuary text” known as the “Book of Breathings”:

Document D is a related mortuary text of late times, the so-called Book of Breathings, in a hieratic hand coarser than that of Document B. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 68)

The second witness is Klaus Baer. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* gave this information concerning him:

Klaus Baer is Associate Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago’s Oriental Institute, and was one of Professor Hugh Nibley’s primary tutors in the art of reading Egyptian characters. (*Dialogue*, Autumn 1968, p. 109)

Klaus Baer’s translation of the Book of Abraham papyrus appears on pages 119-20 of the same issue:

Osiris shall be conveyed into the Great Pool of Khons—and likewise Osiris Hor, justified, born to Tikhebyt, justified—after his arms have been placed on his heart and the Breathing Permit (which [Isis] made and has writing on its inside and outside) has been wrapped in royal linen and placed under his left arm near his heart; the rest of his mummy-bandages should be wrapped over it. The man for whom this book has been copied will breathe forever and ever as the bas of the gods do.

The third witness against the Book of Abraham is Professor Richard A. Parker, chairman of the department of Egyptology at Brown University. Dr. Hugh Nibley had a copy of Richard Parker’s translation of the “Sensen” text before it appeared in *Dialogue*, and in a speech delivered at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, he stated:

Professor Parker has translated that controversial little thing called the “Sensen” papyrus, the little section, that text that matches up with some of the Book of Abraham.

Instead of attacking Professor Parker’s translation, as we might have expected him to do, Dr. Nibley praised it:

. . . here is Parker’s translation of the “Sensen” papyrus. . . . Parker being the best man in America for this particular period and style of writing. And Parker agreed to do it and he’s done it. So it’s nice . . . it will be available . . . in the next issue of the *Dialogue*.

Professor Richard A. Parker’s translation was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 98, and reads as follows:

1. [.....] this great pool of Khonsu
2. [Osiris Hor, justified], born of Taykhebyt, a man likewise.
3. After (his) two arms are [fast]ened to his breast, one wraps the Book of Breathings, which is
4. with writing both inside and outside of it, with royal linen, it being placed (at) his left arm
5. near his heart, this having been done at his
6. wrapping and outside it. If this book be recited for him, then
7. He will breath like the soul[s of the gods] for ever and
8. ever.

The reader will notice that these translations bear absolutely no resemblance to Joseph Smith’s purported translation of the same text. The Book of Abraham, therefore, has been proven to be a spurious work. The Egyptologists find no mention of Abraham or his religion in this text. The average number of words used to convey the message is only 87, whereas Joseph Smith’s rendition contained **thousands of words**. The renditions by Parker and Baer are essentially in agreement, although there are a few minor variations. Some of these variations can be explained without too much difficulty. For more information on the reconciliations of minor differences in the translation of this text see our *Case*, vol. 2, page 160.

As we closely examine the translations it is plain to see that they are basically in agreement with each other. Consequently, it is almost impossible to escape the conclusion that the Book of Abraham is a false translation. The Egyptologist Klaus Baer made this comment:

This is as far as an Egyptologist can go in studying the document that Joseph Smith considered to be a “roll” which “contained the writings of Abraham.” The Egyptologist interprets it differently, relying on a considerable body of parallel data, research, and knowledge that has accumulated over the past 146 years since Champollion first deciphered Egyptian—none of which had really become known in America in the 1830’s. At this point, the Latter-day Saint Historian and theologian must take over. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1868, p. 133)

Besides the renditions given by Professors Parker and Baer, a number of others have translated the text and obtained similar results. Seven years after the translations were published, even Dr. Hugh Nibley set his hand to translate this text. His rendition was published in *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment*, 1975, pages 19-23:

- [Line 1] inside (of) the lake great (of) Chonsu  
 [Line 2] born of Taykhebyt justified likewise  
 [Line 3] after clasp - ed (two) arms his upon breast his being as wrap-  
 [Line 4] ped like a book (or roll, WB II, 192, 16); the Book of Breathings (Wb III, 419) being written according-to-what is (see next line)  
 [Line 5] in (the sacred) writings (books) on both inside and outside in linen (of) the king One places (or, is placed) arm  
 [Line 6] left his vicinity of heart his, having-been-done this for his  
 [Line 7] wrapping on (the) side outer If makes one for him book this, then  
 [Line 8] breathes he like souls (of the) gods for time and eternity

Although Dr. Nibley finally gave his rendition of the text, he tried to cloud the issue by saying:

To the often-asked question, “Have the Joseph Smith Papyri been translated?” the answer is an emphatic no! What, then, is the



foregoing? A mechanical transcription, no more. . . . What we have is a transmission rather than a translation of the text, and such transmission, as G. Santillana notes, “need in no way imply understanding.” . . . The hardest question of all for the Egyptologist, according to W. Schenkel, is whether Egyptian writings can really be understood by anyone but an Egyptian. Go up to the man in the car . . . when he stops at a red light and deliver this sober message to him: “Osiris shall be towed toward the interior of the great Pool of Khonsu,” which is the first line of the Joseph Smith Papyrus No. XI. If the man gives you a blank look or starts an ominous muttering, explain to him that the great Lake of Khonsu is “probably a liturgical designation of the portion of the Nile that has to be crossed in order to reach the Theban cemetery on the west bank,” and that Khonsu or Khons is a youthful moon-god. When the light changes your new friend may proceed on his way knowing as much about the first line of our Book of Breathings as anybody else does, namely, nothing at all. Though as correct and literal as we can make it, the translation in the preceding chapter is not a translation. It is nonsense . . . there is still an unbridged gulf, broad and deep, between the real message of the Joseph Smith Papyri and what purports to be translations of them. (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, pp. 47, 49)

## Dr. Nibley Confused

As time passes it becomes increasingly apparent that Dr. Nibley is totally unprepared to deal with the problems related to the translation of the Book of Abraham, and that he has no real answers to give his people. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, he stated:

Since the Sen-Sen business makes very little sense to anybody, while the Book of Abraham makes very good sense, one might suppose that Smith could have produced the latter without any reference to the former—that he could have written the Book of Abraham more easily, in fact, without having to bother himself with those meaningless squiggles. But if the Sen-Sen symbols are expendable, why does he use them at all? His only purpose would have been to impress others, but he keeps the whole operation strictly to himself and never circulates the Sen-Sen papyrus as he did the Facsimiles. And why on earth would he fasten on this particularly ugly little piece and completely by-pass the whole collection of handsome illustrated documents at his disposal? Did he really think he was translating? If so he was acting in good faith. But was he really translating? If so, it was by a process which quite escapes the understanding of the specialists and lies in the realm of the imponderable.

No one has begun to look into the Sen-Sen problems seriously. . . . Today nobody claims that Joseph Smith got his information through ordinary scholarly channels. In that case one wonders how any amount of checking along ordinary scholarly channels is going to get us very far. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, p. 101)

When Dr. Nibley spoke at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, he admitted that if Joseph Smith was “really translating the papyri,” he did it in a way that is unknown to Egyptologists:

By what process could the Book of Abraham have been squeezed out of a few dozen brief signs? Nobody has told us yet. Was Joseph Smith really translating the papyri? If so, it was not in any way known to Egyptology. Was he then merely pretending to translate them? But he never really put these symbols forth as his source. He published the facsimiles, but these always remained among his private papers. These were not for circulation. He’s not pretending to be doing anything here. He’s not seeking to impress anyone at all. Nobody knew about this little work he was carrying on. He never published them as he did the facsimiles. Did he really need these symbols? This is a funny thing. Are they actually the source upon which he depended? Well, if he really depended on them, he must really have been translating them. But, you say, he couldn’t possibly have been translating. Could he have used this as a source at all? These questions arise. If he was merely faking, of course, pretending to be translating them, well, he wouldn’t need the Egyptian text at all. Yet he used one, and he used

it secretly. Why would he secretly make use of a text he didn’t need at all? This was just a nuisance, really, all these symbols. Let’s just forget about them, and just write the story. Why did he need to tie up with these, and how does he tie up? Why does he ignore the wealth of handsome illustrated texts at his disposal to concentrate only on the shortest and ugliest and most poorly written of the lot? Why does he choose just this particular one when he had all these beautiful manuscripts. And they were all [just as?] meaningless to everybody. Why would he do that? Well, all sorts of questions arise. (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Hugh Nibley made these statements in the *Improvement Era*:

We cannot pretend to understand how the Book of Abraham was translated, but that should not seriously disturb us, since nobody understands the method by which some of the greatest scholars were able to translate texts that no one else could read . . . In their case, it was the result that justified the intuition, and not the other way around. So let it be with Joseph Smith: we must still take his word for it that he was actually translating, but the result of his efforts is a different matter—could such a monument be the result of trickery and deceit? (*Improvement Era*, August 1968, p. 56)

In a footnote on page 64 of the same article, Nibley remarked: “. . . the connection between the Book of Abraham and the ‘Sen-sen’ papyrus remains a mystery: . . .” To give the reader an idea of just how confused Dr. Nibley became on this issue, we have only to compare two statements which he has made. In the *Improvement Era*, May 1968, page 54, he wrote:

. . . the presence on the scene of some of the original papyri, including those used by the Prophet in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham . . . has not raised a single new question, though, as we shall see, it has solved some old ones.

It was only a few weeks after this statement was printed that Dr. Nibley said:

Here is the little “Sen-sen,” . . . the papyrus, in which a handful of Egyptian symbols was apparently expanded in translation to the whole Book of Abraham. This raises a lot of questions. It doesn’t answer any questions, unless we’re mind readers. (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

At one point Dr. Nibley became so zealous to establish Joseph Smith’s work that he wrote:

The evidence supporting the Book of Abraham is simply overpowering . . . Joseph Smith or anyone else could not possibly have faked the Book of Abraham, which I am perfectly convinced is a true record. Some of our ideas about it may call for rectification from time to time, but of the authenticity of the book there can be no doubt. . . . I have studied with both Prof. Baer and Wilson, who translated some of the Mss.; they are splendid men but they have no idea of what these particular manuscripts are about. . . . Before long you will see that the Book of Abraham furnishes some of the best evidence for the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph. . . . I must ask you to be patient until this can be demonstrated more fully. (letter from Hugh Nibley, dated December 11, 1970)

This letter would lead a person to believe that Dr. Nibley now feels that he is a greater Egyptologist than the very men he studied under. Those who followed Nibley’s articles in the *Improvement Era* may remember that in the issue for August 1968, page 51, he was finally forced to admit that he was “anything but an Egyptologist.” In a letter dated Feb. 8, 1968, Dr. Nibley said that his “professors at Chicago”—Wilson and Baer—are “infinitely my betters.” At a meeting held at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, Dr. Nibley admitted he was not qualified to make an accurate translation of the papyri:

. . . I would make mistakes like mad . . . I studied just a year ago with Dr. Wilson. Now, of course, he’s the master, and so when I heard that he was going to translate it [I] let him do it, of course, because if I did it he’d just have to correct what

I did anyway.

In the same speech, Dr. Nibley said that the “excellent work of John Wilson will be coming out in the next issue of *Dialogue*. He has translated the Book of the Dead sections . . . He spent many weeks on it. He’s done a marvelous piece of work . . .”

It is almost impossible to believe that after making these statements that Hugh Nibley could turn right around and say that “Baer and Wilson . . . have no idea of what these particular manuscripts are about.”

In the *Improvement Era*, August 1969, page 75, Dr. Nibley made this fantastic statement:

From here on the reader might as well know that this writer intends to show that the Book of the Dead fragments, the Breathing Papyrus, and the three facsimiles, that is, all the available Egyptian materials that were once in the possession of Joseph Smith, contain the elements of a single story, which happens to be the story of Abraham as told in the Book of Abraham and the early Jewish legends.

Professor Nibley’s concluding article for the *Improvement Era*, however, made it very clear that he was unable to demonstrate any relationship between the papyri and the Book of Abraham. Nevertheless, he encouraged members of the Mormon Church to go on stalling lest they be accused of “forfeiting the game”:

Since the basic charges against Joseph Smith emerging from the study of the newly found papyri have not been discussed in the pages of the *Era*, it may be well to review them briefly here. Two documents of the Joseph Smith Papyri were identified and translated in 1967/8, the one comprising sections from the Book of the Dead, the other being the much rarer but still not unknown “Sen-sen” Papyrus or “Book of Breathings.” Neither of these texts contained the same reading matter as the Book of Abraham, but who said they should? . . .

What supports the idea that the Book of Abraham was thought by Joseph Smith to be a translation of the Breathing Certificate? . . . the symbols from the “Breathing text” are interpreted bit by bit in a writing known as “the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” in which the interpretation turns out to be the same as the text of the English Book of Abraham. . . . No slightest knowledge of Egyptian is necessary to convince anybody that when a symbol as brief as cat is “translated” by an involved paragraph of over one hundred words, we are not dealing with a “translation” in any accepted sense of the word. . . . in 1968 priority went to the newly found papyri, . . . But when it soon became apparent that those documents did not contain any of the text of the Book of Abraham as we have it, it was time for the Egyptologists, having done their work and done it well, either to bow out of the scene or to go on to the more important and essential problems of the facsimiles. . . . The hopes for a quick decision with the finding of the Joseph Smith Papyri were blasted when it became apparent on the one hand that those documents do not contain the Book of Abraham, and on the other that the connection between the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar and the Book of Abraham is anything but clear. The work has hardly begun, but people still seek the safe and easy solution of authority and ask with impatience, “Can’t you spare us all that speculation and surmising and comparing and illustrating and simply give us the results?”. . .

Many Latter-day Saints have not been too happy with the Joseph Smith Papyri, which instead of giving them all the answers only set them to work on a lot of problems with which none of this generation is prepared to deal. But it was the Mormons who started this game, and it is their responsibility to keep it going. They can never again leave the field without forfeiting the game. . . . We have dealt entirely in possibilities, never in certitudes, possibilities being all we need to keep the door open. . . . As long as a single aspect of any problem raised by the Book of Abraham remains unexamined, as long as there is the remotest possibility that any slight detail of any significance may have been overlooked, as long as a single possible relevant text remains unread, we must hold our final word in abeyance. . . . You scholars have spoken; why don’t you do the honest thing and admit

that you don’t know a blessed thing about the facsimiles, that you haven’t made even a superficial study of them . . . Why not admit that . . . the test of the Book of Abraham lies in what it says, not in the manner in which it may have been composed, and that a thorough test of its contents would require a scope of research that no scholar today has any intention of undertaking, a scope of knowledge that few if any scholars today possess? . . .

Until now, no one has done much more than play around with the bedizening treasury of the *Pearl of Great Price*. “They” would not, we could not make of the Book of Abraham an object of serious study. The time has come to change all that. (*Improvement Era*, May 1970, pp. 82, 83, 93, 94)

In *Brigham Young University Studies* for Autumn 1968, page 71, Dr. Nibley declared:

Whatever translation comes by the gift and power of God is certainly no translation in the ordinary sense, and Joseph Smith never put forth the translation of the Book of Abraham as an exercise in conventional scholarship. . . . In every case in which he has produced a translation, Joseph Smith has made it clear that his inspiration is by no means bound to any ancient text, but is free to take wings at any time.

Hugh Nibley’s conflicting statements caused one Mormon to write the following in a letter to the Editors of *Dialogue*:

Dr. Nibley is indeed walking a tightrope, praising conscientious scientific work of scientists on the one hand and accepting their conclusions, and upholding the contradictory beliefs of the Church on the other by looking for explanations in the field of “translated” revelation. Whatever the answers may be, he is either becoming a “split personality” or he is unsuccessfully trying to “serve two masters.” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 9)

In 1879 the Mormon writer George Reynolds tried to refute Deveria’s work against the Book of Abraham by claiming that “the Egyptian hieroglyphics had at least two (but more probably three) meanings, the one understood by the masses—the other comprehended only by the initiated, the priesthood and others; which latter conveyed the true though hidden intent of the writer.” (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, fifth edition, p. 128)

That George Reynolds would make such a suggestion in 1879 is not too surprising, but when we found Dr. Nibley using the same type of reasoning in 1968 we were rather amazed. In his desperation to save the Book of Abraham, Nibley went so far as to state that the “Sensen” text may have a second meaning unknown to Egyptologists:

. . . you very often have texts of double meaning. . . . it’s quite possible, say, that this “Sensen” Papyrus, telling a straight forward innocent little story or something like that, should contain also a totally different text concealed within it. . . . they [the Egyptians] know what they’re doing but we don’t. We don’t have the key. (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

In the same meeting Dr. Nibley was asked “if the key to this concentrated language is not had by the Egyptologists, do we have any hope of having the Book of Abraham ever translated?” Nibley replied: “I don’t know. That’s an interesting thing. We don’t know what may turn up in another manuscript or something like that.”

The reader will remember that Dr. Nibley stated that Joseph Smith treated the characters as super-cryptograms—that is, writing with a hidden meaning:

It has long been known that the characters “interpreted” by Joseph Smith in his Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar are treated by him as super-cryptograms; and now it is apparent that the source of those characters is the unillustrated fragment on which the word Sen- Sen appears repeatedly. This identifies it as possibly belonging to those writings known as the Book of Breathings, . . . (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, p. 249)



We feel that Dr. Nibley's suggestion that the Sensen text might have a "different text concealed within it" which is unknown to Egyptologists is absolutely ridiculous. When Marvin Cowan asked Professor Richard Parker if the papyri could have a second meaning, he replied that he knew of "no Egyptologist who would support such a claim." (Letter dated January 9, 1968)

### Nibley Reverses His Position

Although Dr. Nibley gave some support to the theory that the papyrus might have a second or hidden meaning, he seems to have come to his senses and now realizes that such an idea cannot be successfully maintained. Unfortunately, however, he has come up with another theory which is as fantastic as the first: that the "Sensen" papyrus has no relationship to the Book of Abraham. It is, in fact, "the directions for wrapping up the Joseph Smith papyri with the mummy" (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 6). In other words, Nibley claims the true source of the Book of Abraham is still lost. According to his new theory, Joseph Smith's scribes mistakenly copied the characters from the "Sensen" papyrus into the three handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham:

Is the Book of Abraham a correct translation of Joseph Smith Papyri X and XI? No, the Book of Breathings is not the Book of Abraham! . . . Doesn't the text of the Book of Abraham appear in a number of manuscripts in columns running parallel with characters from the Book of Breathings? Yes, the brethren at Kirtland were invited to try their skill at translation; in 1835 the Prophet's associates, . . . made determined efforts to match up the finished text of the Book of Abraham with characters from the J.S. Papyrus No. XI . . . (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 2)

Professor Nibley's suggestion that Joseph Smith's scribes added the wrong characters in the translation manuscripts is certainly preposterous. That Joseph Smith would allow his scribes to copy the characters from the wrong papyrus into three different manuscripts of the Book of Abraham is really beyond belief. A person might almost as reasonably conclude that the Book of Abraham itself was made up by Joseph Smith's scribes. Dr. Nibley's attempt to separate the "Sensen" papyrus from the Book of Abraham cannot be accepted by those who honestly examine the evidence. The reader should keep in mind that Nibley himself originally accepted the "Sensen" text as the source of the Book of Abraham.

Nibley, of course, now has to maintain that the rediscovered papyri do not contain the portion which Joseph Smith translated as the Book of Abraham. A number of Mormon apologists have blindly followed Dr. Nibley into this grave error. Caleb A. Shreeve, Sr., for instance, wrote the following in an advertisement which appeared in the *Ogden Standard-Examiner* on March 24, 1980:

Joseph Smith (Dec. 31, 1835) describes the writing of Abraham Papyri as, "Beautifully written on papyrus, with **black and small part red, ink or paint, in perfect preservation**" (HC. 2:348). To date, (1980) a papyrus fitting Joseph's description has not been found.

If Mr. Shreeve had cited the first part of the quotation from the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 348, it would have changed the whole meaning of the statement:

The record of Abraham and Joseph, found with the mummies [sic], is beautifully written on papyrus, with black, and a small part red, ink or paint, in perfect preservation.

The reader will notice that when the entire statement is quoted it becomes plain that it is referring to the records of both Joseph and Abraham. In other words, it is a statement about Joseph Smith's Papyri collection in general, not just the one roll which Joseph Smith called the Book of Abraham. This is made very clear in another entry in Joseph Smith's *History*:

. . . I commenced the translation of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that one of the rolls

contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt, etc., . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236)

Now, when we understand that Joseph Smith believed the Book of Abraham was written on a different roll of papyrus than the Book of Joseph, it becomes clear that he was referring to the collection of papyri in general and not specifically to the Book of Abraham. Among the papyri that were rediscovered in 1967 there are pieces which contain rubrics—i.e., portions written in red ink. Later on in this chapter we prove conclusively that they are from the roll of papyrus the early Mormons designated as the "Book of Joseph." When they are translated, however, they turn out to be nothing but portions of the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

At any rate, the fact that Joseph Smith chose the papyrus identified as the "Book of Breathings" as the source for his Book of Abraham is established by irrefutable evidence. To begin with, Joseph Smith used the drawing at the beginning of the Book of Breathings roll as Facsimile No. 1 for his Book of Abraham. It does not contain red ink and the workmanship appears to be no better or well-preserved than that found on Papyrus XI. This in itself would completely destroy the argument advanced by Shreeve and Nibley, but the evidence becomes even stronger as we look into the matter. The writing in the columns to the side of the fragment used for Fac. No. 1, which Dr. Nibley does not dare to translate, mentions that the papyrus was made for Hor, and this is the same name mentioned in the Book of Breathings text which follows on Papyrus XI. Second, even Dr. Nibley has to admit that before the papyrus was cut up by the early Mormons, Papyrus XI followed immediately after Fac. No. 1 on the roll: "It can be easily shown by matching up the cut edges and fibres of the papyri that the text of the Joseph Smith 'Breathing' Papyrus (No. XI) was written on the same strip of material as Facsimile No. 1 and immediately adjoining it" (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 13). On page 3 of the same book, Nibley concedes that even Joseph Smith's scribes felt that the text of the Book of Abraham followed right after Fac. No. 1: "Since this is an illustration to the Book of Abraham, it has naturally been assumed that the text that follows the drawing could only be that of Abraham—even the brethren at Kirtland assumed that."

The strongest evidence that Joseph Smith believed that Papyrus XI was the Book of Abraham is found in the fact that the characters from this fragment were used in the translation manuscripts. Hugh Nibley's suggestion that this was only the work of his scribes cannot be accepted. All evidence, then, points to one unmistakable conclusion: Joseph Smith believed that Papyrus No. XI was the Book of Abraham.

As we have already shown, although Dr. Nibley does not dare give a translation of the writing on the papyrus fragment used for Fac. No. 1, he has given a rendition of Papyrus XI (the "Sensen" text). His work agrees in substance with the other translations we have published. In fact, he includes the names of many pagan gods in his translation of the Book of Breathings. He cannot find anything about Abraham in this text, but to soften the disappointment he tries to relate it to the Mormon temple ceremony. Why he would want to equate the Egyptian religion with Mormonism is really a mystery to us. The Egyptian religion is dominated with magic and other pagan practices.

### Abraham's Signature

To begin with the Mormon leaders claimed that Joseph Smith had the original papyri which Abraham and Joseph wrote upon. Egyptologists, however, claimed that the facsimiles proved that the papyri were of a later date. Dr. Nibley tries to bring the church's position into line with the opinions expressed by Egyptologists by stating:

The commonest objection to the authenticity of the Facsimiles is that they are of too late a date to have been drawn by Abraham. But Joseph Smith never claimed that they were autographic



manuscripts or that they dated from the time of Abraham. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, p. 20)

Professor Nibley is certainly wrong about this matter; Joseph Smith did claim that they were autographic manuscripts. Josiah Quincy maintained that Joseph Smith himself told him the following:

“That is the handwriting of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful,” said the prophet. “This is the autograph of Moses, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron.” (*Figures of the Past*, as cited in *Among the Mormons*, pp. 136-37)

In 1840 Joseph Smith was quoted as making this statement:

“These ancient records,” said he, “throw great light on the subject of Christianity. . . . I will show you how I interpret certain parts. There,” said he, pointing to a particular character, “that is the signature of the patriarch Abraham.” (*Quincy Wig*, October 17, 1840, p. 1, as quoted in *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Sidney B. Sperry, p. 52)

At the beginning of the manuscript of the Book of Abraham (see photograph on page 312 of this book) we find this statement by Joseph Smith: “Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the catacombs of Egypt.” In the introduction to the Book of Abraham as it is now published by the Mormon Church we find this statement: “A Translation of some ancient Records, . . . The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written by his own hand upon papyrus” (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 29). The following statement appears in *Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, pages 24-25:

To assign a date to the scroll of Abraham is a difficult problem. For one thing, the patriarch himself is believed to have lived in the twentieth century B.C. . . . although the original composition of the Book of Abraham may date to the twentieth century B.C., the final disposition of the mummies in connection with which his scroll was found apparently dates to some 1400 years later. (sixth century B.C.) and possibly as much as 1900 years later (first century B.C.).

Evidently what happened was that the scroll was passed from Abraham through a line of persons who respected its sanctity, including his descendants Joseph, Moses, and Aaron, who added their own writing to it. Later possessors of the scroll, . . . need not have been able to read its script nor understand its contents, but only desired to own it and be buried with it for the supposed magical power of so ancient an object.

Ross T. Christensen, of the Brigham Young University, wrote:

Abraham wrote in the twentieth century B.C.; his scroll was added to in the seventeenth and thirteenth centuries B.C., . . .

Apparently after Abraham wrote on his scroll, it was handed down through a line of successors. I do not know who they were, though some of them were his descendants, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 23)

Wilford Woodruff, who later became the fourth President of the Church, made this comment in his journal:

The Lord is blessing Joseph with power to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to translate through the Urim and Thummim ancient records and hieroglyphics as old as Abraham and Adam. Joseph the Seer has presented us some of the book of Abraham... which was written upon his own hand but hid from the knowledge of man for the last four thousand years, but has now come to light through the mercy of God. (Personal Diary of Wilford Woodruff, as quoted by James R. Clark in *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, p. 58)

George Q. Cannon declared:

This book was written by the hand of Abraham while he was in Egypt, and was preserved by the marvelous dispensation of Providence through all the mutations of time and the dangers of distance, to reach the hand of God’s Prophet in this last dispensation. (*The Life*

*of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, 1888, pp. 187-188, as quoted in *Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*)

Now that we have the original papyrus Joseph Smith “translated” the Book of Abraham from we can be absolutely certain that it was not written by Abraham’s “own hand.” In fact, it probably was not written until about the time of Christ, which would be almost two thousand years after Abraham’s time. Mr. Heward has done some work on the dating of the “Sensen” papyrus by comparing it with other samples of hieratic writing. His research led him to believe that it probably was not written until about the time of Christ or even later. The Egyptologist Richard A. Parker has come to the same conclusion. According to the Editors of *Dialogue*, Professor Parker stated that he “would provisionally date the two Book of Breathing’s fragments in the Church’s possession to the last century before or the first century of the Christian era; . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86). Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, also seems to agree on the dating of this fragment: “The handwriting is of the last Ptolemaic or early Roman Period, about the time of Christ” (*Ibid.*, Autumn 1968, p. 111).

The Mormon scholar John Tvedtnes is willing to concede that “The papyri themselves are from Ptolemaic or early Christian times, and thus follow Abraham by about two millennia. Abraham could therefore not be the author of the papyri” (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 72).

Dr. Hugh Nibley seems willing to admit that the papyri do not date back to the time of Abraham, but he is not willing to face the serious implications of this matter. In his book, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 3, he writes:

. . . it has now become apparent, thanks to the diligent researches of the Dutch scholar B. H. Stricker, that our Joseph Smith Book of Breathing’s is one of a very special and limited and uniquely valuable class of documents clustering around a single priestly family of upper Egypt in the first century A.D.

Nibley would have us believe that Joseph Smith claimed that the papyri were only copies and not the original documents. We have shown, however, that Joseph Smith maintained that the papyri contained the very “handwriting of Abraham.” In fact, he showed one man “a particular character” and told him that it was “the signature of the patriarch Abraham.” Although Dr. Nibley is trying very hard to bring the church’s position into line with the opinions expressed by Egyptologists, such a reconciliation is impossible.

## A False Translation

More than fifty years ago the Egyptologist Samuel A. B. Mercer made this observation concerning Joseph Smith’s work in the Egyptian language:

All the scholars came to the same conclusion, viz: that Smith could not possibly correctly translate any Egyptian text, as his interpretation of the facsimiles shows. Any pupil of mine who would show such absolute ignorance of Egyptian as Smith does, could not possibly expect to get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology. . . .

I speak as a linguist when I say that if Smith knew Egyptian and correctly interpreted the facsimiles which you submitted to me, then I don’t know a word of Egyptian, and Erman’s Grammar is a fake, and all modern Egyptologists are deceived. (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 615)

As we have shown, Mormon writers claimed that the original papyrus from which the Book of Abraham had been translated was destroyed in the Chicago fire, and since Egyptologists only had the facsimiles which were published in the *Pearl of Great Price*, they were not in a position to judge the text of the book itself even if Joseph Smith’s work on the facsimiles were incorrect. Mormon writer John Henry Evans made these comments in an article written in 1913:

Bishop Spalding submits to eight Egyptologists the three facsimiles . . . The scholars answer substantially that they were not correctly translated. . . . Before they would be warranted in saying that the entire Book of Abraham was not properly translated, they would have to examine the original papyrus, or a copy of it, from which the Book of Abraham was translated. . . . Now, as a matter of fact, the hieroglyphics submitted to the scholars constitute less than one-seventh of the Book of Abraham and that only an accompaniment of the text. The question therefore, becomes, "Is any one justified in drawing a conclusion respecting an entire manuscript from a statement which was made with respect only to a very small part of that manuscript?" (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 343)

In 1938 the church leaders allowed Dr. Sperry to publish two pages of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham which is found in the collection known as the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The photographs are so poor, however, that the Egyptian characters are not readable. Dr. Sperry made this comment concerning these pages:

Many persons have supposed that it was impossible to get back of the *Times and Seasons* text. We are now glad to say that we can go back of that source to a limited degree and produce what seem to be the original copies made of the Prophet's translation. The finding of several pages of "copy" in different handwritings is an important announcement that we can make for the first time. For the benefit of our readers we are presenting in this chapter photographs of two pages of the original text. The reader may note with considerable interest certain characters on the left-hand side of the manuscript. The paper upon which the translation was written is rough, of a poor quality and has many deep brown stains that make the manuscript at times hard to read. The dimensions of the sheets are approximately eight by twelve inches. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, Salt Lake City, 1938, pp. 69-72)

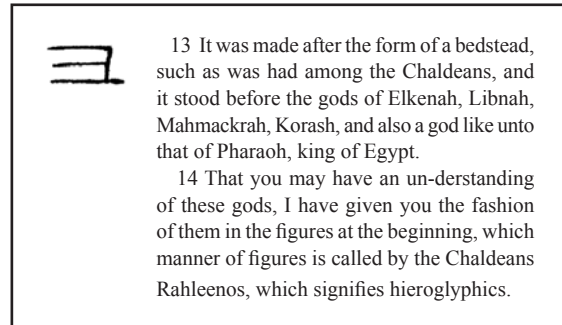
In 1937 Wilford Wood purchased the longer manuscript of the Book of Abraham from Charles Bidamon (see photographs on page 312 of this book). The most surprising event of all, however, was when the original papyrus was found in the Metropolitan Museum. Mormon writers can no longer claim the original papyrus is not available. Actually, we now have everything necessary to test Joseph Smith's ability as a translator of ancient Egyptian writings. We have the original papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" the text of the Book of Abraham, and we also have the original handwritten manuscripts which show the characters Joseph Smith used to make different portions of the Book of Abraham.

Since the original papyrus has been located, it has been suggested that perhaps Joseph Smith obtained the Book of Abraham "by way of direct revelation" and not from the papyrus. The person who tries to use this escape will find himself trapped by the words of Joseph Smith. At the beginning of the handwritten manuscript Smith stated that it was a "Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the catacombs of Egypt." The introduction to the Book of Abraham still maintains that it was "**translated from the papyrus, by Joseph Smith**" (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 29). Joseph Smith not only claimed that he translated it from the papyrus, but he also stated that his translation was correct. The following is attributed to him in the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, pages 350-351:

Thus I have given a brief history of the manner in which the writings of the fathers, Abraham and Joseph, have been preserved, and how I came in possession of the same—a correct translation of which I shall give in its proper place.

As we look at Joseph Smith's translation, we note that he read the papyrus in the correct direction—i.e., from right to left. Since Smith was a student of Hebrew (which also reads in this direction) and since the last line in the first column ends on the right side, he probably did not have much difficulty figuring this out.

The most startling thing about Joseph Smith's purported translation is that he made so many English words out of such a small number of Egyptian characters. The reader can see this by looking at the photographs of the handwritten manuscript on page 312 of this book. We find that in one instance only one set makes 121, another set makes 177, and still another set makes 234 words! One simple looking character makes 76 words in the Book of Abraham. Below is a photograph of this character as it appears in one of the handwritten manuscripts set to the side of the words it makes in the Book of Abraham 1:13-14.



Notice that the Egyptian character is not much more complex than our letter E, yet it makes 76 words in English. These 76 words are composed of 334 letters. Now, is it really possible to imagine that one character (almost as simple as the English letter E) could be translated to make 76 words containing 334 letters? Dr. Nibley states that a person "does not have to be a meteorologist to report that the sky is clear or that it is snowing." We feel that this is true, and we also believe that a person doesn't have to be an Egyptologist to know that it would be impossible to translate thousands of words from a few Egyptian characters. Just common sense should tell a person that this would be absolutely impossible. Brigham Young University scholar James R. Clark, however, maintains that the characters Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham from were very condensed: "These symbols, judging from their translation, were a highly specialized type of ideograph where a few strokes of the pen or brush conveyed an entire concept" (*Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, p. 32).

In an article which was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, we (Heward and Tanner) stated:

. . . the small piece of papyrus pictured in illustration No. 1 appears to be the whole Book of Abraham!

This evidence raises several problems. One is that the Egyptian characters cannot conceivably have enough information channels (component parts) to convey the amount of material translated from them. Another is that the papyrus fragment in question dates from long after Abraham's time, much nearer, in fact, to the time of Christ. But most important, the Egyptian has been translated, and it has no recognizable connection with the subject matter of the Book of Abraham. . . . the papyrus fragment has been identified by reputable Egyptologists as a portion of the "Book of Breathings," a funerary text of the late Egyptian period. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pp. 95-96)

In Dr. Nibley's rebuttal to this article, he commented:

Take the Sen-Sen papyrus itself, for instance. Messrs Heward and Tanner raise three objections to it while completely overlooking their significance. The first is the comical disproportion between the Egyptian symbols and the English text which they suppose to be derived from them. They have left the phenomenon completely unexplained. The second is that the papyrus is too late to



belong to Abraham, but we have already shown that the expression “by his own Hand” was understood to mean that Abraham and no other wrote the book, and cannot serve as a criterion for dating the papyrus . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 103)






On page 101 of the same article, Nibley says:

Those who insist that “the Egyptian characters cannot conceivably have enough information . . . to convey the amount of material translated from them,” are the very parties who do conceive of just that, and insist that Joseph Smith did derive all that stuff from them. They can’t have it both ways.

We feel that Dr. Nibley is trying to transfer his own problem onto us. We did not mean to imply that Joseph Smith actually translated any of the characters. Our contention, in fact, is that he only pretended to translate the characters on the “Sensen” papyrus, and that the text of the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination. How could we make our position clearer?

Grant Heward has written a paper in which he shows that the character from which Joseph Smith “translated” Abraham 1:13-14 could not possibly have contained enough component parts to convey the 76-word message:

Let’s start with an illustration. Supposing someone showed you a round black dot on a piece of paper and said that it was writing. That it told the story of “Little Red Riding Hood”; the whole story—Little Red Riding Hood, her mother, her grandmother, the wolf, the woodcutter, the forest, the basket of cookies and all—everything! Could a single round dot carry that much meaning? Wouldn’t you have to already know the story and the dot simply be a reminder? Each thought requires at least one mark to express it. Other wise, the thought isn’t written. Any writing must contain enough symbols to reveal the meaning of each and every thought. Writing must be able to bring forth the meaning of a story one hasn’t heard before...

No one need understand Egyptian, however, to realize something is wrong with Joseph’s translations. Apply the “little-black-dot” method to the translated material found in the Grammar. (It’s part of the Book of Abraham included in the *Pearl of Great Price*.) If you’re willing to allow honesty and truth to determine the results of your own personal desires and fears, you will find you run out of Egyptian marks long before you run out of English thoughts. Take for example . In Egyptian, this could be no more than a single Egyptian word. However, we will number the strokes and divide up the character thus: . Giving more than the benefit of the doubt, we will assign thoughts to the dissected strokes. Of course, it is too much to hope this character could carry the meaning of even one-half of the first line, let alone the remaining lines. 1.  It, 2.  was made, 3.  after —.

Mr. Heward distributed this paper at the April, 1967, conference of the Mormon Church. Because of this “offense” he found himself in trouble with the church, and on June 21, 1967, he was excommunicated from the Mormon Church.

Dr. Hugh Nibley made this statement concerning Mr. Heward’s paper:

The attempt to give one’s own interpretation to picture writing is hard to resist. At the general conference in April 1967, for example, somebody circulated a mimeographed document bearing the frank and forthright title, “Why Would Anyone Want to Fight the Truth?” The “truth” in this case consisted of the author’s common-sense observations on the nature of Egyptian, such as, that an Egyptian symbol written with four elements “could be no more than a single Egyptian word.” But ancient languages have a way of ignoring our modern common-sense rules; the Egyptian in particular had an incurable weakness for abbreviations, omissions, transpositions, puns, and cryptograms, and their writings are full of signs which, even when we know their meaning (which is by no means always the case), require at least a sentence or two to explain them. (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, pp. 14-15)

Although the Egyptians did use some abbreviations, we do not know of any case where one Egyptian character could be expanded to make 76 English words. (In our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 2, page 168, there are a few examples of words that are sometimes abbreviated in Egyptian writing.)





































































Dr. Nibley’s statement that the Egyptians had “an incurable weakness for abbreviations” does not explain how 76 words can be derived from one character. Now that we have the original papyrus that Joseph Smith used as a basis for his Book of Abraham, the meaning of the character Nibley chooses to argue about is clear. It means “water,” and in hieroglyphic writing is as follows:



In hieratic writing the Egyptians did not take the time to make the lines wavy. Sometimes the lines curved down at the end of the stroke so that the character had the appearance of a backwards E.



While this character means water when it stands alone, it can also be used as a “generic determinative.” This means that in many cases it is used as only a part of **one** word. Its presence helped the Egyptians to know that the words it appeared in had some relationship to water. Below are some examples—written from left to right.


          	     
          	     
          	     
          	     

In the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used for his Book of Abraham this character is only a part of an Egyptian word which means “pool” or “lake.” Below is a photograph of it as it appears on the first line of the papyrus.



Thus we see that Joseph Smith “translated” 76 words out of an Egyptian character which is only a part of **one** word. The other part of the word was used to make 59 additional words (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 1:11-12). This makes a total of 135 words from one Egyptian word!

In another case Joseph Smith “translated” 177 words from just one Egyptian word. Below is a photograph of this word (as it appears in one of the handwritten manuscripts) and the words Joseph Smith derived from it. The words are taken from the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 1:16-19.

	16 And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father’s house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of;	king of Egypt; therefore I have come down to visit them, and to destroy him who hath lifted up his hand against thee, Abraham, my son, to take away thy life.
	17 And this because they have turned their hearts away from me, to worship the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh,	18 Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee.
	19 As it was with Noah so shall it be with thee; but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God.	

The Egyptian word which Joseph Smith pretended to translate 177 words from (found in the first line of the papyrus) is “Khons” —the name of an Egyptian moon-god. The fact that Joseph




Smith would make 177 English words from one Egyptian word is absolutely astounding! It shows very clearly that he did not understand the Egyptian language and that the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination.

As we have already shown, even Dr. Hugh Nibley finds the name of the Egyptian moon-god on this fragment of papyrus:


... “Osiris shall be towed toward the interior of the great pool of Khonsu,” which is the first line of the Joseph Smith Papyrus No. XI. (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyrus*, p. 47)

There is another word on the first line of the “Sensen” papyrus from which Joseph Smith “Translated” most of Abraham 1:11 in the *Pearl of Great Price*. Below is a photograph of this word as it appears in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words it makes in the Book of Abraham 1:11.

	11. Now, this priest had offered upon this altar three virgins at one time, who were the daughters of Onitah, one of the royal descent directly from the loins of Ham. These virgins were offered up because of their virtue; they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or of stone, therefore they were killed upon this altar, and it was done after the manner of the Egyptians.
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An Egyptologist would translate this as either “the” or “this.” Joseph Smith, however, makes 59 words out of this one Egyptian word.

Abraham 1:29, 30 and most of verse 31 were also “translated” from a few characters. Below is a photograph of these characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.


	29. Now, after the priest of Elkenah was smitten that he died, there came a fulfilment of those things which were said unto me concerning the land of Chaldea, that there should be a famine in the land.	the evil which he had determined against me, to take away my life.
	30. Accordingly a famine prevailed throughout all the land of Chaldea, and my father was sorely tormented because of the famine, and he repented of	31. But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood, the Lord my God preserved in mine own hands; therefore a knowledge of the beginning of the creation, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers, have I kept even unto this day,

These characters appear on the second line of the papyrus. When they are translated they make two English words, “born to” or “born of.” In his book, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyrus*, page 20, Dr. Nibley transliterates these characters as *ms n* and translates them into English as “born of.” The Egyptologist Klaus Baer reads “born to” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 132). Joseph Smith, however, “translates” 130 words from these characters!


The next word to the left on the papyrus is the name of one of the parents of the deceased. Professor Nibley renders it as “**Taykhebyt**,” and Klaus Baer reads “**Tikhebyt**.” Joseph Smith, however, broke this name into three different parts and translated a number of words from each part. The first part of this name he used to make part of Abraham 1:31.

	and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record, for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me.
---	--

The second part of the name he used to make Abraham 2:1 and most of verse 2.

	1. Now the Lord God caused the famine to wax sore in the land of Ur, insomuch that Haran, my brother, died; but Terah, my father, yet lived in the land of Ur, of the Chaldees.
	2. And it came to pass that I, Abraham, took Sarai to wife, and Nahor, my brother, took Milcah to wife,

The last part of the name Joseph Smith used to make the rest of Abraham 2:2.


	who was the daughter of Haran.
---	--------------------------------

The fact that Joseph Smith uses the last part of the name to make six words is especially interesting, for it does not have any phonetic value in the name itself. Klaus Baer says that it is a “sign indicating a woman’s name” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 132). The entire name is written on the papyrus as follows:




When we count the total number of words which Joseph Smith “translated” from this one Egyptian name we find that it amounts to 85. Among these 85 words we find all kinds of proper nouns: Ur (twice), Haran (twice), Terah, Chaldees, Abraham, Sarai, Nehor, Milcah and Lord God.

The last few characters on the left side of the second line were used by Joseph Smith to make Abraham 2:3-5. Below is a photograph of these characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript (we are using one of the manuscripts in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar in this case because the longer manuscript is not as clear at this point) set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.

	3. Now the Lord had said unto me: Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.	Sarai my wife; and also my father followed after me, unto the land which we denominated Haran.
	4. Therefore I left the land of Ur, of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and I took Lot, my brother’s son, and his wife, and	5. And the famine abated; and my father tarried in Haran and dwelt there, as there were many flocks in Haran; and my father turned again unto his idolatry, therefore he continued in Haran.

Joseph Smith made 109 English words out of these Egyptian characters. The first two characters are poorly written on the original papyrus, but they probably mean “justified” or “true of word.” The last characters make the word “likewise.”

Abraham 2:12-14 is made from less than one Egyptian word which is found on line 3 of the papyrus. Below is a photograph of the characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.

	12. Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee;	Elkenah, and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice, therefore let thy servant rise up and depart in peace.
	13. Thou didst send thine angel to deliver me from the gods of	14. So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

To an Egyptologist this Egyptian word means “heart” or “breast.” When Joseph Smith or his scribe copied these characters from the papyrus the last part of this word was left off. It is a representation of a “piece of flesh.” It helped the Egyptian to know that this word was in some way connected with one of the “parts of the body” (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Allan Gardiner, 3rd Edition, p. 467). It is written as follows:

This character was included with the next set of characters which Joseph Smith “translated,” but this left the word “heart” incomplete. Thus we find that Joseph Smith “translated” 95 words from a group of characters which did not even make one complete word!

### Basis of Anti-Black Doctrine

As we have already shown, the Mormon Church leaders used to teach that Africans were “cursed” with “a black skin,” and therefore could not hold the priesthood or receive equal treatment in the church. The basis for this anti-black doctrine is found in the pages of the Book of Abraham. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts wrote:

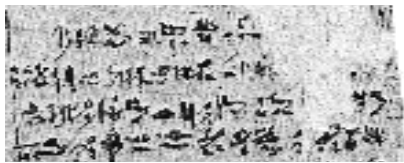
This work [the Book of Abraham] is rich both in doctrine and in historical incidents. . . . the descent of the black race (Negro) from Cain, the first murderer; the preservation of that race through the flood by the wife of Ham—"Egyptus," . . . "which signifies that which is forbidden"—the descendants of "Egyptus" were cursed as pertaining to the priesthood—. . . are contained in the book. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 128)

The Book of Abraham, chapter 1, verses 21-27 all seem to relate to the anti-black doctrine, but verse 26 is the most important. David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church, stated that this is the only "scriptural basis" for the anti-black doctrine. In a letter dated November 3, 1947, he said:

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

### From a Hole in the Papyrus

A man who spent a good deal of time examining this question stated that "Abr. 1:26 corresponds to what now and was in 1835 a hole in the papyrus." It is obvious that the characters from which the anti-black doctrine was "translated" are not now on the papyrus. They should appear on the right side of line 2, but the reader will see from the photograph below that the papyrus has been damaged and that this area is entirely missing.



In the handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham there are four sets of characters used by Joseph Smith to establish the anti-black doctrine. Below is a photograph of these characters set to the side of the words they make in the Book of Abraham.

14

20. Behold, Potiphar's Hill was in the land of Ur, of Chaldea. And the Lord broke down the altar of Elkenah, and of the gods of the land, and utterly destroyed them, and smote the priest that he died; and there was great mourning in Chaldea, and also in the court of Pharaoh; which Pharaoh signifies king by royal blood.

21. Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the aloins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

22. From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

15

23. The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden;

24. When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land.

16

25. Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal.

26. Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal

reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood.

17

27. Now, Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs would fain claim it from Noah, through Ham, therefore my father was led away by their idolatry;

28. But I shall endeavor, hereafter, to delineate the chronology running back from myself to the beginning of the creation, for the records have come into my hands, which I hold unto this present time.

The fact that the original papyrus is damaged in the area from which these characters were supposed to have been taken raises a number of questions. Was the papyrus damaged in Joseph Smith's time? Are the characters which appear in the handwritten manuscript the same ones which were written on the original papyrus? Could it be possible that these characters are the work of Joseph Smith's own imagination or that they were derived from another source?

The Egyptologist Klaus Baer feels that the papyrus was damaged when Joseph Smith worked with it and that three of the four groups of characters are "Incorrectly restored" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 131-132). He feels that the first group forms the name "Osiris"—the name of the Egyptian god of the dead—and that it is "still visible in traces" at the start of line two. We are inclined to agree with Baer concerning this matter because the characters copied in the handwritten manuscript do resemble the name "Osiris" (even though they are poorly written) and because the word "Osiris" would fit logically into the context of that which follows. However this may be, Klaus Baer feels that the other three groups of characters in the handwritten manuscript are not copies of the characters which appeared on the original papyrus. He observed:

. . . the three mounted pieces of the papyrus (PJS I, X, XI) are probably in about the same condition as in Joseph Smith's time, except that the places where the surface is now rubbed away, . . . were still in better condition. The photographs (especially of P. JS X) also show places where papyrus have parted company with the paper backing; . . . But apart from this, the lacunae [i.e., gaps in the papyri] evidently existed at the time the papyri were mounted, and Joseph Smith's copies indicate that they were already damaged at these points when he began to study them. . . . Joseph Smith drew four groups, of which the first . . . has the expected shape and is still visible in traces at the beginning of the line, while the remaining three (including the one corresponding to Abraham 1:26) are clearly proposed restorations that bear no resemblance to the signs that certainly were on the papyrus before it was damaged; note also the difference in general appearance or style. Our conclusion is essentially the same as before: The papyrus was slightly better preserved at the beginning of the line but otherwise broke off at the same point it does now. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 127-130)

Dr. Hugh Nibley claimed that "There is ample evidence that all the papyri though very fragile were in excellent condition when Joseph Smith worked with them—the clumsy patching, gluing, and sketching came later" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 181). In our *Case*, vol. 2, page 173, we demonstrated that Dr. Nibley was wrong about this matter. Nibley seems to have realized his error, and in his book, *The Message of the Joseph Smith*



Papyri, pages 2-3, he contradicts his former statement:

... our Book of Brethings is the most badly damaged of all the papyri. That it was already damaged in Joseph Smith's day is indicated by a number of things. For example, four large pieces are missing; ... chunks containing sizeable portions of several lines each, such as could have broken off only before the document was mounted. If they had broken off after the mounting, why were not the precious pieces returned to their proper place? Instead of that, they were used to fill in gaps in another damaged papyrus, J.S. No. IV, three of them being glued in upside down! ... the paper on which the latter was mounted bears the handwriting of Joseph Smith, and the drawings, maps, and texts on the back of the mounting papers of all the papyri surviving clearly indicates that the work was done in Kirtland, where Wilford Woodruff reports in 1836 the papyri were on display in the temple ... The damage could have been done during Chandler's frantic search for "diamonds or valuable metal" in the New York Customs House. ...

When in 1835 the brethren made attempts to "translate" the first two lines in terms of the Book of Abraham (if that is what they were doing, though it is exceedingly doubtful), they had the characters copied out for them by a single scribe in a bold and rather skillful hand, ... it is significant that when this scribe comes to those places in the manuscript which are today a blank, he also leaves a blank in his copy which has been filled out by another hand with thin and awkward characters which are far too many for the spaces indicated and definitely the wrong characters. This is another indication that the text was damaged from the first.

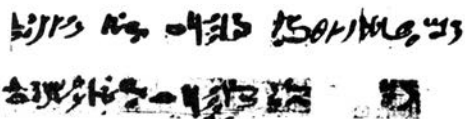
Actually, there is a great deal of evidence to show there were gaps in the papyri when they were in Joseph Smith's possession. William S. West, for instance, made this comment in 1837—just two years after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri:

These records were torn by being taken from the roll of embalming salve which contained them, and some parts entirely lost, but Smith is to translate the whole by divine inspiration and that which is lost, like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, can be interpreted as well as that which is preserved. (*A Few Interesting Facts Respecting the Rise, Progress and Pretensions of the Mormons*, as quoted in *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., p. 55)

James R. Clark, of the BYU, made this comment concerning the statement by William West:

West represents, in his pamphlet, that in the process (and this very often happens) of unrolling these papyrus rolls, in order to get them out of the embalming sap or bitumin, there were little parts torn and perhaps lost. This has happened with the Dead Sea Scrolls, incidentally, and many others, but he represents that the claim was made that it would not make any difference that part of the record was lost, that Joseph Smith could get that part by direct revelation, whereas he would get the rest of it by translation. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., pp. 55-56)

We feel that we can show that the "Sensen" papyrus was damaged at the time Joseph Smith worked with it and that the missing portion extended down into the third line of the papyrus by comparing the characters on the third line with the ones that appear in the handwritten manuscript. Below we have placed the characters from the handwritten manuscript directly above a photograph of the third line of the papyrus.

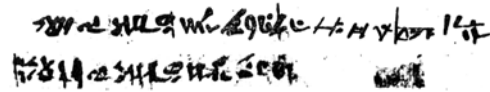


The reader will notice that as we go from left to right the characters line up with each other until we arrive at the break in the papyrus. At this point, however, there is a problem; there are too many characters in the handwritten manuscript to fit in the space from which they were supposed to have been taken. We feel that this shows that the gap in the papyrus existed in Joseph Smith's day and that he tried to supply some characters to fill the gap but misjudged the distance across and supplied too many.

Klaus Baer demonstrates from the handwritten manuscripts in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" that there was also a gap in the first line of the papyrus at the time Joseph Smith worked with it. He makes this comment concerning Joseph Smith's "proposed restoration":

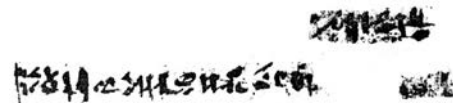
He gives three groups of which no trace now exists. Are they a copy or a proposed restoration of an already existing lacuna? There can be little doubt that they are the latter, since the parallel manuscripts of the Breathing Permit tell us what the missing signs were: ... this is not what Joseph Smith drew, and it follows that the three groups in question are only his suggested restoration. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 129)

Since part of lines 1 and 3 were apparently missing in Joseph Smith's time, it is logical to assume that part of line two—the line which was supposed to have contained the portion concerning blacks—was also missing. We feel that this can be verified by comparing the characters on the second line of the papyrus with the characters from the handwritten manuscript. In the illustration below we have placed the characters from the handwritten manuscript above the characters which are found on the papyrus.



The reader will note that we obtain the same result as we did in line 3. As we go from left to right the characters line up with each other until we arrive at the break in the papyrus. At that point there are too many characters to fit into the space from which they were supposed to have been taken. Thus, it appears that Joseph Smith's proposed restoration is incorrect. We do not know where Smith derived these characters, but they are not the characters which appeared upon the original papyrus. We must remember that he had manuscripts with hieratic, hieroglyphic and Arabic writing on them. He could have derived the characters from any of these manuscripts, or it is possible that they are the work of his own imagination. At any rate, they certainly were not found in this area of the "Sensen" papyrus.

Both Klaus Baer and Richard A. Parker fill in the missing area with the words "Osiris Hor, justified." There is very good reason to believe that their restoration is correct, for not only does it fit the context of the words which follow, but the characters which form the words "Osiris Hor, justified" fit exactly in this area. Below we have taken these words as they appear on the left side of the fragment and put them above the damaged area on the second line of the right side of the fragment.



The reader will see that the characters would fit perfectly into this area. Thus it would appear that the Egyptologists are correct with regard to this matter. The statement that "Abr. 1:26 corresponds to what now and was in 1835 a hole in the papyrus" seems to have been established, and the Mormon doctrine concerning blacks has been proven untrue.

### An Unfinished Work

Mormon writer James R. Clark remarks: "... Joseph Smith did not translate all of the record of the Book of Abraham and he did not publish all he translated" (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 113). On page 98 of the same book, James R. Clark writes:

This point of view that we do not have at present the records in their complete form is born out by a published statement of John Taylor ... Joseph Smith not only translated more of the records of Abraham and Joseph than we now have in print, but ... he fully intended to continue the publication of his translation in the *Times and Seasons*.

The statement by John Taylor which James R. Clark refers to is



found in the *Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, page 95: “We would further state that we had the promise of Br. Joseph, to furnish us with further extracts from the Book of Abraham.” This statement was printed February 1, 1843, but the last extract from the Book of Abraham was printed May 16, 1842. Therefore, the Book of Abraham as it is presently printed in the *Pearl of Great Price* is incomplete. James R. Clark once stated: “To the question of whether these records are lost forever or whether they will some day be re-discovered and the translation completed as Joseph Smith intended, we can only answer ‘God’s ways are not man’s ways’” (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 99).

Since Joseph Smith was working on the right side of the fragment, it would seem logical that if he had continued he would have “translated” the left side of the small “Sensen” papyrus (see photograph on page 297 of this book) and then started on the larger “sensen” papyrus.

These fragments have now been translated by Egyptologists, and their translations give additional proof that Joseph Smith was working with a pagan document.

Richard Parker has translated the left side of the small “Sensen” papyrus. His translation includes restorations from the Louvre Papyrus No. 3284. These restorations are marked with brackets. His translation reads as follows:

1. The beginning [of the Book of Breathings made by Isis for her brother Osiris, to make his soul live, to make his body live, to make young his members]
2. again, [so that he may attain the] horizon with his father Re’ (the sun), [so that his soul may appear in glory in the sky in the disk of Yah (the moon), so that his body may shine as Sah (Orion) on the body of Nut (the sky), and to]
3. cause [the like of th]is to happen to the Osiris Hor, justified, [born of Taykhebt..... Hide (it), hide (it)!]
4. Don’t [allow] any man to read it. [It] is profitable [for a man in the necropolis. He truly lives anew millions of times. Words to be recited]:
5. Hail, [Osiris H]or, justified, born of Tay[khebyt..... You are pure; your heart is pure, your front is purified; your back is]
6. cleansed; your middle is in bd-natron [and hsmn-natron. There is no bad member of yours. Purified is the Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebt, engendered by]
7. Remenykay, justified, with the sdyt-water [of the Field of Offerings, north of the Field of Locusts. Have purified you Edjo and]
8. Nekhbet at the fourth hour of the night and the fourth hour [of the day. Come thou, Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebyt, that you may enter the Broad Hall of the]
9. Two Goddesses of Righteousness, you being purified from [all] baseness [and all wrongdoing. Stone of Righteousness is your name. Hail, Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebyt! You enter]
10. [the Otherworld] very pure. Have purified you [the Two Goddesses of Righteousness in the great Broad Hall. A cleansing has been made for you in the Broad Hall of Geb and your members have been purified in]
11. [the Broad Hall of Shu. You] see Re’ when he sets [as Atum in the evening. Amon is with you, giving you well-being and Ptah]
12. [fashions your limbs]. You enter into the horizon with Re’ [..... (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pp. 98-99)

Klaus Baer has translated the same text, and his rendition is basically the same (see *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 120-21).

Dr. Hugh Nibley seems to want us to believe that this has some connection to the Book of Abraham:

... the main point the critics wish to make is that, “most important, the Egyptian has been translated, and it has no recognizable connection with the subject matter in the Book of Abraham.” With what subject matter does it have recognizable connection, bearing in mind that “. . . the underlying mythology . . . must be largely inferred?” (e.g. B.D., p. 6). Even the casual reader can see that there

is cosmological matter here, with the owner of the papyrus longing to shine in the heavens as some sort of physical entity along with the sun, moon and Orion; also he places great importance on his patriarchal lineage and wants to be pure, nay baptized, so as to enter a higher kingdom, to achieve, in fact, resurrection and eternal life. And these teachings and expressions are secret, to be kept scrupulously out of the hands of the uninitiated. And all these things have nothing to do with the subject matter of the *Pearl of Great Price*? . . . let’s not get ahead of the game, or overlook any possibility that there might be something there after all—“If it looks like an elephant,” Professor Popper used to say, “call it an elephant!” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pp. 103-104)

The fact that Dr. Nibley would try to make parallels between this pagan text and the Book of Abraham shows how desperate he is to make a case for the Book of Abraham.

The Egyptologist Klaus Baer has translated the larger “Sensen” fragment. It is likewise filled with pagan material. We highly recommend Baer’s rendition because he is very precise in his work and has spent a great deal of time with this fragment. His translation appears in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 121-124.

The names of at least **fifteen** Egyptian gods or goddesses are mentioned on the two “Sensen” fragments, but not a word about Abraham.

## Complete Confusion

It has been thirteen years since Egyptologists translated the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his “Book of Abraham,” yet Mormon apologists have **not** been able to explain how Joseph Smith derived the Book of Abraham from this pagan text. The fact that Mormon writers are in a real dilemma over this matter is very evident from their writings. The following statements appear in Jay M. Todd’s book:

In the Church Historian’s Office are four handwritten copies of parts of our present Book of Abraham. . . .

Down the left-hand margin of the pages on copies 1, 3, 4 are some symbols, apparently Egyptian. Interestingly enough, the symbols, appear to have been taken from the right-hand side of fragment “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ Text,” recently found by Dr. Atiya. The symbols appear in order on the handwritten copies, right to left, as they appear in the first several lines of the papyrus fragment. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pp. 318-319)

The scroll, according to Dr. Baer, was made for a priest named Hor, for his death and mummification ceremonies.

Obviously, if this report by Dr. Baer is accurate, it suggests more than ever that either the papyrus “translated” by the Prophet is still unavailable or that the seer stone provided the actual text of which only a shadow and much corrupted version might have been on the papyri fragments. . . .

As readers are already aware, the relationship—if any—between the Egyptian symbols on some of the handwritten copies of parts of the Book of Abraham and the text of the Book of Abraham and the appearance of these same Egyptian symbols on one of the papyrus fragments found in New York City is a most intriguing concern. Indeed, some critics of the Church are attempting to discredit the Book of Abraham and the Prophet by claiming that no relationship could exist between the symbols, and the Prophet was merely trying to deceive those around him when he permitted the symbols to be placed alongside the English text. Dr. Nibley has suggested, however, that if there is no relationship between the symbols and the text, then Joseph Smith would have seen none either, nor, from our knowledge of the Prophet’s character and personality, would he have attempted to deceive anyone by suggesting a relationship where he knew none existed. Indeed, Dr. Nibley has intimated that there still could be a relationship between the symbols and the English text of the Book of Abraham. Obviously, the matter of identifying the actual source of the Book of Abraham

is still unresolved, . . . (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, pp. 377-380)

However, if Joseph Smith did turn to the seer stone to read that which appeared, one wonders what—if anything—the Prophet received from the papyri in his possession. Perhaps the rolls contained a perverted and corrupt version of Abraham's thought, and consequently, it was necessary to turn to the seer stone for the original writings. Perhaps the Prophet did indeed have some papyri that miraculously had been preserved, papyri that contained the record of Abraham. . . . He apparently regarded the records with some respect. Whatever, it is true that as a result of his experience with the Egyptian mummies and records, whether they served as a catalyst for further revelations or whether he was able to receive an English version of some symbols on a fragment in his possession through the seer stone, the Prophet Joseph was able to produce a new volume of scripture that was and is regarded as holy and sacred. (*Ibid.*, pp. 223-224)

Was it really the handwriting of Abraham, as Josiah Quincy reported, or was it a rewrite of a rewrite of something that originally had been said by Abraham? . . . Did the papyri indeed contain the present Book of Abraham, or was it a much corrupted version of what originally had been written by Abraham, and thus, for his purpose also, the Prophet had to receive the original version through the seer stone? These are major questions. . . . Perhaps some of the papyri actually did contain the actual transcript of our Book of Abraham. It may be that the Prophet had told no one from which actual fragment had come the Book of Abraham, and because of this no one recognized the importance of any or all of the pieces. In time perhaps we shall know. But this much we do know—we do not know the answer now. (*Ibid.*, pp. 288-290)

At the Book of Abraham Symposium, the Mormon scholar Dr. Henry Eyring made these strange comments:

Now, the Lord didn't need the Book of Abraham—those scrolls. He was pretty well clear on everything without that. So whatever was on them wouldn't have helped him much, I suspect, and so the essential ingredient in the Book of Abraham is whatever the Prophet was inspired to write down. . . .

To me, it's very exciting to study the Book of Abraham itself to find out how the Lord works. . . . I wouldn't look in it to find out whether He does work or not—I already know that. I also wouldn't look into the matter to find out whether I thought Joseph Smith was a Prophet, because I think there are a hundred things—in fact, to anyone who is curious, I would be glad to enumerate them—where it seems to me evident that he was much more than that. . . . I don't like to say it in this crude way, but I think it's quite an interesting way, maybe a shocking way: it wouldn't make a bit of difference to me if the scholars, studying the scrolls that led the Prophet to think about the problem of Abraham and write about it—it wouldn't make a bit of difference to me if they discovered that it was a bill of lading for wheat in the lower Nile. You see, some people don't feel that way about it. But I think the Lord actually inspired Joseph. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 3)

## Just a Memory Device?

The Mormon scholars John Tvedtnes and Richley H. Crapo wrote an article in which the following appeared:

In two different sections of the "Alphabet and Grammar," hieratic symbols taken in order from the "Small Sen-Sen Fragment" (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968) have been juxtaposed to English symbols (i.e. words) comprising the text of the Book of Abraham (see Fig. 1 and 2). This correlation was pointed out by certain nonmembers of the Church shortly after the publication of photographs of the papyri. These same persons believed that the juxtaposition of small groups of hieratic symbols with English symbols in the "Alphabet and Grammar" implies a relationship of translation. At first sight, this appears to be a reasonable assumption. Four points of fact support it:

1. Joseph Smith, according to his own testimony, was working on a translation.

2. This translation was later published as the Book of Abraham, the text of part of which appears in English symbols or writing in the "Alphabet and Grammar."

3. The Book of Abraham was supposedly being translated from the Egyptian papyri. Historical documentation found with the recently-acquired papyri prove that the "Small Sen-Sen Fragment" was among those used by Joseph Smith.

4. The "Small Sen-Sen Fragment" attaches to and follows (as described in Abraham 1:12-14) the papyrus fragment which depicts "Facsimile 1" (see Fig. 3).

This led to an objection on the part of the non-members: the size of the English text as opposed to that of the Egyptian text (i.e. the 25:1 ratio of the words) seems unbelievably high. Recently, Dee Jay Nelson, a member of the Church and a philologist of the Egyptian language, has accepted this view.

We should therefore reply to these objections if we wish to continue to maintain that the Book of Abraham is scripture, the more so because some respected members of the Church are beginning to accept the rationale behind the argument presented.

If the Book of Abraham is to be presented as authentic, there are two possible directions which can be taken:

A. We can simply discount the objection to the ratio of English to Egyptian symbols, which implies proving that the Book of Abraham text does indeed come from the Sen-Sen text.

B. We can show that there is a relationship between the juxtaposed symbols other than that of translation; we must find some other reason why Joseph Smith put them in juxtaposition.

As previously indicated, assumption "A" seems to be the more desirable, especially in the apparent absence of a reasonable substitute explanation for the juxtaposition. But this possibility appears to have been ruled out by the scholarly translations of the Sen-Sen text by Mr. Nelson, Dr. Richard A. Parker, and Dr. Klaus Baer, showing it to be a normal Egyptian funerary document.

Dr. Nibley, however, still seems to agree with us that possibility "A", a relationship of translation, is the more desirable explanation, for in recent articles he places emphasis on the possibility of a "supercryptogram," i.e. a deeper level of hidden translation. But no one has yet suggested what such a supercryptogram might be. . . .

Although it is true, as pointed out by the non-member critics, that the English text contains many principal words and ideas not reflected in the Egyptian hieratic symbols, we recognized some months ago certain cases in which the hieratic words are found in the corresponding English text.

There was clearly some connection, but its exact nature was not apparent. We theorized that perhaps each set of Egyptian symbols represented merely a "key-word" which would bring to mind a certain memorized set of phrases, which was part of a longer oral tradition. . . .

We propose, therefore, as a working hypothesis: either (1) that the Sen-Sen Papyrus was used as a memory device by Abraham (and perhaps by his descendants), each symbol or group of symbols bringing to mind a set number of memorized phrases relating to Abraham's account of his life, or (2) that the hieratic words in the "Alphabet and Grammar" are simply related to core-concepts in the corresponding English story of Abraham. Either hypothesis requires that Joseph Smith had a working knowledge of the hieratic words on the papyrus. In the second case, much of the English text may have been supplied by Joseph Smith as an inspired commentary on the hieratic words.

Viewed in this light, the Book of Abraham seems not to be a direct translation of the Egyptian text appearing on the Sen-Sen papyrus. Indeed, since the oral tradition itself would have long since disappeared with the death of Abraham or the last of his descendants acquainted with the story, the Book of Abraham would have had to be revealed to Joseph

Smith, perhaps in connection with the use of the Egyptian symbols, inasmuch as the Prophet does relate long English passages to single Egyptian words or short phrases. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, October 25, 1968, pp. 1-4)

The authors of this article have prepared a chart which they feel shows a relationship between the “Sen-sen” fragment and the text of the Book of Abraham. Most of their parallels are very weak. For instance, they note that an Egyptian word meaning “in” or “inside of” was used as the basis for Abraham 1:7b-10. Joseph Smith “translated” 122 words from this one Egyptian word. Because they find the word “in” among these words they feel that they have a parallel. We feel that it is just a coincidence, for Joseph Smith used the word “in” frequently in his Book of Abraham. In fact, it is found at least sixteen times in the first chapter of the Book of Abraham alone!

On page 324 of this book, we pointed out that Joseph Smith “translated” most of Abraham 1:11 (59 words) from one Egyptian word meaning “the” or “this.” The authors of the article cited above also state that the Egyptian word means “this, the, (a specific thing),” but because the word “this” is found among the 59-word “translation,” they feel they have evidence that Joseph Smith understood the hieratic writing. They find the word “this” toward the beginning of verse 11: “Now this priest . . .” (previously mentioned.) Actually, we find the words “this” or “the” six times in this 59-word “translation.” These words are used at least 130 times in the first chapter of the Book of Abraham. We feel that it would be unusual if they did not appear in the 59-word “translation.”

Perhaps the best parallel they are able to find is that Joseph Smith “translated” the words “who were the daughters of Haran” out of a “determinative for woman” (see page 324 of this book).

In their article Tvedtnes and Crapo argued that when Joseph Smith transcribed Egyptian words from the papyri he usually took complete words and this showed that he had a knowledge of Egyptian:

. . . when he transcribed a word composed of five hieratic symbols, he never made the mistake (statistically inevitable for anyone to whom the sign symbols are only a meaningless jumble of lines) of transcribing only three or four of the word’s five signs, or of transcribing six or seven by including elements of the preceding or following words. . . . The transcription of only three of the words involved breaking them in two, and the breaks were always made at valid morpheme boundaries. . . . a person with no insight into the meaning of the symbols would have been bound to make a false division. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, October 25, 1968, p. 4)

The claim that the transcription of the words showed that Joseph Smith had a knowledge of Egyptian could not stand up under investigation, and in 1970, Richley Crapo had the honesty to admit that he had been mistaken:

It has been pointed out that Joseph Smith transcribed individual words from the Egyptian papyrus as only one who understood the language could do: . . . An emic test of this probability . . . involved simply the asking of persons untrained in the Egyptian language or script and uninfluenced by an appeal to inspiration to mark hypothetical divisions between the symbols on a copy of this papyrus. The results were that every person requested marked acceptable divisions between words or morphemes. Thus, the conclusions reached by an emic study are the same as those of Dr. Nelson: Joseph Smith’s handling of the Egyptian words was unremarkable; he did nothing in this respect that others could not do. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 31)

Another serious defect in the argument advanced by Tvedtnes and Crapo is that they based part of their parallels on the meanings of the names “Hor” and “Taykhebyt.” This would mean that it would have been impossible to have used the “Book of Breathings” papyrus until the time that “Taykhebyt” lived and had a son by the name of “Hor,” and this would have been sometime around the time of Christ. Even John Tvedtnes admits that the papyri date “from Ptolemaic or early Christian times, and thus follow Abraham by about two millennia” (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, p. 72).

While the text of the Book of Breathings might remain the same for many years, the names would have to be changed for each mummy. Therefore, even if the text of the Book of Abraham had been memorized to or concealed in the Book of Breathings, the changing of the names would have completely fouled up the system.

At any rate, the fact that The Society For Early Historic Archaeology at Brigham Young University would use the article cited above in defense of the Book of Abraham reveals the weakness of their case. Even Dr. Nibley was influenced by this theory. In *Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 101-102, he made this statement about the relationship between the “Sensen” text and the Book of Abraham:

We still suspect that there is a relationship between the two documents, but we don’t know what it is. . . . R. Crapo and J. A. Tvedtnes, presented an interesting hypothesis to explain the relationship between the Breathing Certificate and the Book of Abraham. . . . it seems that the idea is that if one takes the actual meaning of the hieratic signs in the order in which they occur, they can be roughly matched up with certain general themes of the Book of Abraham which occur in the same order. . . . This would make the “Sensen” papyrus a sort of prompter’s sheet. True, the document tells a connected and consistent story, but then it would have to do that in order to serve as an effective aid to memory by itself being easily memorized.

Far-fetched as it may seem, there are many ancient examples of this sort of thing, the best-known of which is the alphabet itself. . . . We are now being advised that “if we are to understand the Jewish authors correctly, we must examine their work carefully to see whether they contain a gematria,” that is, condensed and hidden code-writing, which turns up in the most surprising places. . . . In a preliminary statement in *Dialogue* it was suggested that the hieratic symbols placed over against the long sections of the Book of Abraham might be viewed not as texts but as topic headings. We still don’t know what the connection is, but one thing is certain—that the relationship between the two texts was never meant to be that of a direct translation.

The following appeared in the *LDSSA Commentary*, published by the Latter-day Saint Student Association, Institute of Religion:

. . . Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes, have instituted a new approach to the study of Joseph Smith Papyri. This approach, which is quickly gaining support from LDS scholars, was prompted by the discovery by several leading Egyptologists that the translation of the Egyptian Sensen fragment, which Joseph Smith directly connected to the Book of Abraham text, does not correspond to the Abrahamic story as we have it in the *Pearl of Great Price*, nor does it deal with Abraham.

Crapo and Tvedtnes theorize that, while Abraham had nothing to do with the production of the Sen-sen text, the papyrus may have been used as a mnemonic device to support an oral tradition. (*LDSSA Commentary*, February 24, 1969)

In the March 27, 1969, issue of the same paper Crapo and Tvedtnes wrote:

The rediscovery of the Joseph Smith Papyri . . . has made it possible to reformulate entirely our concepts about the process by which Joseph Smith produced the Book of Abraham. . . .



Lacking the original papyri or any significant amount of information about the materials which stimulated the writing of the Book of Abraham, the members of the Church have always assumed that book to have been a literal translation of a document written by the hand of Abraham himself. Now it is possible to supersede this naive view with a deeper understanding of the origins of that book. . . . One of the recently acquired papyri, it seems, is directly related to the Book of Abraham. . . . It appears, therefore, that Joseph Smith connected the Book of Abraham to the Small Senses Fragment. . . .

Our own translation and those of several Egyptologists of the Small Senses Fragment have demonstrated that this papyrus is part of an Egyptian funerary document. Its relationship to the Book of Abraham must, then, be something other than has long been thought. The possibility of its use as a mnemonic device in connection with an Abrahamic oral tradition was suggested by our further studies.

Jay M. Todd reproduces the study by Richley Crapo and John Tvedtnes; however, he asked Klaus Baer, the Egyptologist from the University of Chicago, for his opinion of it. In his reply Klaus Baer stated:

The English passages in the Book of Abraham corresponding to the Egyptian signs are long, and the parts cited by Crapo, in which he finds similarities to the Egyptian, are related to the whole by no visible principle—often they are a very secondary part of the text. This is most extreme in the case of the section corresponding to the Egyptian py (“the” or “this”); you are hardly going to find an English sentence without an article or a demonstrative, so what does the coincidence signify? Nothing. . . . By that method similarities can be uncovered between any two texts so long as one is willing to look long enough and you’re willing to use your imagination. The important thing: Unless we can show, in detail, how Joseph Smith obtained the Book of Abraham from the Egyptian text, applying a rational method that others could follow, we cannot speak of “translation” in any ordinary sense of the word, and this Crapo has not succeeded in doing, nor do I see how it can be done. Even if the signs were just key words somehow suggesting the text, the choice would be most strange, and one would expect, at the very least, to find Abraham mentioned, something to connect the Egyptian with the Book of Abraham. (Statement by Dr. Klaus Baer, as quoted in *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 386)

Jay M. Todd seems to have great respect for Dr. Baer’s opinion and refers to him as “an internationally regarded Egyptologist . . . an honest non-Mormon—one of genuine good will . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 384).

Benjamin Urrutia wrote the following in an attempt to explain why Joseph Smith’s translation differs from that given by Egyptologists:

In this essay my main objectives shall be to prove that the two titles that have been ascribed to PJS (“The Breathing Permit of Hor” and “The Book of Abraham”) are both correct, and that the two translations . . . are both good and acceptable translations, each in its own way. . . .

The reasons that make the scholars “rage” and “imagine a vain thing” are that; a) Joseph’s translations of PJS is very different from their own; and b) the Book of Abraham is disproportionately long (136 very long verses) as contrasted to column I of PJS (less than 70 characters), the ground it covers.

These people obviously think they can have their cake and eat it, but they can’t have it both ways. . . .

Abraham, . . . wrote the book that bears his name. This document was brought back to Egypt by Abraham’s grandson, Israel.

But when “there arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph” (Ex. 1:8), what became of the sacred book? . . .

The best way to save the book would have been to camouflage it to look like an Egyptian document instead of a Semitic one. Most likely it was already written in Egyptian characters, but that wasn’t enough.

An enterprising Hebrew, whom we shall call X, conceived a code in which every character of a Mizraite funerary inscription, with only a few minor (though significant) changes, was the equivalent of two verses, more or less, of the book he was trying to save, the original of which no longer exists. There even exists the possibility (it would be more farfetched, but also more logical) that X actually created “The Breathing Permit of Hor” (B P H), to suit his purposes, and later the Egyptians accepted it as sacred, without suspecting its origin. . . . the Book of Abraham plus X’s manipulations equals the Papyrus Joseph Smith.

But once the BA was rendered into code, what chance was there of ever decoding it again? X being dead, the secret was lost, and not a convention of all the world’s cryptographers could find it again. The book was in all appearance, and even in reality, “The Breathing Permit of Hor.” What was there to be done? What was the key to the lost code? The answer: the Urim and Thummim: . . .

When Moses left Egypt, he took a copy of the B P H with him. Since he had the Urim and Thummim, the Book of Abraham was brought to light a second time. (It must have helped Moses in the writing of his own books) . . .

Of course, the papyrus we have is not the original, but a late copy of Saitic times. Mormon and Gentile agree on this. . . . it should also be clear that this “translation” was not a translation in the usual sense of the word (as that of the Inspired Version was not, either), and that no man, no matter how wise or imaginative, could have done it by any normal means. . . . Therefore, my friends, cease raging, cease imagining vain things. Joseph was a prophet, not a linguist. Dr. Baer is a linguist, not a prophet. Each of these men did what he could do, and admirably well, but he could not have done the same kind of translation the other did (even from the same document). (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1969, pp. 130, 131, 134)

Richley H. Crapo and John A. Tvedtnes wrote an article in which they stated:

There is no evidence of the Sen-Sen text having existed prior to 600 BC. Considering all logical possibilities, one could contend that the non-existence of the document prior to that date is unprovable, lack of evidence not being a proof. . . . True, the lack of an example of the Sen-Sen text of age greater than 600 BC does argue against any direct contact between Abraham himself and this text. On the other hand, it is possible to consider Abraham as having authored his own story in oral form, and this oral tradition, after being passed down, as having been adapted (ca. 600 BC) to the Egyptian document by a follower of Abraham, for mnemonic purposes. At this period of history, many Jewish colonies are known to have existed in Egypt.

Considering Abraham, then, as the author of the Book of Abraham, we have the following as possible relationships of the Sen-Sen text to that book:

- a. Abraham wrote the Sen-Sen text as a mnemonic device
- b. Abraham used the already extant Sen-Sen text as a mnemonic device.
- c. Abraham wrote his story and others adapted the written account to the Sen-Sen text, thus making Abraham’s story an oral account.

Another approach would be to attribute authorship of the Abraham story, as we know it, not to Abraham himself, but to his followers of a later date, on the basis of preexisting traditions regarding Abraham. Though a logical possibility, one need not in this case attribute authorship of the Sen-Sen text (with its pagan content) to these followers who used it. Two possible relationships would fit this situation:

- a. The followers composed the Sen-Sen text for use as a mnemonic device in connection with an oral account passed down from Abraham himself.
- b. The followers composed the Abraham story, based on oral traditions passed down to them (and perhaps some sayings actually attributed to Abraham), building it around the

already extant Sen-Sen text.

Finally, exhausting the logical possibilities, one may consider Joseph Smith as the “author” of the Abraham story, on the basis of inspiration rather than translation. In this case, the Sen-Sen document would be a purely Egyptian one, never having even been seen by Abraham himself, but a document which did provide a message which acted as a “springboard” for the mind of the Prophet to seek inspiration about the meanings of the individual words, which, as we have shown, he must have understood, and the relationship of these to the story of Abraham, with which the Prophet felt them to be connected. And, of course, a logical (though improbable) possibility is a purely modern uninspired authorship. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, BYU, June 2, 1969, pp. 11-12)

In 1970 John Tvedtnes wrote an article in which he stated:

It should, first of all, be made clear that Abraham (or whoever actually composed the text of the Book of Abraham—presumably in the Hebrew language) made use of an already extant Egyptian text, in all probability . . . the person using the Egyptian text as a mnemonic device would have been required to know the Hebrew (?) text of the Book of Abraham by heart (or, at least well enough so that the key-words would bring it to mind and fill any gaps in the memory). . . .

Moreover, the key-word in the Egyptian text need not represent the key thought in the oral text—and, indeed, probably will not so represent it, if the written text used as a mnemonic device predates the oral text. . . .

There remain two questions of major importance to be answered:

(1) Why was the text orally transmitted? (2) How did Joseph Smith come by the text if, indeed, it was not written on any document that he possessed.

(1) The answer to the first question is, simply, that portions of Abraham’s record dealt with the Temple ceremony (see Joseph Smith’s explanations of Figs. 7 through 20 of Facsimile 2), and could therefore not be committed to writing. Additionally, we cannot be certain that the composer of the text knew how to write. . . .

I propose that the Book of Abraham was just such an esoteric oral tradition, passed down by word of mouth by the righteous descendants of Abraham until it was eventually lost.

(2) This being the case, we now come to the question of how Joseph Smith came into possession of the Abrahamic story. Here, I propose that he received it by direct revelation or inspiration, possibly even from a heavenly messenger, who, during his lifetime, was one of the transmitters of the tradition. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, BYU, April 1970, pp. 7-9)

These statements clearly demonstrate the great lengths Mormon writers will go to in their attempt to save the Book of Abraham. It seems they will propose almost any fantastic thesis rather than accept the simple truth that the Book of Abraham is a spurious work. These new theories certainly are not in harmony with Joseph Smith’s statements concerning the papyrus and the translation. Joseph Smith never mentioned anything about a “mnemonic device” or “super-cryptograms”; instead, he clearly stated: “. . . I commenced the translation of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that one of the rolls contained the writing of Abraham. . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236)

In one of Joseph Smith’s speeches he definitely claimed that he received information by translating the papyri: “I learned it by translating the papyrus which is now in my house. I learned a testimony concerning Abraham . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 476)

On still another occasion Joseph Smith claimed that the Book of Abraham was “a correct translation” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 351). If the Book of Abraham is not a literal translation of the papyrus, then the introduction to it which appears in the *Pearl of Great Price* is a misrepresentation, for it plainly states:

TRANSLATED FROM THE PAPYRUS, BY JOSEPH SMITH.

A Translation of some ancient Records, that have fallen into our hands from the catacombs of Egypt.—The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written by his own hand, upon papyrus. (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 29)

### “Bushels of Nonsense”

It would appear that Professor Nibley wants us to forget about the papyri and judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old apocryphal writings. He wrote the following in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

But after all, what do the papyri tell us? That Joseph Smith had them, that he studied them, and that the smallest and most insignificant-looking of them is connected in some mysterious way to the *Pearl of Great Price*. There is really very little new here to shed light on the Book of Abraham. We must look elsewhere for further light and knowledge . . . We are completely in the dark as to how it was produced, but we are anything but helpless with the wealth of detailed material it offers us to test it by. The strange history, the strange rites, the strange doctrines all meet us again and again in ancient sources far removed from Egypt but all connected with the name of Abraham. . . . No Egyptian evidence, perhaps, but then Egyptian sources are not the only sources, and it is folly to come out with a verdict about the Book of Abraham until we have studied fully and carefully the great and growing corpus of ancient Abrahamic literature, even if it takes us years to get through it.

For after all, the Book of Abraham itself is a book of legends about Abraham which can at least give us hints as to whether Joseph Smith was making it all up or not. . . .

Now the Abraham literature is of course a great hodge-podge of stuff coming from many different sources and many different centuries. But because of the ways in which legends and traditions were swapped around anciently, with very ancient and authentic bits sometimes turning up in the most unlikely places, often buried in bushels of nonsense, we cannot escape the obligation of reading everything. . . .

So now it is time to hear the other side of the story, for after all it is just possible that there are things that might be said in favor of the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pp. 102-105)

It has become very obvious to many people that Dr. Nibley is just stalling. He has **no** answers to give his people, and he is trying to make the issue as confused and drawn out as possible.

It should be noted that in the article cited above, Hugh Nibley says that “the Book of Abraham itself is a book of legends about Abraham . . .” Now, what does Nibley mean by this statement? How could it be a “book of legends about Abraham” unless it was written after Abraham was dead? If Professor Nibley is claiming that the Book of Abraham was composed after Abraham’s death, he is certainly denying the traditional view regarding this matter. Not only does the Introduction to the Book of Abraham state that it was written by Abraham’s “own hand upon papyrus,” but the text of the book itself is in the first person:

. . . I Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence; (*Pearl of Great Price*, Abraham 1:1)

At any rate, Dr. Nibley wants us to ignore the evidence which the “Sensen” fragment furnishes and wait for “years” while he searches through bushels of nonsense” and “legends” hoping that he may find something that may be used as evidence for the Book of Abraham. Such a suggestion is absurd. Why should we ignore the evidence furnished by the original papyrus and judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old Apocryphal writings? The Mormon people cannot afford to wait for “years” while Dr. Nibley searches through this “great hodgepodge of

stuff.” Now is the time to face this problem. The evidence furnished by the original papyrus is very clear. The Book of Abraham is a spurious work. It has no historical basis, and it is plain to see that it is a work of Joseph Smith’s own imagination!

### Facing the Truth

After we published Grant Heward’s work on the papyri in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, we received a letter in which the following appeared:

I’ve read your articles and in spite of everything you said I testify I know the Book of Abraham is the Word of God. If I was President McKay I would order Grant S Heward be assassinated.

In a letter dated July 20, 1968, this same man stated: “God knows I don’t really want the murder of Mr. Heward.” Instead, he had another solution. He felt that the President of the Church should order that the papyrus be destroyed:

I’ve come to the conclusion that the manuscript found was not the manuscript the Prophet Joseph Smith used. I think it is a forgery to force the Church to give the Negroes the priesthood. If I was President McKay I would have the manuscript destroyed.

We do not feel that this man is typical of the Mormon people. In fact, his letters show evidence that he is not a well adjusted person. Nevertheless, his thinking concerning the Book of Abraham is somewhat similar to that of many other Mormons. They would not go so far as to suggest that the papyrus or Grant Heward be destroyed, but they feel that the Book of Abraham is the “Word of God” and that any evidence to the contrary must be ignored. Some of Dr. Nibley’s suggestions concerning this matter are almost as ridiculous as the idea that the papyrus is a “forgery.”

The Mormon writer Klaus Hansen makes these observations in an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1970, page 110:

To a professional historian, for example, the recent translation of the Joseph Smith papyri may well represent the potentially most damaging case against Mormonism since its foundation. Yet the “Powers That Be” at the Church Historian’s Office should take comfort in the fact that the almost total lack of response to this translation is an uncanny proof of Frank Kermode’s observation that even the most devastating acts of disconfirmation will have no effect whatever on true believers. Perhaps an even more telling response is that of the “liberals,” or cultural Mormons. After the Joseph Smith papyri affair, one might well have expected a mass exodus of these people from the Church. Yet none has occurred. Why? Because cultural Mormons, of course, do not believe in the historical authenticity of the Mormon scriptures in the first place. So there is nothing to disconfirm.

Marvin S. Hill, who teaches history at Brigham Young University, seems to feel that the church can survive the attack on the Book of Abraham by appealing to the fact that it is led by revelation at the present time:

While Mormons venerate their sacred books...the final word comes not from any scriptural passage but from the living oracles. The Saints hang more upon the words of their prophets than upon the canons of the written law. This is one reason it may make little difference to them if they are told that some of the divine books have been altered, or even that the accepted view of the origin of one of their books might have to be revised. . . . Yesterday’s mistakes and revisions seem insignificant when compared with the advantage of social stability which derives from waiting upon the word of the Lord. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1970, p. 96)

Our observations lead us to believe that there are a growing number of Mormons who are rejecting the Book of Abraham. Grant Heward was one of the first to openly attack its authenticity, and for this offense he was called in by church leaders to stand trial for “alleged circulation of literature challenging the validity of the

translation of a standard work of the Church” (Letter dated June 14, 1967). He was excommunicated from the church on June 21, 1967. Naomi Woodbury, another Mormon who has studied Egyptology, also came out against the divinity of the Book of Abraham. In a letter published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 8, she made these comments:

I myself studied Egyptian hieroglyphics at UCLA several years ago in the hope of resolving some of the problems connected with the “Book of Abraham” in Joseph Smith’s favor. Unfortunately, as soon as I had learned the language well enough to use a dictionary I was forced to conclude that Joseph Smith’s translation was mistaken, however sincere it might have been. Facsimile No. 2 in the *Pearl of Great Price* contained enough readable writing to convince me that it had purely Egyptian significance. This was a disappointment to me, but the discovery has given me more time to restructure my thinking about Joseph Smith and the Book of Abraham than most of your readers will yet have had. My faith in the Church rests on personal feelings, but it has to find a place for historical facts as well.

After the appearance of the photographs of the papyri . . . I made some attempt to translate the “Book of Breathing[s]” text, with the help of . . . a book which included . . . a fairly good text of the “Book of Breathings”. . . It belongs to a kind of literature which is alien to Christianity and to our Church. . . .

Let us not lose sight of what I think is the primary importance of this papyri find. It can free us from our dilemma about excluding Negroes from the Priesthood. Perhaps our Father in Heaven intended the papyri to come to light now for just this purpose.

The rediscovery of the papyri was probably one of the most important factors in causing Thomas Stuart Ferguson to lose his faith in Joseph Smith’s work. As we indicated earlier, Ferguson has devoted a great deal of his life in trying to prove the Book of Mormon by archaeology and is recognized by the Mormon people as a great defender of the faith. He is the founder of the New World Archaeological Foundation and has written many articles and books defending the church’s position.

When the papyri were first discovered Thomas Stuart Ferguson submitted them to a test. In the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society For Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, we find the following:

Thomas Stuart Ferguson, an Orinda, California, attorney and one-time general officer of the SEHA, has written the following, dated December 28:

Yesterday, I spent an hour and a half with Professor Emeritus Henry Lutz, an Egyptologist of the University of California. . . . At my request he looked at the Egyptian glyphs found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City as published in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* the first week of December. I had clipped them from the paper, and he had no notice as to where they came from or that they had any significance to the LDS people. He gave me a perfectly candid and honest opinion that all are from the Book of the Dead.

On November 12, 1968, Thomas Stuart Ferguson wrote us a letter in which he remarked: “You are doing a great thing—getting out some truth on the Book of Abraham.” On December 2, 1970, he paid us a visit and among other things he told us that he had given up the Book of Abraham.

It seems that after showing the photographs clipped from the church’s *Deseret News* to Professor Lutz, Thomas Stuart Ferguson obtained enlarged photographs of the papyrus fragments. He consulted with both Professor Lutz and Professor Lesko of the University of California. Both these Egyptologists agreed that the “Sensen” text was the Book of Breathings made for a man by the name of Hor. As we have already shown, Mr. Ferguson’s examination of *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* convinced him that the “Sensen” text was the one Joseph Smith used in producing the Book of Abraham. Therefore, he came



to the inevitable conclusion that the Book of Abraham was a spurious production.

Thomas Stuart Ferguson felt that Dr. Nibley's articles on the papyri were worthless because Nibley "is not impartial" and "because he could not, he dared not, he did not, face the true issue: 'Could Joseph Smith translate Egyptian?'" (Letter dated March 13, 1971).

### The Facsimiles

Although Professor Nibley was later forced into publishing a translation of the "Sensen" text, at first he tried desperately to divert attention from the papyri and deal only with the facsimiles found in the Book of Abraham:

From the very beginning this writer has been rightly accused of an almost callous unconcern for the newly located papyri (all excepting the one matching Facsimile 1) as evidence for or against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. . . . in the following articles we are going to discuss only the facsimiles and the interpretation thereof, passing by in silence those writings which do not belong to the Book of Abraham, even though that book may have been the end product of a process in which they had a part. . . .

For those who wish to attack or defend the *Pearl of Great Price*, there is quite enough material contained in the facsimiles to keep things lively for sometime to come, without having to wrangle about hypothetical claims while the clear-cut claims of the facsimiles go unheeded. (*Improvement Era*, Nov. 1968, pp. 36-38)

It certainly appears that Ferguson was right when he said Nibley "dared not . . . face the true issue." He evidently wants us to forget that the papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham has been located and judge the Book of Abraham by the facsimiles. This suggestion is almost as ridiculous as his suggestion that we judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old apocryphal writings. The facsimiles are very important, of course, and we do intend to deal with them, but we feel that the most important thing is that the original fragment which Joseph

Smith used as the text of the Book of Abraham has been translated by Egyptologists and found to be nothing but an appendage to the "Book of Breathing." What better evidence could there be than that furnished by the translation of the original text? To ignore this evidence, as Nibley suggests, is to **ignore the truth entirely**.

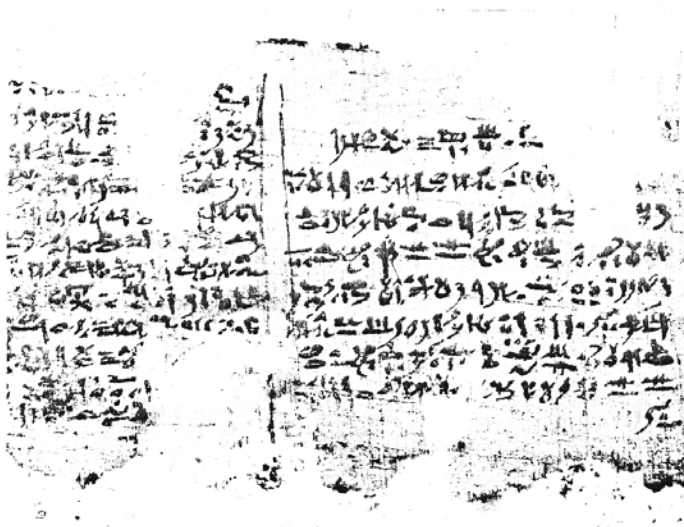
Even though we can not accept Nibley's suggestion that we ignore the "Sensen" text, we feel that a very good case can be made against the Book of Abraham on the basis of the facsimiles alone. Facsimile No. 1, for instance, has now been identified as a part of the same scroll from which the "Sensen" text was taken. In other words, Facsimile No. 1 is in reality an illustration for the Book of Breathing. It was very providential that the original papyrus from which Facsimile No. 1 was copied is among the eleven fragments rediscovered at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Professor Richard Parker comments concerning this papyrus:

This is a well-known scene from the Osiris mysteries, with Anubus, the jackal-headed god, on the left ministering to the dead Osiris on the bier. The pencilled (?) restoration is incorrect. Anubus should be jackal-headed. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968; p. 86)

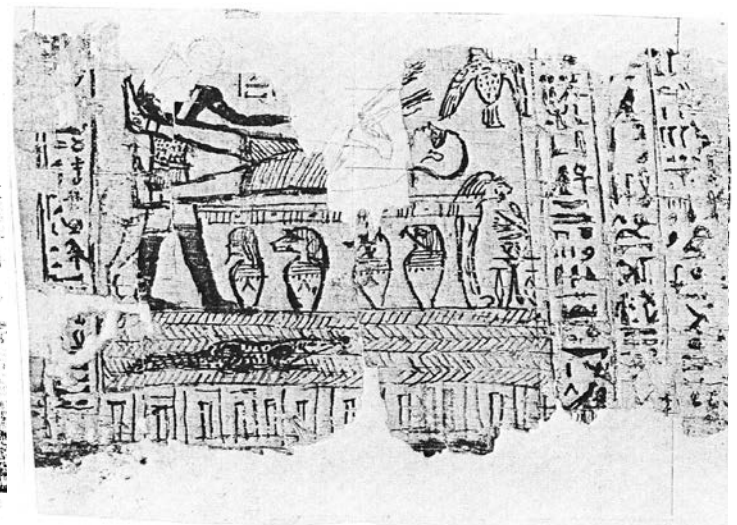
Professor Klaus Baer gives this information:

The vignette on P.JS I is unusual, but parallels exist on the walls of the Ptolemaic temples of Egypt, the closest being the scenes in the Osiris chapels on the roof of the Temple of Dendera. The vignette shows the resurrection of Osiris (who is also the deceased owner of the papyrus) and the conception of Horus. Osiris (2) is represented as a man on a lion-couch (4) attended by Anubis (3), the jackal-headed god who embalmed the dead and thereby assured their resurrection and existence in the hereafter. (*Ibid.*, Autumn 1968, pp. 117-18)

Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, has proved beyond all doubt that this is part of the same scroll which contained the small "Sensen" papyrus that Joseph Smith used as the basis for the text of the Book of Abraham. He has shown that when the two fragments are placed together they match perfectly (see photograph below).



Small "Sensen" Text



Original of Facsimile No. 1

This illustration shows that the small "Sensen" text which Joseph Smith used as a basis for the text in the Book of Abraham, joins with the fragment from which Facsimile No. 1 was drawn.

Writing in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 112, Professor Baer explains:

They seem to have been cut apart after being mounted. The edges match exactly in the photograph, and the pattern of vertical lines drawn on the backing about 2 cm. apart continues evenly from P. JS XI onto the left end of P. JS I when the two are placed in contact.

Just before his article was printed in *Dialogue*, Klaus Baer went to Brigham Young University and examined the original papyrus fragments. His work with the original manuscripts confirmed the research he had done with photographs of the papyri. In an addendum to his article he gave the following information:

The reverse of the backings of both P. JS I and XI contains parts of the plan mentioned in n. 117, and they clearly adjoin as proposed in n. 15; matching upper and lower parts of handwriting are on the two pieces of paper with the cut going through the letters. The fiber patterns show that the papyri were adjoining parts of the same scroll and not simply mounted on adjoining pieces of paper. Papyrus fibers are always irregular and can be used (much like fingerprints) to check whether fragments come from the same sheet; in this case, the horizontal fibers on the left and right edges of P. JS I and XI, respectively, match exactly. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 133-134)

Dr. Hugh Nibley has conceded that Facsimile No. 1 was part of the same scroll:

Of particular interest to us is the close association of the Book of Breathings with the Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham. It can be easily shown by matching up the fibers of the papyri that the text of Joseph Smith Pap. No. XI was written on the same strip of material as Facsimile Number 1, the writing beginning immediately to the left of the “lion-couch” scene. The British Museum Book of Breathing, “the Kerasher Papyrus,” has both the “lion-couch” scene (Budge, Vignette No. 2b), and a scene resembling our Facsimile Number 3, though representing a patently different situation albeit with the same props and characters (Vignette No. 1). This last stands at the head of the “Kerasher” text, and suggests that our Fac. No. 3 was originally attached at the other end of the Joseph Smith Papyrus, coming after the last column, which is missing.

. . . Thus our “Sensen” Papyrus is closely bound to all three facsimiles by physical contact, putting us under moral obligation to search out possible relationships between the content of the four documents. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1971, pp. 160-161)

In a caption for a picture of Facsimile No. 1 in Hugh Nibley’s book, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 184, we find the following information:

The “Lion Couch” scene lies at the very heart of the Egyptian mysteries set forth in the Book of Breathings. Facsimile I from the Book of Abraham was the frontispiece to the Joseph Smith Book of Breathings, Pap. X and XI.

The text of the Book of Abraham itself reveals that the drawing shown as Facsimile No. 1 was supposed to be at the beginning of the scroll. In Abraham 1:12 we read:

And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.

As we have already shown, Joseph Smith was “translating” from the small “Sensen” text. Since he was working from right to left, the drawing would have to appear on the right side of the scroll to be at the “commencement of this record.” The illustration shown on the last page proves that the drawing was found on the right side of the “Sensen” text, which is consistent with the statement found in Abraham 1:12. It is also consistent with a statement in Abraham 1:14 which speaks of Facsimile No. 1 as being “at the beginning” of the record.

Klaus Baer carries the matter a step further and shows that the name Hor, which is found in the “Sensen” text and on the fragment Joseph used for Facsimile No. 1, is also found on Facsimile No. 3. He comments:

Even though Hor is a relatively common name in Greco-Roman Egypt, this does suggest that “Facsimile No. 3” reproduces a part of the same manuscript that “Facsimile No. 1” does. Hor’s copy of the Breathing Permit would then have had two vignettes, one at the beginning and another (“Facsimile No. 3”) at the end, an arrangement that is found in other copies of the same text. . . . a comparison with the photograph shows that “Facsimile No. 1” was originally printed actual size, so the fact the “Facsimiles Nos. 1 and 3” are about the same height may well be significant. It is what would be expected if they came from the same scroll. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 127)

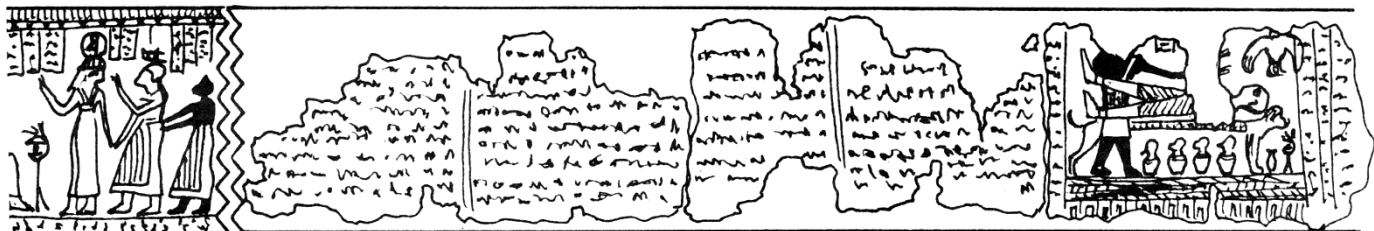
Klaus Baer reads the name Hor from the hieroglyphs that appear at the bottom of the scene shown in Facsimile No. 3. These hieroglyphs are very unclear in most modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, but in the first printing which appeared in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842 they are readable.

Facsimile No. 2 was not part of the papyrus roll written for “Osiris Hor”; nevertheless, Joseph Smith added writing from the “Sensen” fragment onto Facsimile No. 2. Among the words which he added we find the Egyptian words which mean “Book of Breathings.” We will have more to say about this later.

At the bottom of this page the reader will find a rough sketch of how the papyrus roll probably fits together.

## Facsimile No. 2

Facsimile No. 2 is a round disk which is supposed to relate to Abraham and his religion. We will deal with this facsimile first because it furnished evidence which is important in the study of



Facsimile No. 3



Larger “Sensen” Text

Small “Sensen” Text

Facsimile No. 1

Section of scroll now missing



Facsimile No. 1. Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 2, as it appears in the 1978 *Pearl of Great Price*, together with Joseph Smith's interpretation.

A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

No. 2



EXPLANATION OF THE FOREGOING CUT

Fig. 1. Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians Jah-oh-eh.

Fig. 2. Stands next to Kolob, called by the Egyptians Oliblish, which is the next grand governing creation near to the celestial or the place where God resides; holding the key of power also, pertaining to other planets; as revealed from God to Abraham, as he offered sacrifice upon an altar, which he had built unto the Lord.

Fig. 3. Is made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand Key-words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed.

Fig. 4. Answers to the Hebrew word Raukeyang, signifying expanse, or the firmament of the heavens; also a numerical figure, in Egyptian signifying one thousand; answering to the measuring of the time of Oliblish, which is equal with Kolob in its revolution and in its measuring of time.

Fig. 5. Is called in Egyptian Enish-go-on-dosh; this is one of the governing planets also, and is said by the Egyptians to be the Sun, and to borrow its light from Kolob through the medium of Kae-e-vanrash, which is the grand Key, or, in other words, the governing power, which governs fifteen other fixed planets or stars, as also Floeese or the Moon, the Earth and the Sun in their annual revolutions. This planet receives its power through the medium of Kli-flos-is-es, or Hah-ko-kau-beam, the stars represented by numbers 22 and 23, receiving light from the revolutions of Kolob.

Fig. 6. Represents this earth in its four quarters.

Fig. 7. Represents God sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood; as, also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove.

Fig. 8. Contains writings that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.

Fig. 9. Ought not to be revealed at the present time.

Fig. 10. Also.

Fig. 11. Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.

Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, will be given in the own due time of the Lord.

The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give at the present time.

Egyptologists have always claimed that this is a hypocephalus—a disk placed under the head of the mummy. Their argument is very convincing because there are several hypocephali which are almost identical to the facsimile in the *Pearl of Great Price*.

On the next page we show a number of hypocephali that are similar to the one found in the *Pearl of Great Price*. According to the *New York Times*, Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, who was Curator of the Egyptian Department of the Metropolitan Museum, made some interesting comments about Facsimile No. 2:

The third piece of writing published with the Mormon “Pearl of Great Price” was a circular disk, and this disk Dr. Lythgoe went over carefully.

“Egyptian scholars give this particular disk a name,” he said. “They call it a ‘hypocephalus,’ which means literally ‘under the head.’ Like the length of garments on the figures and the kinds of lids on the stone jars this disk shows that the Mormons gained possession of a mummy and papyrus from the comparatively late Egyptian period. During our work in Egypt last Winter we obtained some of those disks that were nothing but slabs of Nile mud.

“Here is a disk of exactly the same sort,” Dr. Lythgoe remarked, as he turned to a volume of Egyptian religion by Adolf Erman.

On page 188 of this volume a drawing was found of a circular disk, which was almost exactly a duplicate of the disk from which the Mormon prophet took a record of Abraham in the act of receiving God’s word. (*The New York Times*, Magazine Section, Part 5, Dec. 29, 1912)

Dr. Hugh Nibley says there are “about a hundred” hypocephali known today (Speech given at University of Utah, May 20, 1968). Mormon writer George Reynolds tried to explain the presence of the other disks by stating:

It has been urged as an argument against the veracity of the translation by the Prophet Joseph Smith, of the circular cut or disc, . . . that numerous copies of it exist, scattered among the museums of Europe. These copies have been found buried with mummies . . . Instead of being an argument against the truthfulness of the translation given by Joseph Smith, we consider it a very strong one in its favor. For this reason, Egyptologists acknowledge that some peculiar potency was ascribed to it by the ancient Egyptians, but their ideas are very vague as to in what that power consisted. . . . Accompanying the mummy is also often found this sacred disc, or hypociphilas, as the learned term it, which if we mistake not, was usually placed under or near the head of the mummy. . . . The Egyptians buried this disc containing these sacred words with their dead, for very much the same reason that the Saints bury their dead in the robes of the holy priesthood. No doubt the true meaning of these key words were soon lost from amongst the Egyptians, but they knew enough to understand something of their value, and as ages rolled on, their apostate priesthood doubtlessly invented some myth to take their place. (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, pp. 94-95)

## Falsification Proven

For over a hundred years Egyptologists have claimed that the Facsimiles in the Book of Abraham were altered before publication. Deveria was probably the first Egyptologist to charge that the Mormons had altered the Facsimiles. He stated:

It is evident to me that several of the figures to be found in these various manuscripts have been intentionally altered. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake*, vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913, p. 4)

In rebuttal to Deveria’s charge, George Reynolds made this statement: “. . . what earthly reason there could be for the ‘Mormons’ attempting to alter them, is beyond our comprehension” (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, p. 131). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts said that the idea that the Mormons would have purposely changed the figures or altered the text was “out of the question” (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 314). When Prof. Edgar J. Banks charged that Joseph Smith had altered the drawings, Sterling B. Talmage replied:

. . . this author shows his lack of careful study by boldly asserting, on no authority but his own, that Joseph Smith has “altered the drawings to suit his purpose,” an accusation that has not been made before, on account of its palpable absurdity. (*Ibid.*, p. 771)

Now that some of the original papyri have been located we have definite proof that the drawings in the Book of Abraham have been altered and that they cannot be relied upon. The evidence of falsification is irrefutable.

Although the original hypocephalus from which the Mormons copied Facsimile No. 2 has not been located, the papyri that have been found prove that the drawing which appears in the *Pearl of*



NOTE—The reader will notice that six of our examples of hypocephali come from the book, *Joseph Smith As a Translator*, by R. C. Webb. This book was printed in 1936 by the Mormon publishing company “Deseret News Press.” Although one area on some of the photographs appears to have been “doctored” (we will have more to say about this later), they are generally good reproductions.



A photograph of Facsimile No. 2 as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. This, of course, is the Mormon Hypocephalus. We will use the letter “M” when referring to it in the study which follows.



EXAMPLE 1

A photograph of a hypocephalus which is in the Berlin Museum. This photograph was published in the *New York Times*, December 20, 1912.



EXAMPLE 2

A photograph of a hypocephalus “Inscribed on the bronze plate.” This photograph is published in *Joseph Smith as a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, Salt Lake City, 1936, page 130.



EXAMPLE 3

R. C. Webb refers to this as “British Hypocephalus, No. 1.” It is published on page 165 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 4

R. C. Webb calls this “The Paris Hypocephalus.” It is found on page 173 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 5

R. C. Webb calls this “British Hypocephalus, No. 2.” It is found on page 175 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 6

R. C. Webb refers to this as “British Hypocephalus No. 3.” It is found on page 177 of the book, *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.



EXAMPLE 7

R. C. Webb calls this “The Leyden Hypocephalus.” It is found on page 179 of *Joseph Smith as a Translator*.

*Great Price* has been falsified. Evidently the original hypocephalus which Joseph Smith had was damaged. Portions of it were either unreadable or they had fallen away. When the Mormons made the woodcut for Facsimile No. 2, they falsely inserted writing from other papyri which was not on the hypocephalus. The fact that part of the hypocephalus was either missing or damaged is proven by a drawing which appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. This drawing was suppressed for 130 years. The reader will find a photograph of this drawing in Example No. 1 which is printed at the bottom of this page. Notice the missing areas on this drawing.

In Example No. 2 the reader will find a photograph of Facsimile No. 2, as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. Notice that the missing areas have been filled in.

In the study which follows we will use photographs of Facsimile No. 2 as it appears in the church's first publication of it in *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, between pages 721 and 722. It is important that we do this because there have been many additional changes made since 1842. Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, makes these comments about the changes:

It is necessary to raise a caution against using any printing of these facsimiles except that prepared by Joseph Smith. Later plates made of these cuts or facsimiles show some marked changes in the form and completeness of the symbols. Failure to use these original printings has been a serious weakness of all subsequent criticisms of Joseph Smith as a translator. To the investigator's knowledge there has never been an appraisal of Joseph Smith's ability as a translator which has been based on these original printings done under his personal supervision, by any scholar or linguist, and subsequent printings that have been used in such criticism can be demonstrated to be defective printings. (*Progress in Archaeology*, B.Y.U. Archaeological Society, 1963, p. 30)

Mormon writers have criticized F. S. Spalding for using the 1907 printing of the *Pearl of Great Price*, instead of the 1842 printing in the *Times and Seasons*. James R. Clark charged:

An additional damaging reflection on Bishop Spalding's "competent" investigation is the demonstrable fact that the facsimiles that Bishop Spalding used contained printer's errors. If he

was so competent or if his scholars were competent, why did they not bother to even know that the 1842 printing of the facsimiles done under Joseph Smith's personal supervision are far more accurate than the 1907 printing which he submitted to his "world's greatest Egyptologists." (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, pp. 59-61)

Speaking of the facsimiles that Spalding sent to the Egyptologists, Dr. Hugh Nibley wrote:

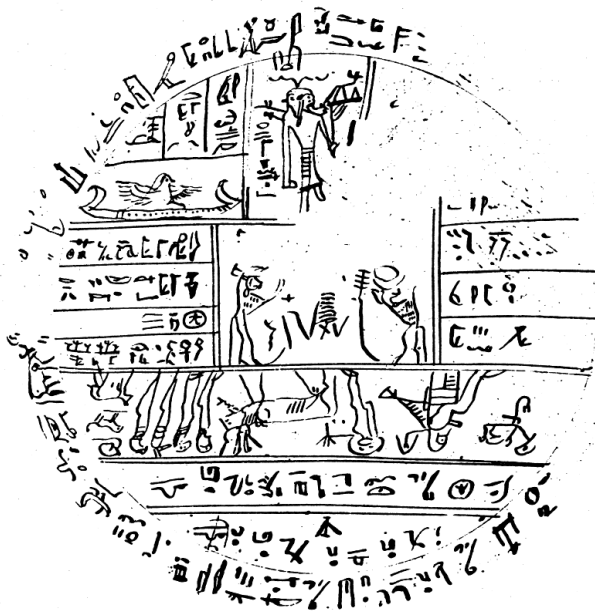
... the miserable copies that Bishop Spalding circulated among his jury of experts made a very poor impression, and their raw clumsiness was in every case attributed to the Prophet himself. ... It makes all the difference in the world what particular text a scholar has to work with, as a comparison of the recently discovered original of Facsimile 1 with the copies of it that Spalding sent to the critics should make clear to anyone. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, pp. 20-21)

Because Nibley does not clarify who was responsible for the "miserable copies," the reader might get the impression that Spalding altered the copies that he sent to the Egyptologists. Now, what was it that Spalding sent to the Egyptologists anyway? It was the *Pearl of Great Price*—the official publication of the Mormon Church—which contains the facsimiles. Dr. James R. Clark says that it was the "1907 printing" of the *Pearl of Great Price* that the Egyptologists examined (*Story of the Pearl of Great Price* p. 61).

Now, why should Hugh Nibley make a point out of the fact that Spalding submitted "miserable copies" to the Egyptologists, when it was the Mormons themselves who made the changes and alterations in the facsimiles?

In the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Professor Nibley admits that the facsimiles which the church published in the *Pearl of Great Price* were not accurate:

The *Pearl of Great Price* itself admirably illustrates the issue. The Facsimiles now in use are extremely bad reproductions, far inferior to the first engravings published in 1842. Am I, then, as a member of the Church bound to consult the present official edition and that only, and regard it as flawless, bad as it is, because it is the official publication of the Church? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 177)



EXAMPLE NO. 1—A drawing of the Mormon Hypocephalus which appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The drawing was suppressed for 130 years. The reader will notice missing areas on this drawing.



EXAMPLE NO. 2—A photograph of Facsimile No. 2 as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. Notice that the areas that are blank in the drawing to the left have been filled in.



We are glad that Dr. Nibley has made this statement, for it is certainly the truth. But, we ask, why did he not include it in his article in the *Improvement Era*? As his article stands in the *Era* the reader might get the impression that F. S. Spalding made the changes, whereas the truth is that the Mormon leaders were responsible. In the *Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65, Nibley said that Spalding was “way out of bounds” when he sent “by far the worst copies of all to his eight judges . . .” If Bishop Spalding was “way out of bounds” when he submitted these copies to Egyptologists, weren’t the Mormon leaders “way out of bounds” when they allowed them to be printed that way? In the 1972 edition of this book we wrote: “We would think that the Mormon leaders would have the best and most accurate copies of the Facsimiles in modern editions, but such is not the case.” Since this statement was printed, the Church has returned to the *Times and Seasons* engravings in some printings of the *Pearl of Great Price*. A copy we purchased in 1978 still has the “extremely bad reproductions” in it, but it is rumored that all copies will eventually be changed so that they contain the engravings from the *Times and Seasons*.

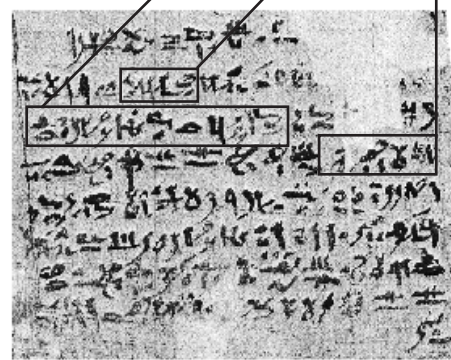
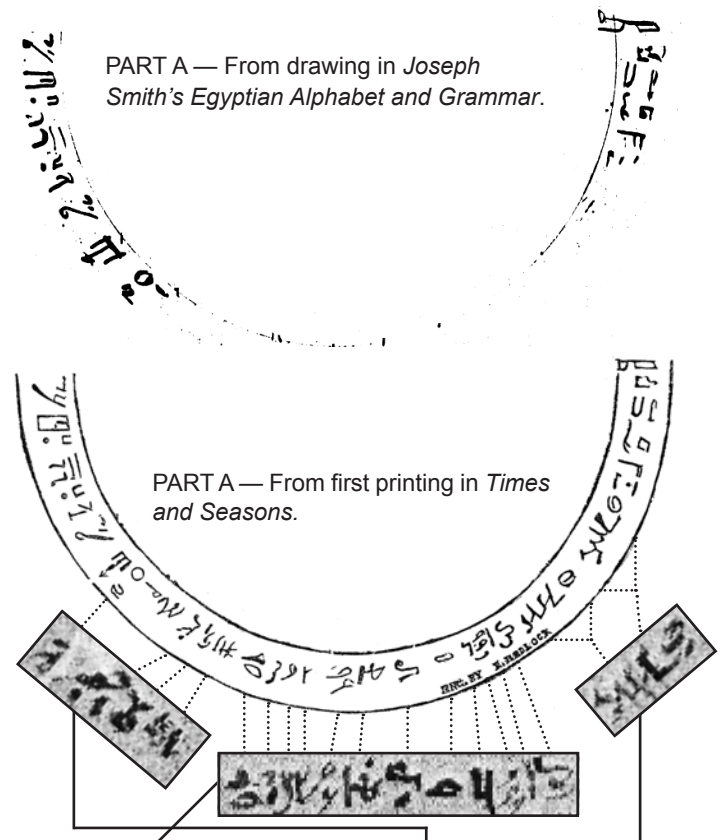
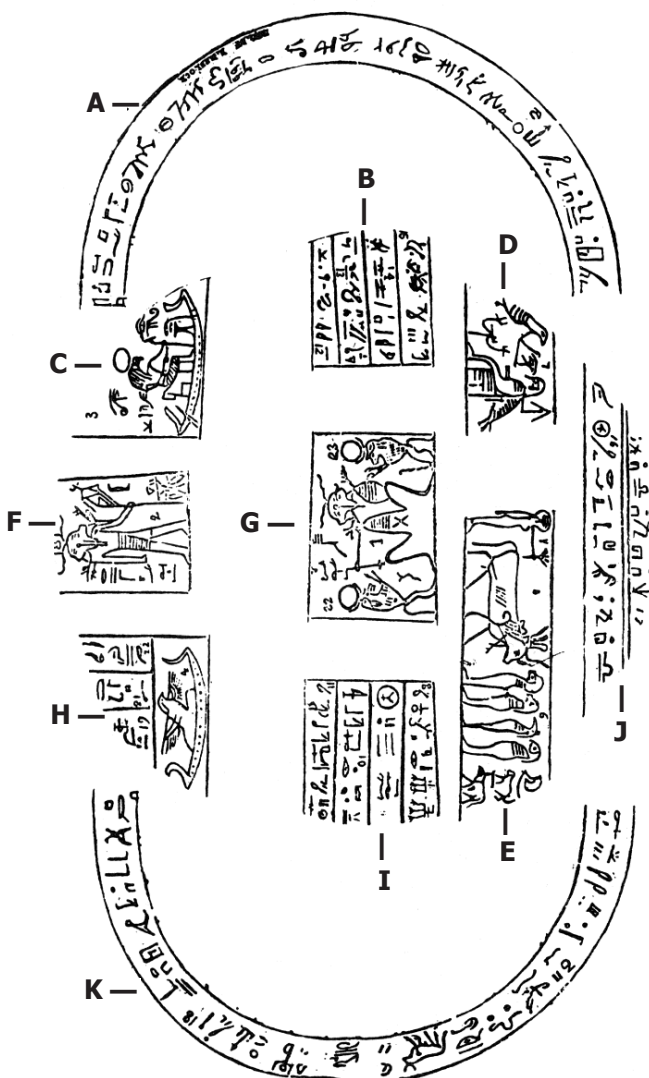
From the information given above the reader will see that it is important that we use a photograph of the 1842 printing of Facsimile No. 2.

In order to make a detailed study of Facsimile No. 2 it is necessary that we dissect it into several parts and assign a letter to each part. Below (to the left) the reader will find a photograph of Facsimile No. 2 which we have dissected and labeled for this study.

### Part A

Grant Heward has been convinced for sometime that Facsimile No. 2 contains portions that have been falsified. He finally came to the conclusion that the damaged or missing areas around the edge of Facsimile No. 2 had been filled in with hieratic characters. (The hypocephalus is supposed to be written in hieroglyphic characters.) Working on this theory he made an astounding discovery. He found that the characters had been copied from the same piece of papyrus Joseph Smith used as a basis for the text in the Book of Abraham.

Below is a photograph of the right side of Facsimile No. 2 as it appears in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Below this is a photograph of Part A from the first printing in the *Times and Seasons*. Notice that the missing areas have been filled in with characters from the fragment of papyrus Dr. Nibley labeled “XI. Small ‘Sensen’ text (unillustrated).” One group of characters from line two of the “Sensen” fragment was copied twice along the



A photograph of the right side of the papyrus fragment identified in the *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1968, as “XI Small ‘Sensen’ text (unillustrated).” Joseph Smith used this as a basis for the Book of Abraham.

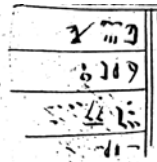


edge of Facsimile No. 2. The characters which follow were taken from line 3. The remaining characters were probably taken from line 4, but they are poorly copied.

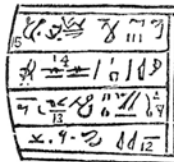
The characters which were used to fill in the blank area were added in upside down, so that they read in the opposite direction to the rest of the text.

### Part B

After Grant Heward told us of his discovery concerning the characters that were inserted around the outer edge, we examined the hypocephalus and found the word “Sensen” written in Figure 14. A more careful check revealed that the entire name of the “Book of Breathings” had been written in Figures 14 and 15. These characters were taken from the fourth line of the fragment which has been identified as the one used for the Book of Abraham text. The remaining part of the fourth line is written in Figure 13. Other characters have been added in Figure 12. We do not know exactly where these characters were taken from, but Wesley Walters has found them written at the bottom of the same sheet of paper that contains the piece of papyrus which was included in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. These characters also appear to be written in hieratic. The characters which are added in Figures 12-15 are written in the areas that were damaged or missing on the original disk. Below is a comparison of this portion of the drawing as it appeared in the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” (to the left) with the way it appeared in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right). We have turned Part B upside down, so that the numbers 12-15 are facing up. When we do this, however, it makes the hieroglyphics upside down. The hieratic writing that is added in is right side up to the numbers, but upside down to the hieroglyphic writing.

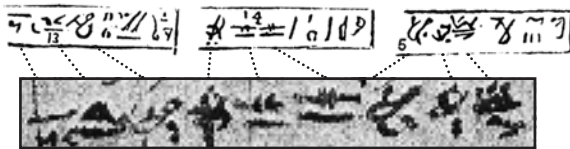


“Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar”



Times and Seasons

In the photograph below we have dissected Figures 13-15 and placed them in a line so that we can compare them with characters from the fourth line of the fragment of papyrus which has been identified as the source of the text of the Book of Abraham.



The Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria examined these lines more than a hundred years ago and made this comment:

12-15. Four lines of writing similar to the former, of which they are the pendant. They appear to be numbered upside-down, and are illegibly copied. (*Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

Now that we know the truth about these lines it is easy to understand why Deveria was unable to read them. Who would suspect the lines are part hieratic writing and part hieroglyphic writing and that the hieratic has been added in upside down to the hieroglyphic?

Dr. Hugh Nibley was willing to admit that changes were made in the facsimiles after Joseph Smith’s death. In fact, he went so far as to state:

... we shall have occasion to note what drastic alterations they have suffered through the years at the hands of their various copyists.

... It is as if the Mormons had felt that these drawings, since they are mere symbols anyway, may be copied pretty much as one pleases. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, p. 65)

Nevertheless, he was unwilling to admit that the 1842 printing of the facsimiles contained falsifications. In the face of documented proof that Facsimile No. 2 has been falsified, Dr. Nibley stated:

Then too, we must recognize that there are sections of hieroglyphic text in Facsimile 2 that present-day Egyptologists read without too much trouble: since these legible portions are found to be correct and conventional Egyptian, it is perfectly plain that nobody has falsified or jumbled them, as was charged. That is to say, whenever the text can be checked, everything is found to be in order. (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 74)

We had presented the evidence of falsification in the Summer 1968 issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, and therefore we were very disturbed to find Nibley would deny these false restorations. We reprinted the evidence in the November 1968 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* and were able to distribute thousands of copies. It seems that truth has prevailed, for Professor Nibley now admits that “restorations” were made in Facsimile No. 2 during Joseph Smith’s lifetime:

(4) The Hedlock engraving when compared with an early sketch showing parts of Facsimile No. 2 to be missing shows definite signs of attempted restoration.

(5) The restoration was not as extensive as the other sketch would indicate, and no clear instances of such have been demonstrated on Facsimile No. 1.

(6) The restorations of Facsimile No. 2 are limited to the filling in of gaps, not the alteration of existing symbols. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, page 95)

Even though Dr. Nibley now admits that restorations were made, he seems unwilling to face the implications:

They: Let’s turn to Facsimile No. 2, where we have much clearer evidence of restoration. In the Church Historian’s Office among the papers of the EAG is a rather well-done pen-and-ink sketch of the facsimile made by some Mormon at an early date. This, we believe, is the way the hypocephalus looked when it came into Joseph Smith’s hands; and in it there are certain parts missing and we are shown exactly what they are. Now these parts are not missing in the official engraving of the hypocephalus, Facsimile No. 2, which can only mean that they have been later supplied. You will notice that a large part of the inscription around the rim is missing, and this has been filled in with hieratic characters from other papyri definitely known to have been in the possession of Joseph Smith. So there you have it.

We: Since the restored portions of the rim with their crude repetitions (hardly an attempt to be subtle) are not a subject of inspired commentary, we don’t think that is too important. (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, pp. 86-87)

Although Joseph Smith does not try to translate the writing around the rim, he states that it “will be given in the own due time of the Lord” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, p. 35). We feel that this matter cannot be as easily dismissed as Dr. Nibley would have us believe. To begin with, it shows that Joseph Smith knew absolutely nothing about the Egyptian language, for the portion which is added from the “Book of Breathings” is written in hieratic, whereas the writing that appears on Facsimile No. 2 is hieroglyphic writing. Also, the characters that were added into the blank area were added upside down, so that they read in the opposite direction to the rest of the text.

We feel that this matter also reflects seriously upon Joseph Smith’s honesty. Scholars, of course, do not object to restorations in a text if they are sincere attempts to restore a missing portion. For instance, in 1961 a stone inscription was found at Caesarea. The second line was damaged, but scholars were able to read: “. . . tius Pilate” (*The Biblical World*, edited by Charles E. Pfeiffer, p. 156). Since Pontius Pilate had resided in Caesarea, they felt

that it was reasonable to restore “Pon” to complete the name “Pontius Pilate.” This type of restoration is reasonable. In Joseph Smith’s case, however, it seems to be an attempt to deceive rather than to restore what was on the original document. No one who is honest with himself could approve of these false restorations. How can we possibly trust the rest of Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham after seeing what he did with Facsimile No. 2?

At the Book of Abraham Symposium, the Mormon scholar Richley Crapo was very honest with regard to the falsification of Facsimile No. 2:

An examination of the hypocephalus from the point of view of expectations based upon the normal makeup of such documents reveals that there are several anomalous figures in Facsimile Number 2. . . . the etic investigator is forced to ask himself if, perhaps, the original document from which the facsimile was copied was damaged at the time the wood-cut was made, the figures in question having been missing and merely filled in on the wood-cut from elsewhere. The probability of the damaged state of the original document—and thereby of the “restored” nature of the facsimile—is further enhanced when one discovers that a hand-drawn copy of this hypocephalus is to be found in Joseph Smith’s “Valuable Discovery Notebook”—. . . this hand-drawn copy of Joseph Smith is incomplete, and interestingly the sections which were left undrawn in his copy are exactly those which contain unexpected or anomalous figures in the facsimile! Unless this is an extreme coincidence, this seems to confirm the idea that these anomalous areas of the facsimile were actually missing from the papyrus when Joseph copied it . . . an examination of the dozen available papyri reveals possible sources for most of the figures in question. . . . all the blank space of Joseph Smith’s copy of the hypocephalus—the right rim and half of the right-hand quadrant—is filled, the facsimile, with hieratic symbols which are upside down with respect to the hieroglyphic signs of the rest of the rim and lines on which they are found. Thus, these lines begin in hieroglyphic writing and change, mid-line into upside-down hieratic with a different message content. Finally, it is found that these added hieratic words are taken verbatim and in order—with a repetition of one phrase—from another of the papyri, the important Small Sen-Sen Papyrus itself! This seems to clinch the matter, since these signs are not just unexpected, but inconsistent in both positioning and nature of writing as well as meaning content from the rest of the hypocephalus. It would seem indisputable that the Facsimile Number 2 is indeed a copy of a damaged hypocephalus and has been incorrectly “restored” from other of the Joseph Smith Papyri. This is another ethically discovered fact which must be dealt with by L.D.S. scholars in arriving at a satisfactory analysis of the papyri and their significance for L.D.S. scriptures and doctrines. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, pp. 28-29)

The Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes concedes that Facsimile No. 2 was falsely reconstructed with part of the “Book of Breathings” added upside down to the rest of the text:

When perusing Facsimile 2, one is immediately struck by the contrast between most of the hieroglyphic signs, which are readily recognizable, and the signs of the right third of the figure on the outer edge as well as the outer portions of the sections numbered 12-15. On closer examination, these prove to be hieratic and inverted (that is, upside down to the rest of the text). And, most surprising of all, these hieratic characters are recognizable as a fairly faithfully rendered copy of lines 2, 3, and 4 of the Church papyrus XI, which contains a portion of the Sensen papyrus or Book of Breathings. Especially clear is the actual word, *snsn*, in section 14, . . . Why this was done I am not sure. I can only postulate that these portions of the hypocephalus were damaged (a common enough occurrence because of the extremely fragile condition of these documents), and someone (the printer, one of the Prophet’s associates, or Joseph Smith himself) copied these characters off the Sensen papyrus so that the facsimile would look

complete. In support of this view is an ink drawing of Facsimile 2 in the Church Historian’s Office which shows blanks in these sections. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, p. 263)

Edward H. Ashment, a Mormon Egyptologist who demonstrated that Hugh Nibley made grave errors in his work, has also admitted that Facsimile No. 2 has suffered from “conjectural restorations”:

The Church Historian’s (CH) facsimile is different from the Hedlock version (Plate 5) in one very important way: it reveals that the original papyrus was damaged in the very areas in which Hedlock’s version radically differs from other Egyptian hypocephali . . .

Finally, attention must be given to the hieroglyphic texts of Facsimile 2 even though they “are not a subject of inspired commentary” and have been considered as not being “too important.” On the contrary, they are very important in that they help to conclusively identify the damaged areas in the Hedlock woodcut (which are already outlined in the CH copy), as well as to provide information about the “instruction [Joseph Smith gave to Reuben Hedlock] concerning the arrangement of the writing on the large cut, illustrating the principles of astronomy [i.e., Facsimile 2].”

It comes as no surprise then, that the areas in which the Prophet conceivably could have given “instruction” to Reuben Hedlock “concerning the arrangement of the writing” are those where lacunae exist in the CH document but in which the Hedlock version has material, mostly written upside down and backwards in a different script, the subject matter of which radically differs from that of the rest of the texts on the hypocephalus. (Plates 5 and 6) Otherwise the CH copy and the Hedlock version are virtually the same, with the exception that the writing is much clearer on the former.

The basic document with all of the conjecturally restored material reveals, in addition to the vignettes already discussed, many signs that have come from the small *snsn* text (or Papyrus Joseph Smith XI, which was originally attached to Papyrus Joseph Smith I— see Plate 8); they appear along the right side of the rim panel and are interspersed on the right side of panels 12-15. As already noted, these texts are part of a different contextual unit, written upside down and backwards in the hypocephalus, and are in a different script from the rest of its texts. Why those characters were chosen, apparently by the prophet, to fill in the lacunae is not exactly known, for other signs written in hieroglyphic instead of hieratic were available and their style would have more closely approximated that of the hypocephalus. One possibility may be that those particular signs may have been well-known to the prophet in relation to the Book of Abraham manuscripts (Plate 9), with the result that he “gave instruction” to Hedlock to arrange them within the hypocephalus. Consequently, the fact that the prophet “gave instruction [sic] concerning the writing of the large cut,” together with the fact that that same writing is connected with the Book of Abraham manuscripts, implies that the prophet had some positive connection with the production of the Joseph Smith Egyptian Papers. Therefore, even though involvement with them on his part has been disputed, thoughtful reexamination of the evidence leads to the conclusion that the prophet was connected with the entire project.

In another location where the CH copy shows a lacuna, signs appear out of context in the Hedlock version. On the left side of the rim text of the latter, a group of signs appears which is virtually the same as a group in Fig. 22 from the CH copy (Illustration 38), and in the lacuna on the left side of Fig. 9 another group appears which is virtually identical to parts of a group on the left of Fig. 2 of the CH copy—the same group of signs (minus a stroke) that has been added at the left of Fig. 1. (Illustration 39) All of these represent apparent conjectural restorations. (*Sunstone*, December 1979, pp. 38, 42)

Edward H. Ashment does not try to dodge the issue; instead, he frankly admits that Joseph Smith was connected with the inaccurate reconstruction of the facsimiles:

It can be clearly ascertained that portions of Reuben Hedlock’s



Facsimiles 1 and 2 were conjecturally restored. Moreover, according to the diary entry for Friday, March 4, 1842, in the *History of the Church*, it is apparent that the prophet was connected with their production. . . . he probably was not as concerned with having historically accurate restorations of Facsimiles 1 and 2 as he was with having complete pictures to publish in the *Times and Seasons*. Neither he nor Reuben Hedlock would have known that a standing human body would have a dog's head (Facsimile 1, Fig. 3), nor that a bird would have a human head (Facsimile 1, Fig. 1). . . . It seems that they completed each damaged section with what was to them logical or important for whatever reason: a man's head on a man's body . . . a bird's head on a bird's body . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 44)

**Part C**

The area at the top of Facsimile No. 2 (Part C) showing a god in a boat was evidently copied from the fragment of papyrus which Dr. Nibley labeled "IV. Framed ('Trinity') papyrus."

Below is a photograph of Part C as it appears in the drawing in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Below this (to the left we have placed Part C as it was printed in the *Times and Seasons*. To the right of this we have placed the portion of "IV. Framed ('Trinity') papyrus" which we feel was added to Part C.)



Alphabet and Grammar

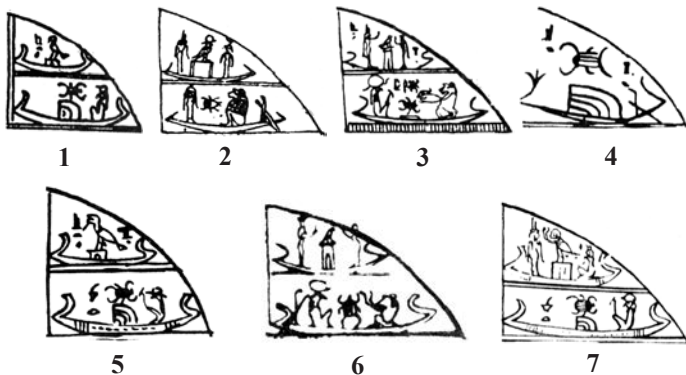


Times and Seasons



Framed ('Trinity') Papyrus

In all but one of our samples of hypocephali we find this area filled with two boats, and the one which has only one boat does not resemble Part C of Facsimile No. 2.



In the *Improvement Era*, vol. 17, page 333, R. C. Webb stated that "this figure differs from the representations found in the general run of hypocephali." Now that we have evidence that Joseph Smith added this portion from the "Trinity" papyrus, we understand why it differs from other hypocephali.

The Mormon Egyptologist Edward H. Ashment makes this comment concerning the matter:

Fig. 3 is almost entirely missing in the CH copy, the small trace possibly indicating the prow of a boat. At any rate, a falcon-headed figure in a boat was apparently copied from Papyrus Joseph Smith IV and inserted into this spot . . . (*Sunstone*, December 1979, p. 40)

Joseph Smith gave this interpretation of Part C:

Fig. 3 is made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand Key-words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed. (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 35)

Joseph Smith would have us believe that this is a representation of the God of Abraham. Actually, it represents the Egyptian Sun-god. Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, who was head of the Dept. of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, made this statement concerning Part C:

And when it comes to the Mormon picture of "God on His Throne, signifying the Grand Key-Words of the Holy Priesthood as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden," why that is a sad joke.

The representation is the most common of all in Egyptian papyri. It is the view of the "Sun god in his boat." The Mormon version is right in that this is the picture of a god, but it is the chief god of a polytheistic people instead of God, who was worshipped by monotheistic Abraham, and pictures of him were among the widely distributed pictures in Egypt. (*The New York Times*, December 29, 1912)

**Part D**

Below is a comparison of Part D as it appears in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" (to the left) with the way it was printed in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right).



The reader will note that part of the drawing which appears in the *Times and Seasons* is a work of the imagination, for this area was missing in the drawing in the "Egyptian Alphabet." Notice that Joseph Smith reconstructed the one figure as a dove. This is not correct. The Egyptologist Deveria stated that it is supposed to be an "ithyphallic serpent," and that it "has certainly been altered in the hypocephalus of the Mormons." When we compare Part D on other hypocephali, we see that Deveria was correct. R. C. Webb's photographs have been "doctored" in Part D, but we have been able to obtain accurate photographs of two of these, plus the one that was published in the *New York Times*, December 29, 1912.



1



7



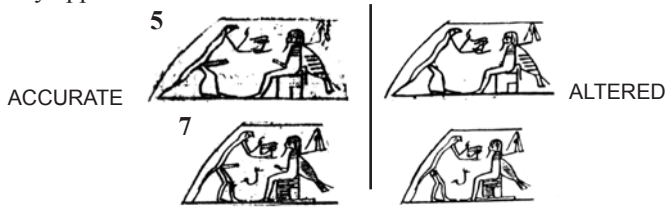
5

Joseph Smith gave this interpretation of Part D:

Fig. 7. Represents God sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood; as, also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove. (*Pearl of Great Price*, p. 35)

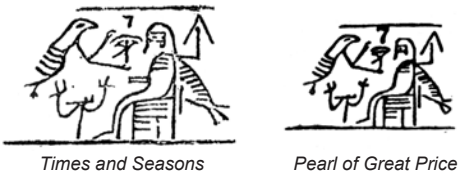


After examining other hypocephali, we are convinced that what Joseph Smith claimed was “God” upon His throne and “the sign of the Holy Ghost” in the “form of a dove” is in reality a pagan drawing which is extremely crude in appearance. It would appear that the Mormon leaders have been trying to keep their people in the dark concerning this pornographic representation, for when they published pictures of different hypocephali in the book, *Joseph Smith As a Translator*, by R. C. Webb, the pictures were altered so that they did not have the same crude appearance. This book was printed by “The Deseret News Press”—a Mormon publishing company—in 1936. Below are two examples of Part D from accurate photographs compared with the same portions as they appear in Webb’s book:



We feel that five of “Dr. Webb’s” pictures, shown on page 336 of this book, have been altered in Part D.

The Mormon leaders apparently feared that the seated god in Facsimile No. 2 was also shown as ithyphallic, for in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, Part D has been altered. Below is a photograph of Part D as it was first published in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842 and the way it appears in editions of the *Pearl of Great Price* prior to 1981.



As noted earlier, in some recently printed copies of the *Pearl of Great Price*, the *Times and Seasons*’ engravings have been used, and there is a rumor that the church will eventually return to the original engravings in all of its printed copies. While scholars would welcome such a move, it would be obvious that the church was forced into the change by its critics and even some of its own scholars who are disturbed by the inaccurate reproductions which have appeared in the *Pearl of Great Price*.

In any case, we have been informed that the Mormon Apostle James E. Talmage spoke of this change and the reason for it in some of his papers, but since we were denied access to manuscripts in the LDS Church Library we were unable to confirm this.

The Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes freely admits that Part D shows an ithyphallic god known as “Min”:

7. A seated ithyphallic god with a hawk’s tail, holding aloft the divine flail. Several gods of similar appearance are found on the Metternich Stela mentioned above. Before him is what appears to be a bird of some sort, presenting him with an Udjat-eye. In most other hypocephali it is a snake or an ape that is presenting the eye, but often this snake seems to have a hawk’s head. This snake is thought to be Nehebka, a snake god and one of the assessors in the 125th chapter of the Book of the Dead. Nehebka was considered a provider of nourishment, and as such was often shown presenting a pair of jars or the Udjat-eye, the symbol of all good gifts. . . .

The seated god is clearly a form of Min, the god of the regenerative, procreative forces of nature, perhaps combined with Horus as the hawk’s tail would seem to indicate.

Joseph Smith mentions here the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove and God “revealing through the heavens the grand key-words of the

priesthood.” The procreative forces, receiving unusual accentuation throughout the representation, may stand for many divine generative powers, not least of which might be conjoined with the blessings of the Priesthood in one’s posterity eternally. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, p. 273)

Even though the pictures are censored in R. C. Webb’s book, he gives a great deal of information which we would not expect in a book published by the Mormon Church:

Our study of the figures shown on the hypocephalus concludes with that numbered “7.” This includes a seated figure, opposite to which is another, apparently bird-headed, and with arms extended, as if in adoration, holding a sacred eye. A very similar group appears on nearly all known examples of hypocephalus; varying from that shown in our Facsimile No. 2, in the fact that the figure offering the sacred eye appears with an attenuated body—apparently a serpent, but with legs of human description. . . .

Of the seated figures very much more may be asserted with confidence. Evidently it is a composite of two figures as indicated by the body of a bird (the tail extending downward at the rear) with human head, legs and one arm, bent and held to the rear, supporting a bent object. In these signs, we have the distinctive marks of two separate “gods,” or “avatars”—to wit, Horus (with the hawk-body) and Min supporting a flail or whip upon the tip of his right-hand middle finger. . . . Of Min, it is correct, probably, to state that he was a conspicuous ba, or “soul,” of the Supreme—which is to say, that he was in origin, apparently a local deity, subsequently identified with the Supreme Godhead. He appears first as a phallic god of desert lands and of husbandry, . . . In any event, as is agreed generally, his significance is that of Creator, or Amon-Generator, the Father of the world. (*Joseph Smith As a Translator*, pp. 202-203)

In the *Improvement Era*, “Dr. Webb” made these comments:

The analysis of this group is very nearly the most interesting of any of the entire plate. In virtually all ‘hypocephali’ examined the space corresponding to this group is occupied by a seated winged figure, before which, in general, stands the phallic serpent “Nehebka,” as already suggested, holding the Uzat eye in outstretched hands. The figure called “Nehebka,” however, is radically different from the one shown in the present plate, the common point, in addition to the position, is the sacred eye held before the face of the seated figure. . . .

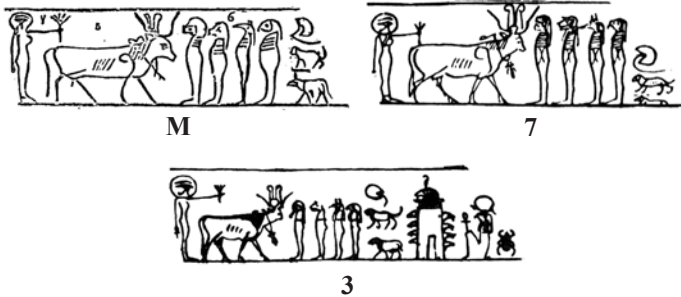
The group shown in the common run of hypocephali is evidently entirely phallic, the seated figure being usually identified with the dual god, Horus-Min, who, in certain local cults, combines the offices and functions of Horus and a deity known as Min. This latter was, according to Egyptologists, originally a local god of the desert, and of strangers, in general. He is also identified with a deity called Amsu. By other, or later, ascriptions, he becomes identified with the creative principle of nature, or the universal generative power typified in phallic symbols. . . .

There may be allowed to be a difference of opinion, as to whether the group here is the original form, or whether it is merely a variation of the usual, as shown on the common hypocephalus. There is, however, no obvious reason for changing from the phallic to the non-phallic character, if we consider this only one of a general run of Egyptian documents. On the other hand, there is a very good and sufficient reason for making the change from such a group as this to the phallic character, if the interpretation offered by Joseph Smith is in any sense correct. Smith called this seated figure “God sitting upon his throne,” hence the Creator of the universe. According to the conception evidently held by him, and, presumably also, by the original compiler of this group, the Almighty Creator operates by virtue of a word of power. To the Egyptian artist, the symbol of creative power is the phallic symbol. Hence, knowing, perhaps, that the group represented God, he embellished it according to one of the most popular of Egyptian concepts, relating to the beginning of things. The familiar variation of this group adds strong presumption in favor of the description given in Smith’s caption. (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 447)

It is strange that the Mormon leaders would allow “Dr. Webb” to tell so much, especially since they found it necessary to use altered pictures in his book. They probably felt that most people would not understand what he was talking about. R. C. Webb also discusses Part D in the *Improvement Era*, vol. 17, pages 333-334.

**Part E**

Part E of Facsimile No. 2 closely resembles at least two of our samples of hypocephali. Below is a comparison.



The reader will note that all of our samples shown at the beginning of this study are somewhat similar to Facsimile No. 2 in the area designated as Part E.

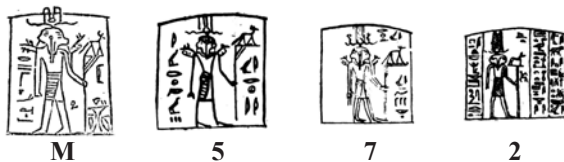
The four standing figures to the right in Part E are the four sons of Horus. The images of these gods are also carved on the canopic jars found beneath the bier in Facsimile No. 1. Professor Richard A. Parker identifies them as “human-headed Imseti, baboon-headed Hapy, jackal-headed Duamutef and falcon-headed Kebehsenuf” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86).

Dr. Petrie gives this interesting information concerning the cow found on the hypocephalus:

“The hypocephalus appears to have had its origin in connection with Chapter clxii. of the Book of the Dead. From the rubric of this chapter we learn that the figure of the Cow Hathor was to be fashioned of gold, and placed upon the neck of the mummy; and that another was to be drawn upon papyrus, and placed under the head, the idea being to give ‘warmth’ to the deceased in the Underworld. After the Eighteenth Dynasty the cow-amulet fell into disuse, and the drawing upon papyrus developed into the hypocephalus, upon which the cow always remained an important figure.” (Statement by Dr. Petrie, as quoted in *Joseph Smith As a Translator*; by R. C. Webb, p. 155)

**Part F**

Part F is similar to several of our samples of hypocephali. Below is a comparison.



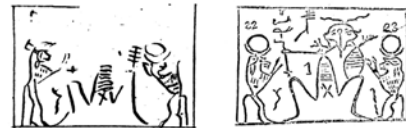
It is interesting to note that the lower portion of Part F is blank in the drawing in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. In our *Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 3, p. 23, we show that the offering table was probably added from Facsimile No. 1.

The reader will note that the feet of the standing figure in all samples of hypocephali except the Mormon one face toward the right. Dr. Hugh Nibley has noticed this and admits that Facsimile No. 2 is incorrectly restored in this area: “The feet of Figure 2, on the other hand, facing as they do in the wrong direction, we agree to call a restoration” (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, p. 92).

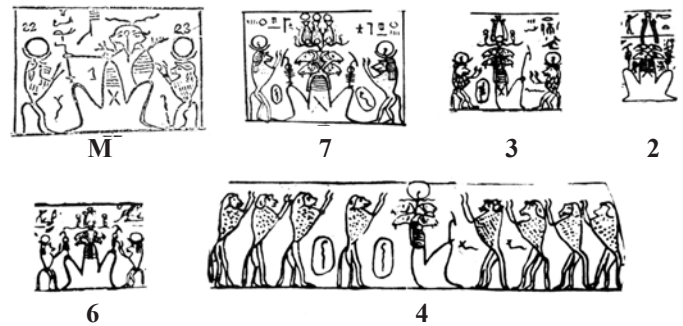
The Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes comments concerning Part F: “2. A two-headed deity wearing the double-plumed crown of Amen, . . . That the deity is a form of Amen is clear from the fact that he is wearing the double plume crown mentioned in chapter 162 of the Book of the Dead, . . .” (*BYU Studies*, Spring 1977, pp. 268, 270). On page 260 of the same article, Rhodes cites the relevant portion from chapter 162 of the Book of the Dead: “1. To be recited: Greeting to you, mighty Par of the lofty Double plumes, possessor of the White crown [of Upper Egypt], equipped with the flail. You are Lord of the Phallus.”

**Part G**

From the drawing in the “Egyptian Alphabet” it would appear that a portion of Part G was missing on the original hypocephalus. Below is a comparison of Part G as it appears in *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* (to the left) and as it appears in the *Times and Seasons* (to the right).



In other hypocephali the figure in the center seems to have four heads. Below is a comparison.



The Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria made this comment concerning Part G of the Mormon hypocephalus:

The God is always represented with four rams’ heads, and his image has certainly been altered here. They have also evidently made a very clumsy attempt at copying the double human head of the god figured above, fig. 2, instead of the four rams’ heads. . . . (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

We feel that Deveria’s theory that the Mormons filled in this area with the same “double human head of the god figured above” is probably correct. Below is a comparison of Part F and Part G.



The Mormon scholar Richley Crapo observes that the “seated two-faced god in the center of the hypocephalus has a head which corresponds remarkably to the head of the god Par, standing directly above it” (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, p. 28).

**Part H**

Part H on the Mormon hypocephalus (Fac. No. 2) is similar to our examples of other hypocephali found on page 366 of this

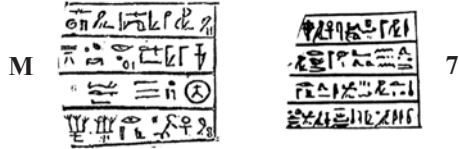


book. Below is a comparison of Part H of Facsimile No. 2 with the samples of other hypocephali.



**Part I**

Part I of the Mormon Hypocephalus is similar to the “Leyden Hypocephalus.” They both have four lines of writing in this area. Below is a comparison of the two.



Joseph Smith has numbered this portion upside down. Samuel A. B. Mercer made this comment concerning this matter:

Figs. 8-11. Here indeed the Prophet’s inspiration gave out. It does not even save him the blunder of numbering the hieroglyphics upside down. . . . his numbering the hieroglyphic lines upside down shows that the Prophet did not know Egyptian. (*The Utah Survey*, September 1913 p. 24)

The last line of Part I of the Mormon Hypocephalus gives the name of the person for whom it was made. The Egyptologist John A. Wilson informs us that “A hypocephalus was a cartonnage disk which was placed under the head of a mummy toward the end of ancient Egyptian history. I think that the name of the owner appears as Sheshonk” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 68). Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes likewise says that “From the text of the hypocephalus itself, it seems that the owner’s name was Sheshonk” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, p. 263). It is interesting to note that the Egyptian name Sheshonk appears as Shishak in the Bible, 1 Kings 14:25-26. The Shishak mentioned there, however, is an enemy to the Lord’s people: “. . . Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: . . . he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, . . .” While the Mormon Hypocephalus bears the name Shishak, Egyptologists do not believe that the man mentioned there is the Shishak found in the Bible. According to *The Biblical World*, p. 527, Pharaoh Shishak dates from “940-915 B.C.” (about a thousand years after Abraham). The drawing shown in Facsimile No. 2 apparently dates from an even later period, and Egyptologists do not feel that it was prepared for a king.

Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie read the name Shishak on Facsimile No. 2 in 1912. The presence of this name on Facsimile No. 2 seems to have troubled Dr. James R. Clark, and he suggested that it may have been added by a later scribe:

Could Dr. Petrie have been correct in reading the name of Shishak on Facsimile No. 2 and still not invalidate the translation of Joseph Smith? . . . Since the scholars have found these hypocephalli in late dynasty burials only, they have concluded that Joseph Smith’s papyrus must be from the late dynasties also. Two other possibilities exist, however, to explain the similarities. One is that not all of the inscription on Facsimile No. 2 from the Book of Abraham was written at Abraham’s time. The Facsimile may have been added to by some later scribe . . . is there a chance of some later inscriptions being added to the record after it left the hands of Abraham? . . .

If Dr. Petrie reads the name Shishak (or its equivalent) on Facsimile No. 2 of the Book of Abraham and Shishak lived between 950 and 750 B.C., while Abraham, on whose record his name is recorded lived

around 2000 B.C. does that invalidate the record? Must we assume that the whole papyrus would have to be written either at 2000 B.C. or at 750 B.C.? Is it not possible that a scribe around 950-750 B.C. might have added this name and perhaps other names to the original record started but not finished by Abraham? . . . that Dr. Petrie may have recognized some of the forms of the characters on the facsimiles and even some of the words as having been of a later date need not invalidate the record as a whole as being the writings of Abraham and his patriarchal successors. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, pp. 119, 121-123)

**Parts J and K**

We have compared Parts of J and K with other hypocephali in our *Case*, vol. 3, page 27, but since these areas are not of any real importance we will not take the room to deal with them here.

**Joseph Smith Responsible**

In our examination of Facsimile No. 2 we have found that it was reconstructed in a most peculiar way. First, areas that are blank in the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” have been filled in with characters and drawings from other documents. Second, lines of hieratic and hieroglyphic writing are joined together in a strange way—introducing foreign and unrelated thoughts. Third, to add to the confusion, the hieratic writing is inserted upside down in relation to the hieroglyphic text on the same lines.

The information presented above shows beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith did not have the slightest idea of what the Egyptian language or drawings were all about. He did not even seem to know when the Egyptian writing was upside down. The most serious indictment against him, however, is that he falsified the documents and made many imaginative additions to the drawings.

Dr. Hugh Nibley claims that Joseph Smith cannot be held responsible for mistakes in the Facsimiles:

First of all, Joseph Smith did not draw the Facsimiles; they were the work of a professional wood engraver, Reuben Hedlock, . . . Some critics have noted that some of the numbers that have been added to Facsimile 2 are upside down, and have again assumed that Joseph Smith put them that way; but as R.C. Webb points out, “There is no evidence before us that Smith is responsible for it.” (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, p. 20)

It is true that Hedlock made the engravings, but we feel that Joseph Smith was responsible for what appeared in the Facsimiles. While he cannot be held responsible for any changes made after his death, he is certainly responsible for the falsifications that were made when the Book of Abraham was first published in 1842. Actually, Joseph Smith was the Editor of the *Times and Seasons* at the time the Facsimiles were published. Under the date of March 1, 1842, we find this statement in his *History*:

During the forenoon I was at my office and the printing office, correcting the first plate or cut of the records of Father Abraham, prepared by Reuben Hedlock, for the *Times and Seasons*, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 519)

Under the date of March 4, 1842, we find this entry in Joseph Smith’s *History*:

Friday, 4.—At my office exhibiting the Book of Abraham in the original to Brother Reuben Hedlock, so that he might take the size of the several plates or cuts, and prepare the blocks for the *Times and Seasons*; and also gave instructions concerning the arrangement of the writing on the large cut, illustrating the principles of astronomy, with other general business. (*Ibid.*, p. 543)

The “large cut” refers to the hypocephalus. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement in a footnote at the bottom of the same page: “This refers to Facsimile No. 2, . . . which was published in the *Times and Seasons* in double page size.”

Joseph Smith’s statement that he “gave instructions concerning



the arrangement of the writing” on this cut becomes much more significant now that we know that portions were added from other documents.

The Mormon apologist James R. Clark certainly felt that Joseph Smith was responsible for the accuracy of the work on the facsimiles:

It is significant and reassuring to us that Joseph Smith personally corrected the illustrations or Facsimiles and read the proof of the text of his translation of the Book of Abraham before he would allow copies of the *Times and Seasons* containing it to be circulated. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 170)

Thus we see that Joseph Smith would have been aware of the falsifications made in the facsimiles, and therefore he stands responsible for the fraudulent reconstruction. While Dr. Hugh Nibley tried to pass the blame onto Hedlock, the Mormon Egyptologist Edward H. Ashment conceded that Smith was “connected” with the inaccurate reconstruction (see his statement on page 341 of this book).

### “Cannot Be Revealed”

Although Joseph Smith gave his interpretation of the drawings on Facsimile No. 2, he did not attempt to read the hieroglyphic writing which appears upon it. He said that this information was not to be given to the world at that time:

Fig. 8. Contains writing that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.

Fig. 9. Ought not to be revealed at the present time.

Fig. 10. Also.

Fig. 11. Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.

Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, will be given in the own due time of the Lord.

The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give at the present time. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, p. 35)

The science of Egyptology was in its infancy when Joseph Smith published these statements. Today it is possible for Egyptologists to read much of the writing which appears on Facsimile No. 2. The drawing which appears in the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” and the original “Sensen” papyrus have helped scholars to read this writing. Even Dr. Nibley admits that Egyptologists are able to read at least some of the writing on the Mormon Hypocephalus:

Then too, we must recognize that there really are sections of hieroglyphic text in Facsimile 2 that present-day Egyptologists read without too much trouble: . . . (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 74)

The translation of the hieroglyphic writing on Facsimile No. 2 deals another devastating blow to the Book of Abraham, for it does not contain a word about Abraham or his religion. In fact, it proves beyond all doubt that Facsimile No. 2 is a pagan document. In 1977 the Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes published a translation of Facsimile No. 2 in *Brigham Young University Studies*. Since we feel that Rhodes has made a real contribution to the understanding of this facsimile, we are reproducing his translation in this book. Following it we have placed a photograph of Facsimile No. 2 (as it appears in the 1978 *Pearl of Great Price*) for easy reference purposes. Rhodes translates the Mormon Hypocephalus as follows:

Edge: I am Djabty in the House of the Benben in Heliopolis, so exalted and glorious. [I am] a copulating bull without equal. [I am] that Mighty God in the House of the Benben in Heliopolis . . . that Mighty God . . .

Left Middle: O God of the Sleeping Ones from the time of the creation. O Mighty God, Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Netherworld and his Great Waters, grant that the soul of the Osiris Sheshonk, may live.

Bottom: May this tomb never be desecrated, and may this soul and its possessor never be desecrated in the Netherworld.

Upper Left: You shall be as that God, the Busirian.

To the Left of the Standing Two-headed God: The name of this Mighty God. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, p. 265)



While Dr. Nibley has not translated the writing on Facsimile No. 2, he has made some admissions which tend to confirm Michael Dennis Rhodes’ work. The following statements appear in the *Improvement Era*:

We must not overlook the fact that the name Iwnw or Heliopolis, occurring twice in the inscription around the rim of Facsimile No. 2, definitely associates the facsimile with the Heliopolitan cult. (*Improvement Era*, March 1969, page 80)

It is an interesting coincidence that the name Sheshonk (or Shishaq) is the one hieroglyphic word readily identified and unanimously agreed upon by the Egyptologists who have commented on Facsimile No. 2, where the name appears as Figure 8. How all this fits into the picture remains to be seen. (*Ibid.*, April 1969, p. 72)

The reader will notice that Rhodes read the name “Sheshonk” in Figure 8 of Facsimile No. 2. He also found the word “Heliopolis” twice in Figure 18.

### A Pagan Object

While Joseph Smith claimed that Fac. No. 2 was “A Facsimile From The Book of Abraham,” Michael Dennis Rhodes failed to find anything about the ancient patriarch. For many years we have maintained that it is nothing but a hypocephalus—an Egyptian funerary document filled with pictures and information about pagan gods and practices. Rhodes confirms that it is indeed a “hypocephalus” and that “The text of the hypocephalus itself seems to be an address to Osiris, the god of the Dead, on behalf of the deceased, Sheshonk” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, p. 274). On page 260 of the same article Rhodes says that “Hypocephali first appeared during the Saite Dynasty (663-525 B.C.) and their use continued down at least to the Christian era. It is in the Saite recension of the Book of the Dead, chapter 162, that directions for the construction and use of the hypocephalus are given. . . . the meaning of the hypocephalus is intimately connected with chapter 162 of the Book of the Dead, . . .” This is certainly an astonishing admission to find in a publication printed by the Mormon Church’s own university. One would think that if it is a “Fac-simile From the Book of Abraham,” it would be “intimately connected with the Book of Abraham—not the Book of the Dead. In

any case, Rhodes goes on to point out that the cow found in Facsimile No. 2 is in reality a pagan goddess:

This is the cow Ihet, mentioned in chapter 162 of the Book of the Dead, which should be drawn on a piece of new papyrus. This picture of a cow is common to almost all hypocephali. Ihet is a form of Hathor, the personification of the power of nature. She is also connected with Mehweret (Greek Methryr), another cow goddess who symbolized the sky. (*Ibid.*, p. 272)

The relationship of the Mormon Hypocephalus to paganism becomes clearer as a person studies into the matter. For instance, Michael Dennis Rhodes reads these words on the edge of the facsimile: "I am Djabty in the House of the Benben in Heliopolis, . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 26) In footnotes 31-32 on the same page, Rhodes explains that "Djabty" is "an epithet of Osiris" and that the "House of the Benben" is "the name of the sun sanctuary in Heliopolis." On another part of the hypocephalus, Rhodes translates: "You shall be as that God, the Busirian." In footnote 43 he explains that "Busiris" is "a cult center of Osiris in the Delta, and thus used as an epithet of Osiris."

While Rhodes does not try to read the hieratic writing falsely inserted into the hypocephalus from the Sensen Papyrus, it has been translated by other Egyptologists and also bears witness of the pagan origin of the documents. As we have already pointed out, the words "Book of Breathings" stand out like a sore thumb.

Mormon apologists have searched in vain for any evidence that Facsimile No. 2 came from the hand of Abraham. All evidence points to the unmistakable conclusion that this is a pagan object and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion.

### Facsimile No. 1

Joseph Smith claimed that Facsimile No. 1 was a picture of an idolatrous priest trying to sacrifice Abraham on an altar. At the top of the next column is a photograph of Facsimile No. 1 as it is printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 28. This is followed by Joseph Smith's interpretation of the drawing.

James R. Clark made this statement concerning Facsimile No. 1:

Another thing to be noticed about the Book of Abraham is that the Facsimiles are intended to serve as illustrations of the text. When Joseph Smith translated the text of Abraham 1:10-12 the whole idea of the altar and the sacrifice was contained in a single character.

But he, Abraham, wanted to make sure that his reader would clearly understand what the altar actually looked like so he "drew a picture" for his reader. That picture or illustration is Facsimile No. 1. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 119)

Abraham himself was supposed to have made this statement concerning the drawing which appears in Facsimile No. 1:

And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.

It was made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans, and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and also a god like unto that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, which manner of the figures is called by the Chaldeans Rahleenos, which signifies hieroglyphics. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:12-14)

Egyptologists maintain that this scene is from funeral papyri and does not have anything to do with Abraham.

A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

No. 1



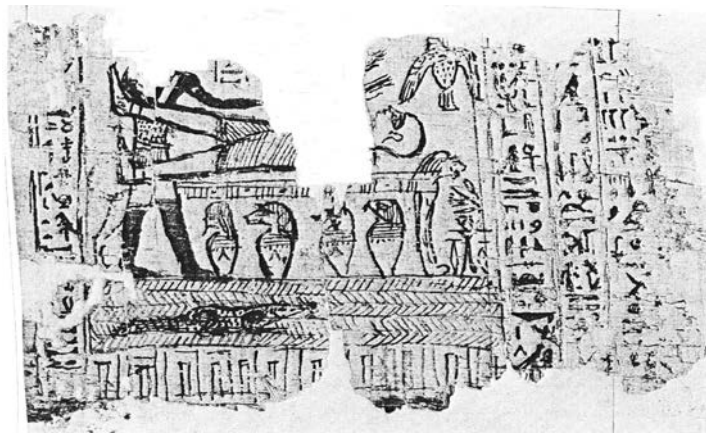
EXPLANATION OF THE ABOVE CUT

Fig. 1. The Angel of the Lord. 2. Abraham fastened upon an altar. 3. The idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice. 4. The altar for sacrifice by the idolatrous priests, standing before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and Pharaoh. 5. The idolatrous god of Elkenah. 6. The idolatrous god of Libnah. 7. The idolatrous god of Mahmackrah. 8. The idolatrous god of Korash. 9. The idolatrous god of Pharaoh. 10. Abraham in Egypt. 11. Designed to represent the pillars of heaven, as understood by the Egyptians. 12. Rau-keeyang, signifying expanse, or the firmament over our heads; but in this case, in relation to this subject, the Egyptians meant it to signify Shaumau, to be high, or the heavens, answering to the Hebrew word, Shaumahyeem.

Now that the original papyrus from which Joseph Smith copied Facsimile No. 1 has been located we know that it is a scene from the "Book of Breathings."

### Unfamiliar Writing

The original fragment has several rows of hieroglyphs which were not included in the printed facsimile. This writing becomes very significant when we try to determine what the drawing is about. Below is a photograph which shows the hieroglyphs which appear at the two sides of the drawing. There is another row just above the arm of the standing figure, but most of it has broken off.



Dr. Hugh Nibley has claimed that "the inscriptions on the Mormon papyrus are completely different" from those found on a scene which is parallel in several respects to the "Book of Abraham" scene (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, page 79). On page 81 of the same article, Nibley stresses:

. . . our manuscript is different. . . we are impressed by the rather massive additions—the unfamiliar writing that frames the scene on either side, and the stage-like



foundation of elements found in none of the other papyri. True, every individual sign and figure can be matched rather easily somewhere else, just as every word on this page can be found in almost any English book, but it is the combination of perfectly ordinary signs that makes extraordinary compositions, . . . the combination here is different.

As we have already pointed out, Dr. Nibley has not unfolded the unique message he claims is found on the fragment of papyrus used for Facsimile No. 1. He has prepared a large book dealing with the Joseph Smith Papyri, yet he has failed to provide a translation of this important papyrus! Nibley seems to have realized that a translation of these lines would undermine his entire effort to rescue the Book of Abraham. We are certain that Nibley would have furnished a complete translation of the text if it had mentioned "The idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice." It is obvious that the reason he has decided to remain silent is that the text is concerning the burial of an Egyptian named Hor. This, of course, makes it part of the Book of Breathings. Since the discovery of the papyri, some Mormons have been fearful that the message contained on this papyrus would not support the Book of Abraham. One man, for instance, wrote a letter which was published in the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* at the Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, page 9. In this letter he warned:

What was discovered at the Metropolitan Museum is largely standard Egyptian writing such as may be found with most of the mummies gotten from Egyptian tombs. . . . Some claim that Joseph did not know what he was doing, to explain Facsimile No. 1 as he did. Actually, the writing which surrounds this picture on the original papyrus has no connection with either the illustration or the Prophet's "explanation."

We cannot accept this statement, for we feel that the writing and the illustration are indissolubly interwoven. If the drawing had been done by Abraham, the lines of writing would, no doubt, have had something to say about Abraham or his religion. We feel, therefore, that this writing deals a fatal blow to the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. It does not relate in any way to Abraham, and it proves conclusively that the scene is from the "Book of Breathings."

Fortunately, Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, has made a translation of this fragment:

Lines 1-3 give the titles, name, and parentage of the man for whose benefit the Breathing Permit was written:

. . . the prophet of Amonrasonter, prophet[?] of Min Bull-of-his-Mother, prophet [?] of Khons the Governor . . . Hor, justified, son of the holder of the same titles, master of secrets, and purifier of the gods Osorwer, justified [?] . . . Tikhebyt, justified. May your ba live among them, and may you be buried in the West . . .

Too little is left of line 4 to permit even a guess at what it said. Insofar as I can make it out, line 5 reads:

May you give him a good, splendid burial on the West of Thebes just like...

(*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 116-117)

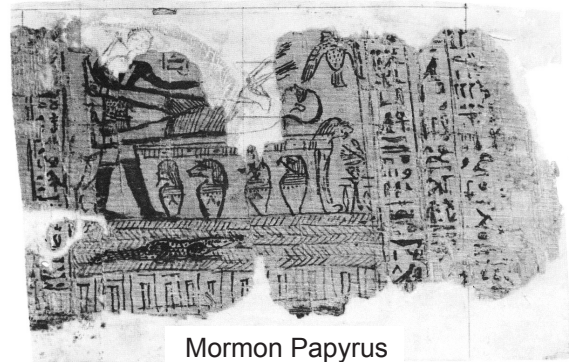
The reader will notice that Klaus Baer reads the names "Hor" and "Tikhebyt" on this fragment. These, of course, are the same names that appear in the text of the "Sensen" fragments. This establishes beyond all doubt that the fragment is part of the pagan funeral text known as the "Book of Breathings." The names of Egyptian gods are written on the fragment, and the word "burial" appears twice on this piece of papyrus. It is interesting to note that Klaus Baer translates the word "Thebes" from the fifth line of the fragment. Dr. Nibley says that the *Pearl of Great Price* mummies were "found in Thebes" (*Improvement Era*, Feb. 1968, p. 21), and

Klaus Baer informs us that "all the known copies" of the Book of Breathings "seem to come" from Thebes (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 111). Furthermore, the gods mentioned in the text are the very gods that were worshipped at Thebes. All evidence, therefore, points to the inescapable conclusion that this is a pagan document and that it could not have been written by Abraham.

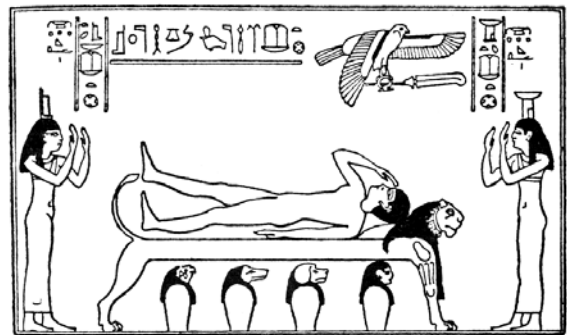
### Not Unique

Dr. Hugh Nibley would have us believe that the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith copied Facsimile No. 1 is "A Unique Document." Professor Richard Parker on the other hand, claims this is a "well-known scene from the Osiris mysteries, with Anubus, the jackal-headed god, on the left ministering to the dead Osiris on the bier" (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, p. 86).

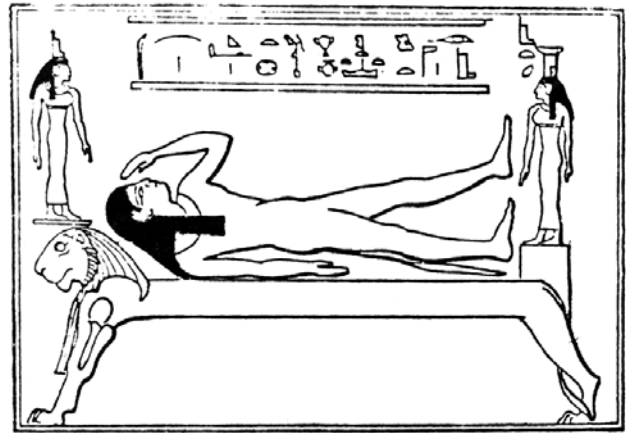
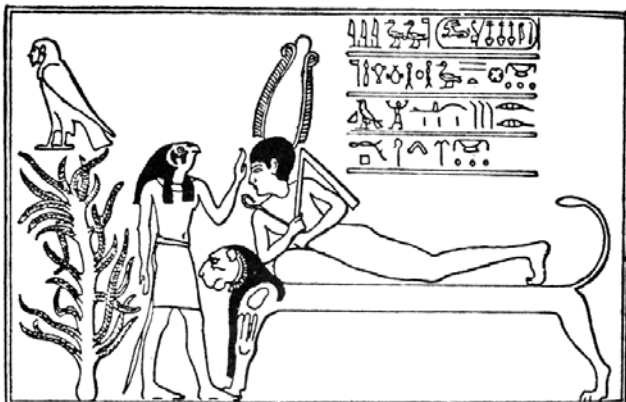
The following scenes are similar to Fac. No. 1. They are taken from several books. The reader will find most of them in *Osiris—The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, 1961, vol. 1, p. 280 and vol. 2, pp. 21-48.



Mormon Papyrus







### The Interpretation

Egyptologists who have examined the papyrus fragment that Facsimile No. 1 was copied from feel that Joseph Smith's interpretation of it is incorrect. What Joseph Smith called "Abraham fastened upon an altar" is in reality Osiris lying upon his bier. The "idoltrous priest of Elkenah" is the god Anubis ministering to Osiris. Klaus Baer says that the identification of Anubis "is assured by the black color of the body and many parallels, e.g., Mariette, Denderah, IV, pl. 70-71 and the countless examples of Anubis attending a mummy on a lion-couch (BD 151 and often elsewhere). He is, of course, not holding a knife" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 118).

The Egyptians believed that Osiris was killed by his brother Set. The body was found by Isis, and he was embalmed by Anubis. Osiris was resurrected and became the God of the Dead.

The four jars which appear below the bier in Facsimile No. 1 prove that it is a funerary scene. These canopic jars were used to hold the soft parts of the body that were removed during the embalming process. (Notice that they appear in some of the other scenes we have shown.) Joseph Smith's statement that they are the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, and Korash is completely wrong. Professor Richard A. Parker comments:

Beneath the bier are the four canopic jars with heads representative of the four sons of Horus, human-headed Imseti, baboon-headed Hapy, jackal-headed Duamutef and falcon-headed Kebehefnuf. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86)

Klaus Baer agrees with Parker:

Below the couch are the canopic jars for the embalmed internal organs. The lids are the four sons of Horus, . . . who protect the liver, lungs, intestines, and stomach, respectively. (*Ibid.*, Autumn 1968, p. 118)

These are the same four gods found in Part E of Facsimile No. 2. The Mormon Egyptologist Michael Dennis Rhodes states:

. . . the four Sons of Horus, . . . also were guardians of the viscera of the dead, and their images were carved on the four canopic jars into which the internal organs were placed. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1977, pp. 272-73)

R. C. Webb, who defended the Mormon position concerning the Book of Abraham, admitted that the four jars resembled canopic jars used in the embalming process:

. . . these figures, both in shape and position accord with those of the "Canopic vases," containers for the viscera of mummified deceased. In fact, they have contributed the most cogent evidence, in the eyes of Egyptological critics, that we have here only a variation of such familiar funerary scenes as have been specified already. (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, Salt Lake City, 1936, p. 141)

## Changes in Facsimile

Egyptologists have always claimed that the Mormons altered the scene shown in Facsimile No. 1. They claim that the standing figure (Anubis) should have a jackal's head instead of a human head. Some Egyptologists claim that the knife has been added into the hand of Anubis and that the bird should have a human head. The charge that the Mormons altered this scene was made a century ago by Theodule Deveria. In his interpretation of Facsimile No. 1 he stated:

Fig. 1. The soul of Osiris, under the form of a hawk (which should have a human head).

Fig. 2. Osiris coming to life on his funeral couch, which is the shape of a lion.

Fig. 3. The god Anubis (who should have a jackal's head) effecting the resurrection of Osiris. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake City*, vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

In 1912 Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, head of the Department of Egyptian Art of the Metropolitan Museum, made a similar charge:

Dr. Lythgoe . . . expressed the wish that he might see the original papyrus that the Prophet Smith translated or a photograph of it, instead of drawings made from it. In the first of the Mormon figures the god Anubis, bending over the mummy, was shown with a Human and a strangely un-Egyptian head, instead of the jackal's head usual to such a scene. And a knife had been drawn into the god's hand. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, December 29, 1912)

In 1966 the Egyptologists John A. Wilson and Richard A. Parker still maintained that Facsimile No. 1 had been altered. John A. Wilson charged: "The head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal" (Letter dated March 16, 1966). Richard A. Parker stated: "Number 1 is an altered copy of a well known scene of the dead god Osiris on his bier with a jackal-god Anubis acting as his embalmer" (Letter dated March 22, 1966).

R. C. Webb, the apologist for the Mormons, wrote the following:

. . . unless these drawings have been altered in several essential particulars, . . . they do not represent the common run of illustrations in the Book of the Dead, . . . If there is no evidence that they were not altered in copying, there is also no evidence that they were so altered. . . . There are numerous representations of Anubis, "protector of the dead," standing beside the corpse or mummy on its bier. It may be safe to assert, however, that, in all such drawings, Anubis is shown in the conventional manner, having a jackal's head with elongated snout, never with a human head. (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 437)

In the *Improvement Era*, vol. 17, p. 319, "Dr. Webb" commented:

Thus, Dr. Petrie calls the standing figure "Anubis," but he does not refer us to genuine examples in which that god is shown with a human, instead of a jackal's head. Dr. Breasted's note on the attempted 'reconciliation' between the diverse judgments, "Anubis" and "priest," stating that "the officiating priest wears the head of a wolf or jackal to impersonate Anubis," adds nothing to our enlightenment, because the figure in question is wearing no such head.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made these sarcastic comments concerning the charge that the Mormons had altered the facsimiles:

To these diverse interpretations of this figure 1, I add that of M. Deveria: "The soul of Osiris, under the form of a hawk." He also adds, in parenthesis, that the hawk "should have a human head." Yes, or the head of an ass, then it could be made to mean something else than what these other learned men describe it as meaning. . . . Petrie makes

no complaint against the form of "figure 3," but Deveria insists that he "should have a jackal's head." Yes, or some other change might be suggested, and by such process some other meaning may be read into the plate and make it different from the translation of Joseph Smith. (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, p. 321)

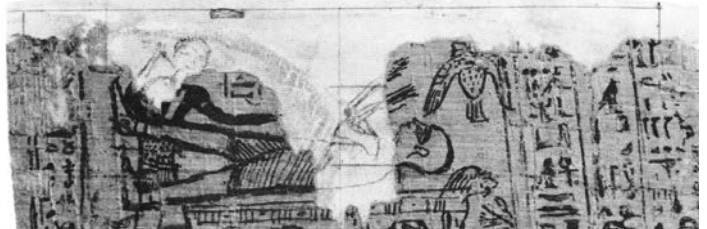
At the time these comments were written, the original papyrus from which Facsimile No. 1 was drawn was not available. Therefore, B. H. Roberts and "Dr. Webb" were able to criticize the Egyptologists for claiming that alterations had been made. Now that the papyrus has been located, the entire picture has changed. The Mormon position has been considerably weakened because the portions of the papyrus which have been in question—i.e., the parts that would have contained the head of Anubis, the head of the bird, and the knife—are missing! (See photograph below.)

Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, the man who found the papyri, made this comment about the papyrus:

" . . . I went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art looking for documents, . . . While there I found a file with these documents . . . When I saw this picture, I knew that it had appeared in the *Pearl of Great Price*. . . the head had fallen off, and I could see that the papyrus was stuck on paper, nineteenth century paper. The head was completed in pencil, apparently by Joseph Smith, who must have had it when that part fell off. He apparently drew the head in his own hand on the supplementary paper. . . .

"In order to protect the papyrus, which becomes brittle with age—for instance, the head of the person fell off simply because the papyrus was brittle—Joseph Smith probably thought that the best thing for its protection was to glue it on paper." (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, pp. 13-14)

Below is a photograph of the top part of Facsimile No. 1. The reader will see that whoever drew the missing portions of the papyrus on the paper beneath reconstructed the scene in a different manner than it appears in the Book of Abraham.



The reader will notice that the head appears to be off to one side and facing forward, and the knife seems to be in the other hand, up by the head. This would seem to show that the reconstruction was merely guesswork.

Dr. Nibley tries to show that the "pencilled restoration" was done by a non-Mormon (*Improvement Era*, Sept. 1968, pp. 72, 80), but his arguments are very weak.

The Egyptologist Klaus Baer makes this interesting statement concerning the condition of the papyrus at the time Joseph Smith worked with it:

Is there any evidence for the condition of the vignette of "Facsimile No. 1" in Joseph Smith's time? The cut shows it complete, but we have already seen that Joseph Smith attempted to fill lacunae [blank portions] in his copy of the texts. Is this the case here also? There is no direct evidence, but line 4 is an indication. One would have expected it to appear in the "Facsimile" and in the copies in EAG if more had existed than the insignificant remnant now visible—the hieroglyphs are included in "Facsimile No. 3."

The sketch in the lacuna is a stronger argument. The head and



shoulders of the standing figure (3) are quite different in “Facsimile No. 1” and on the backing of P.JS I. Neither can be a copy of the other, and they diverge too much to be copies of the same original. If the sketch were later than the cut in PGP, one would expect it to resemble the “Facsimile”; if, on the other hand, Joseph Smith had drawn it himself (or had it drawn) in order to replace a part of the papyrus that had been damaged after it came into his possession, one would still expect the two versions to resemble each other. The likeliest interpretation of the difference is that the sketch on the backing fills an already existing gap in a manner that Joseph Smith himself rejected as unsatisfactory. In addition, as we have already seen, the Egyptian parallels to the missing portions of the vignette resemble neither the sketch nor “Facsimile No. 1.” The human-headed bird (1) would hardly have been drawn with a bird’s head in PGP if more of the papyrus had been preserved when the woodcut was made. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pp. 132-133)

On page 118, footnote 31, of the same article, Klaus Baer states:

... the vignette was probably in essentially the same condition in 1835 that it is now, and the restorations, both that sketched on the backing and that in “Facsimile No. 1” in the *PGP*, are not copies of the missing parts.

Dr. Hugh Nibley makes this comment concerning the charge that Facsimile No. 1 has been altered:

1. It is significant that the charge of false copying today centers on those parts of the document which happen to be missing, and thus offends the first principle of textual criticism, which is, always to give a document the benefit of the doubt. If the copyist is perfectly reliable in the four-fifths of the sketch that have survived, why should he go berserk in the particular fifth that is missing? (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 74)

We feel that Dr. Nibley is overlooking important evidence concerning Joseph Smith’s method of working with these documents. We have already shown that the portions of Facsimile No. 2 which were missing on the original document were filled in from other documents and that false restorations were made in the “Sensen” papyrus. Since Joseph Smith was responsible for falsification in the other documents, why should we believe that he would perform differently with regard to Facsimile No. 1? We have quoted William S. West as stating that the papyri “were torn by being taken from the roll of embalming salve which contained them, and some parts entirely lost . . .” This statement was printed just two years after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri. We must remember, too, that the Egyptologists made their charges long before the papyri were rediscovered. It seems very significant that the very parts they charged were altered are the portions that are missing on the original papyrus fragment.

In a desperate attempt to save the Book of Abraham, Dr. Nibley claimed that an “old portrait” of Joseph Smith’s mother proves that Facsimile No. 1 was not altered. Dr. Nibley was basing his conclusions on a photograph of this portrait. Wesley P. Walters, however, rediscovered the original portrait, and Dr. Nibley was forced to admit that he had made a mistake concerning this matter. For more information about this see our *Case*, vol. 3, pages 40-43, 72-73.

The Egyptologist Richard A. Parker has suggested that there was originally a second bird shown in Facsimile No. 1, but that it has broken away. He feels that what Joseph Smith thought was the upper hand of Abraham is in reality the wingtip of the second bird (see *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86). According to his interpretation, the bird is “hovering over the erect phallus of Osiris (now broken away).” He explains that Isis takes the form of a bird and “is magically impregnated by the dead Osiris and then later gives birth to Horus who avenges his father and takes over his inheritance.” Klaus Baer says:

There are some problems about restoring the missing parts of the body of Osiris. He was almost certainly represented as ithyphallic,

ready to beget Horus, as in many of the scenes at Dendera. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 119)

If it could be established that Osiris was originally “represented as ithyphallic” in this drawing, it would be very embarrassing for the church. This is a possibility that has to be considered since Facsimile No. 2 shows the ithyphallic god Min. Dr. Hugh Nibley says that there are “a number of procreation scenes in which the mummy is begetting his divine successor or reincarnation” (*Improvement Era*, October 1968, p. 78), but he argues vigorously against the idea that Facsimile No. 1 was originally such a scene:

We must bear in mind that the alterations that Professor Parker’s interpretation requires—the jackal’s mask of the priest, the hovering bird, and the reproductive activities indicated—not only occupy the most conspicuous position, front and center, on the Number 1 papyrus, but by their unusual, not to say shocking nature (and many visitors to Nauvoo were looking for something shocking), would be most certain to command the attention of any observer. How does it happen that during all the years when the papyri were being shown by old Sister Lucy Mack Smith for a small admission fee to any interested parties, nobody ever noticed that they differed drastically from the well-known printed copies that the visitor was invited to take away with him? (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 77)

The answer to Nibley’s question is very simple: if it was really a procreation scene, as some Egyptologists maintain, the papyrus was probably damaged in this area before Joseph Smith obtained it, and therefore visitors wouldn’t see anything “shocking” about the drawing.

The Mormon Egyptologist Edward H. Ashment seems to be unsure of exactly how this portion of the papyrus should be reconstructed:

The direct evidence is meager about whether the upper “hand” of the recumbent figure is really a hand or the tip of a bird’s wing. Except for some slight indications, it could be seen to be either one. . . . given its general resemblance to the lower hand and the fact that it is not drawn in a manner similar to the wing of the bird on its right it is plausible to consider the upper “hand” as a hand. However, the two little blotches within the “hand” present a problem, in that they resemble the mottling technique used to portray feathers on the bird on the right. The blotches appear to be intentional and not remnants of a solid line, in that no damage to the papyrus has occurred immediately around them. This indicates that the upper “hand” may have been something other than a hand—such as the tip of one of the wings of Isis hovering over Osiris, just as she does in other scenes depicting the same event. . . . As for the upper ‘hand’ there are parallels for having a bird hovering over the recumbent figure, but there are no parallels for a recumbent figure with two arms raised, so taking into account the otherwise inexplicable blotches it seems that the upper “hand” may be a wing, although direct evidence from the papyrus cannot strongly support that conclusion. (*Sunstone*, December 1979, pp. 36-38)

However this may be, Mormon scholars were probably very disappointed to find that the head of the standing figure was missing on the original papyrus. They had made such a point of the fact that Facsimile No. 1 was different from other Egyptian scenes in that it had a human head rather than the head of a jackal. Egyptologists, on the other hand, are now more confident than ever that the standing figure is Anubis. John A. Wilson, who had stated that “the head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal,” made this comment after he saw a photograph of the original papyrus:

Finally, you want to know about the embalming scene and I am comforted to see that the standing figure has no head. I am sure that it never had a human head, as all of these illustrations show an animal head. In Ryerson, Pl. XLVIII, the vignette for B.D. 151 shows the jackal-god Anubis bending over a couch, with his hands on a recumbent human figure. (Letter from John A. Wilson, dated January 5, 1968)



Dr. Nibley is now willing to admit that the human head on the standing figure in Facsimile No. 1 is an error, but he tries to blame it onto the Egyptian artist:

They [Nibley]: Well, you do go so far as to assume without question that the priest in Facsimile No. 1 should have a jackal's mask. And you are quite right—he should have, and the human head is an error. But whose error?

They [Critics]: Whose could it be but Smith's?

We [Nibley]: Smith didn't need an unmasked priest—a mask would have been just as impressive perhaps. But let us call your attention to at least three Ptolemaic lion-couch scenes closely paralleling this one in which the artist has deliberately drawn the embalming priest without a jackal mask. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, p. 98)

The Mormon scholar Richley Crapo made this observation concerning the charge that Facsimile No. 1 has been altered:

As early as 1860, T. Deveria noted a number of similar anomalies on Facsimile Number 1. (See Figure 3) Since he also noted the irregularities of the central two-headed god of the hypocephalus and the serpent-dove figure, his comments concerning Facsimile Number 1 may well be considered with some respect.... Now, although this case lacks the conclusiveness of that for Facsimile Number 2, one does wonder if it be mere coincidence that the recovered papyrus original of Facsimile Number 1 is missing exactly these purportedly anomalous features: the head of the priest, the knife, and the head of the bird. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 29)

Edward H. Ashment, the Mormon Egyptologist, has carefully examined the evidence concerning Facsimile No. 1 and has concluded that Joseph Smith was probably in error in his reconstruction of both the human figure and the bird:

Thus it is apparent that the upper edge of Papyrus Joseph Smith I was virtually the same in 1835 as it is today, indicating that any material above it constitutes restoration. (See Plate 1)

It is just that material which has been controversial. Parenthetically, it is significant that those are the very items that should be expected to differ from the usual couch motifs if the restoring artist(s) had no knowledge of ancient Egyptian religious art . . . upon close examination of the upper torso of the black standing figure (Illustration 9) two important differences appear between the original and Hedlock's woodcut: the angle of ascent of the Hedlock shoulder is not nearly as vertical as that on the original, and on the original, parts of the shoulder consist of narrow vertical stripes which again do not appear in the Hedlock version. The second difference is small but very important. In the Hedlock copy a white line proceeds up the trunk of the standing figure to his shoulder and then turns sharply to the left. However on the original, where the entire top third of the line is intact, there is no sharp turn to the left, indicating that Hedlock utilized artistic license there.

Those traces are significant in that they are a clear indication of the god Anubis who is closely associated with the Osiris mysteries. The narrow stripes clearly are the bottom edge of Anubis' headdress. (Illustration 10) The white line represents part of Anubis' clothing, as does the rest of the black figure's clothing such as the vest and kilt. (Illustration 11) In addition, the very color of the figure—black is another indication of Anubis, as is the arm band which Hedlock failed to include in his woodcut. With high probability, Fig. 3 should be restored as Anubis and not as a human-headed individual. . . .

The final controversial item from Facsimile 1 to be considered here is what type of head should be on the bird . . .

As with the representation of Anubis, there are small but important clues where the bird intersects the upper edge of the papyrus which tend to support the conclusion that it originally had a man's head, thus representing a b3. . . the traces of the bird's head at the broken edge of the papyrus represent clear indications of a human head. (Illustration 23)

It is apparent that Reuben Hedlock's Facsimile 1 is a conjecturally-restored copy of Papyrus Joseph Smith I . . . significant traces at the upper edge of Papyrus Joseph Smith I where the standing black figure

and the bird intersect it definitely indicate a jackal-headed Anubis for one, and a human-headed b3 bird for the other." (*Sunstone*, Dec. 1979, pp. 34, 36, 38)

For more information on the false reconstruction of Facsimile No. 1 see our *Case*, vol. 3, pages 38-45.

### Facsimile No. 3

Joseph Smith claimed that Facsimile No. 3 showed "Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh's throne." Below is a photograph of Facsimile No. 3 as it is printed in the *Pearl of Great Price* [1978], Book of Abraham, page 42. This is followed by Joseph Smith's interpretation of the drawing, and below the explanation is a photograph of this drawing as it first appeared in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842.



#### EXPLANATION OF THE ABOVE CUT

1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh's throne, by the politeness of the king, with a crown upon his head, representing the Priesthood, as emblematical of the grand Presidency in Heaven; with the scepter of justice and judgment in his hand.
2. King Pharaoh, whose name is given in the characters above his head.
3. Signifies Abraham in Egypt—referring to Abraham, as given in the ninth number of the *Times and Seasons*. (Also as given in the first facsimile of this book.)
4. Prince of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, as written above the hand.
5. Shulem, one of the king's principal waiters, as represented by the characters above his hand.
6. Olmlah, a slave belonging to the prince.  
Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of Astronomy, in the king's court.



1842 — *Times and Seasons*

As we examine the cut which appears in printings of the *Pearl of Great Price* prior to 1981, we are amazed at the extremely poor quality of the reproduction. We have previously quoted Dr. Hugh Nibley as stating that "careless changes occurred in later editions" of the *Pearl of Great Price*. He also said that the facsimiles have suffered "drastic alterations" at the "hands of their various copyists." He admits that "The Facsimiles now in use are extremely bad reproductions, far inferior to the first engravings published in 1842." In *Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, p. 73,

he makes this statement:

But the Mormons have never displayed any particular reverence or awe for the facsimiles. Whereas the editing of the standard works has ever been an object of meticulous care, even a cursory examination of successive reproductions of the plates of the Book of Abraham shows the work to be amazingly slapdash and slipshod, as if a mere approximation of the general idea were quite enough to satisfy the brethren.

These are certainly strange statements to be coming from the man whom the Mormon leaders chose to defend the Book of Abraham. We must agree with Dr. Nibley that “drastic alterations” have been made in the facsimiles. These alterations are very evident in the hieroglyphs which appear on Facsimile No. 3 (see previous page for a photographic comparison of the 1842 printing with that found in the *Pearl of Great Price*). The reader will notice that the line of hieroglyphs which appears at the bottom of the facsimile is almost completely unreadable in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*. Many of the hieroglyphs which appear at the top of the facsimile have also been altered. It would appear that the Mormon leaders did not want accurate reprints of the facsimiles. We feel that the alterations in the facsimiles were a deliberate attempt to obscure the writing so that Egyptologists would be unable to read it. (As we indicated earlier, there has been a great deal of criticism concerning the printed facsimiles and there is a rumor to the effect that the church will soon return to the use of the *Times and Seasons*’ engravings in all copies of the *Pearl of Great Price*.)

In any case, the Egyptologist Klaus Baer has carefully examined the original 1842 printing of Facsimile No. 3. He used the *Times and Seasons* because “The cuts that appear in modern, cheap editions of the *PGP* have lost too much detail to be of use and appear to have been touched up slightly” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 126, n. 106).

On pages 126-127 of the same article, Klaus Baer gives this important information about Facsimile No. 3:

“Facsimile No. 3” shows a man (5), his hand raised in adoration and a cone of perfumed grease and a lotus flower on his head (ancient Egyptian festival attire), being introduced by Maat (4), the goddess of justice, and Anubis (6), the guide of the dead, into the presence of Osiris (1), enthroned as king of the Netherworld. Behind Osiris stands Isis (2), and in front of him is an offering-stand (3) with a jug and some flowers on it. Over the whole scene is a canopy with stars painted on it to represent the sky.

The scene comes from a mortuary papyrus and is similar to, but not identical with scenes showing the judgment of the deceased before Osiris such as P. JS III. It is a summary in one illustration of what the Breathing Permit promised: The deceased, after successfully undergoing judgment is welcomed into the presence of Osiris.

The texts, poorly copied as they are, carry us one step further. As far as it can be made out, the line of hieroglyphs below the scene reads:

O gods of . . . , gods of the Caverns, gods of the south, north, west, and east, grant well-being to Osiris Hor, justified, . . .

The characters above and to the left of the man are probably to be read: “Osiris Hor, justified forever.” Even though Hor is a relatively common name in Greco-Roman Egypt, this does suggest that “Facsimile No. 3” reproduces a part of the same manuscript that “Facsimile No. 1” does. Hor’s copy of the Breathing Permit would then have had two vignettes, one at the beginning and another (“Facsimile No. 3”) at the end, an arrangement that is found in other copies of the same text.

When naming their children the Egyptians often used the names of their gods. The man mentioned in the Mormon Papyrus was named after the god Horus. This was a common name toward the end of ancient Egyptian history. The Egyptologists who have

translated Joseph Smith’s papyri render the name “Hor,” but they realize that it is the name of the god Horus. Klaus Baer makes this statement concerning the name Hor: “The name means ‘[the god] Horus’” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 111, n. 8).

Now that we know that the name “Hor” is the same as “Horus,” we find that the Egyptologist M. Theodule Deveria correctly identified the name in Facsimile No. 3 more than a hundred years ago! He stated:

5. The deceased led by Ma into the presence of Osiris. His name is Horus, as may be seen in the prayer which is at the bottom of the picture, and which is addressed to the divinities of the four cardinal points. (*A Journey to Great Salt Lake*, vol. 2, as quoted in *Deseret News*, January 4, 1913)

The appearance of the name Hor on both Facsimile 3 and on the original papyrus used for Facsimile No. 1 is absolutely devastating because it shows that they are both part of a pagan document. (For more information about the translation of the name “Hor” see our *Case*, vol. 3, page 7.) It is also interesting to note that Klaus Baer reads the words “gods of the Caverns” from the line of hieroglyphs at the bottom of Facsimile No. 3. These same words are found toward the end of the hieratic text in other copies of the Book of Breathings. From “parallel manuscripts,” Klaus Baer reads: “Let him accompany Osiris together with the gods of the Caverns, . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 126)

## Dressed Like Women

In his booklet, *Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians*, pages 29-30, Wesley P. Walters writes:

Facsimile No. 3 shows the deceased being led before Osiris, god of the dead, and behind the enthroned Osiris stands his wife Isis. Joseph identified the figure on the throne as Abraham, and the figures behind and in front of him as Pharaoh and his son respectively, failing to recognize that these figures are wearing women’s dresses and headdresses.

The arrows below point to the two goddesses whom Joseph Smith mistakenly identified as men.



This mistake was pointed out in Spalding’s pamphlet published in 1912. Dr. A. H. Sayce wrote:

Number 3 is a representation of the Goddess Maat leading the Pharaoh before Osiris, behind whom stands the Goddess Isis. Smith has turned the Goddess into a king and Osiris into Abraham. (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, p. 23)

James H. Breasted commented:

Fac-simile Number 3: This scene depicts the god Osiris enthroned at the left, with a goddess, probably Isis, behind him and before him three figures. The middle one, a man, led into the presence of Osiris by the goddess Truth, . . .

Writing in *The Utah Survey*, page 26, the Egyptologist Samuel A. B. Mercer remarked:

Isis carries a star in her right hand which indicates life. The

Prophet calls this figure “King Pharaoh”—a very womanly king!

Concerning the personage Joseph Smith identifies as “Prince of Pharaoh,” Mercer declared: “The Prophet again makes a male out of a female” (*Ibid.*, p. 28).

Robert C. Webb, apologist for the Mormons, conceded that “the figure seated on the throne—and called Abraham, or even some earthly king—is drawn after the usual fashion of the god Osiris, while those called ‘Pharaoh’ and ‘prince’ are given the kind of representations familiar with Egyptian goddesses, rather than contours definitely masculine” (*Joseph Smith As a Translator*, p. 149).

Even Dr. Nibley admits the personages Joseph Smith identified as men seem to look more like women:

If “Pharaoh” and “the Prince of Pharaoh” in Facsimile 3 were being drawn to order, why on earth were they not drawn as princes or at least as men instead of being so very obviously women—is this cunning alteration to suit Joseph Smith’s interpretation? (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 76)

### A Common Scene

Although “Dr. Webb” claimed that Facsimile No. 3 was unique in some respects, he did admit there was a resemblance between this scene and those found in the Book of the Dead. In fact, he even mentioned the Book of Breathings:

We must admit the close resemblance of the seated figure to the traditional representations of Osiris, wearing the double plumed crown, and holding the flail, or scourge, and the hook, or crook, in either hand. The figures before and behind him also closely suggest the goddesses mentioned by our critics . . . the scene differs in several important details from the common run of representations of Osiris judging the dead . . . there are variations in some other books of the same import, particularly in later ages. Among such later may be mentioned the papyrus, or [of?] Kerasher, or Kersher—containing the so-called “Book of Breathings.” This papyrus, . . . shows the deceased. . . led before Osiris by . . . Anubis, . . . (*The Improvement Era*, vol. 16, pp. 450-451)

Grant Heward has located two copies of the Book of Breathings which have judgment scenes that resemble Facsimile No. 3. They are located in the Berlin Museum and are identified as Papyrus No. 3135 and Papyrus No. 3154. At the bottom of the page the reader will find drawings of these papyri compared with Facsimile No. 3—we have not attempted to make accurate copies of the hieroglyphs as this would take many hours of tedious work and would serve no purpose for the average reader. Notice that in both papyri Isis wears the “sun orb” between “two cow horns” and stands behind Osiris as in Facsimile No. 3.

### Not Abraham’s Drawings

Dr. Nibley’s defense of the facsimiles has been almost as pathetic as his work with regard to the “Sensen” text. In an article published in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, pages 95 and 99, he remarks:

The scholar is not alive today who can tell us all there is to be known about the facsimiles, and until we know that the game must still go on. . . .

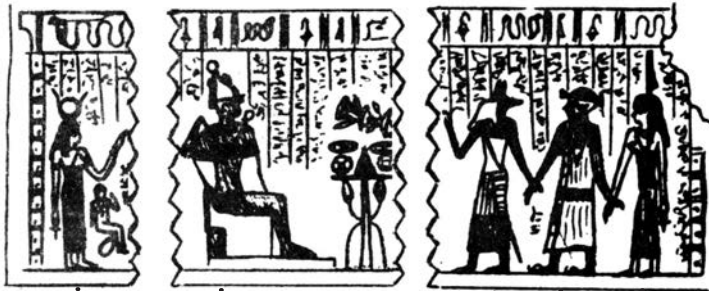
The facsimiles were originally intended as visual aids for an unspecified audience. Nothing supernatural, inspired, or sacrosanct is claimed for them . . . we cannot answer the question, “What are the facsimiles?” until we know everything there is to know about them.

At times Dr. Nibley has seemed to realize the problems connected with the Facsimiles and has tried to play down their importance. He goes so far as to state that the three facsimiles are “not an integral part of the Book of Abraham” (see *Improvement Era*, March 1968, p. 18). The text of the Book of Abraham, however, bears witness to the fact that Joseph Smith intended people to believe that Abraham himself made the drawings. Abraham was supposed to have said:

. . . that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record. . . .

**See graphics on next page**

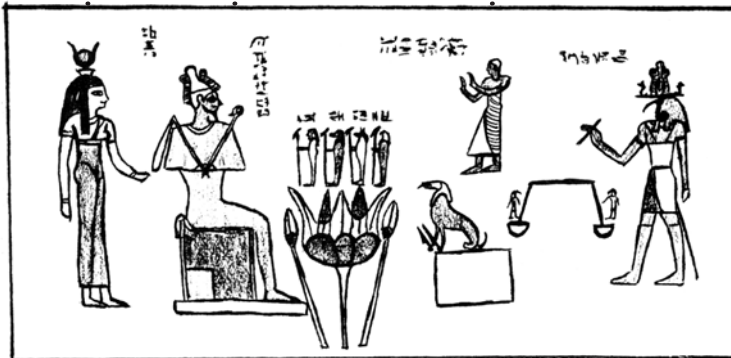




Papyrus No. 3154  
Cut down for  
comparison



Facsimile No. 3



Papyrus No. 3135

That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:12, 14)

Faced with this evidence which ties the facsimiles to the text, Dr. Nibley goes so far as to suggest that the statement attributed to Abraham may have been an interpolation by a later scribe:

And when Abraham tells us, “That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning,” we do not need to imagine the patriarch himself personally drawing the very sketches we have before us. In fact, the remark may well be the insertion of a later scribe. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, p. 78)

With such a liberal interpretation of the Book of Abraham, a Mormon who does not believe certain doctrines taught in that book might just as reasonably argue that they were added by a later scribe.

While Dr. Nibley does not provide a translation of the writing found on the papyrus used for Facsimile No. 1, he does include J. de Horrack’s translation of a Book of Breathings papyrus known as Louvre Papyrus No. 3284 in his book. When verses 66-67 of this translation are compared with Klaus Baer’s rendition of the writing on the papyrus used for Facsimile No. 1, it becomes evident that Facsimile No. 1 is a part of the pagan Book of Breathings. The reader will remember that Baer reads the following from Joseph Smith Papyrus No. 1: “. . . the prophet of Amonrasonter, prophet [?] of Min Bull-of-his-Mother, . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 116). In footnote 20, Baer reveals that Amonrasonter means “Amon-Re King of the Gods.” If we substitute these words for Amonrasonter, we would read:

. . . the prophet of Amen-Re King of the Gods, prophet [?] of Min Bull-of-his-Mother, . . .

Now, it is extremely interesting to note that Professor Nibley includes almost exactly these same words from the Book of Breathings’ translation (Papyrus 3284) he has published in his book:

. . . the Servant (Prophet) of the God Amon-Re King of the Gods, Prophet of Min-Amon-Re, Bull of His Mother . . . (*The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 62)

At any rate, we feel that it is not possible to divorce the facsimiles from the text of the Book of Abraham, and that the text and the facsimiles stand or fall together. The Mormon writer William E. Berrett boasted:

The translation made by Joseph Smith, and facsimiles of some of the engravings, remain as one of the greatest contributions to the field of religion. . . .

No prophet ever gave to the world a stronger challenge of his divine calling than did Joseph Smith in his publication of the Book of Abraham. (*The Restored Church*, p. 144)

This challenge has been accepted, and it has been shown that Joseph Smith had absolutely no understanding of the Egyptian language. His interpretations of both the text and the facsimiles have been proven untrue; therefore, it is clear to see that the Book of Abraham is a spurious production.

## Book of Joseph

The reader will probably remember that when Joseph Smith examined the papyrus rolls, he claimed that “one of the rolls contained the writings of Joseph of Egypt, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236).

An examination of the eleven fragments of papyrus which the Metropolitan Museum gave to the Mormon Church reveals that some of them are probably from the roll which the Mormon Prophet classified as the “Book of Joseph.” Fortunately, Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon,

described the drawings contained in the “Book of Joseph.” Some of the fragments seem to contain pictures that match Cowdery’s description. This description of the “Book of Joseph” appeared in the *Messenger and Advocate* in December, 1835:

The representation of the god-head—three, yet in one, is curiously drawn to give simply, though impressively, the writers views of that exalted personage. The serpent, represented as walking, or formed in a manner to be able to walk, standing in front of, and near a female figure, is to me, one of the greatest representations I have ever seen upon paper, or a writing substance; and must go so far towards convincing the rational mind of the correctness and divine authority of the holy scriptures, . . . as to carry away, with one mighty sweep, the whole atheistical fabric, . . . Enoch’s Pillar, as mentioned by Josephus, is upon the same roll. . . . The inner end of the same roll, (Joseph’s record,) presents a representation of the judgment: At one view you behold the Savior seated upon his throne, crowned, and holding the sceptres of righteousness and power, . . . (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 2, p. 236)

Below we have compared some of Cowdery’s statements with some of the Metropolitan Museum papyrus fragments.

**See graphics on next page**



“The representation of the god-head—three, yet in one, is curiously drawn . . .”



← “The serpent, represented as walking, or formed in a manner to be able to walk, standing in front of, and near a female figure, is to me, one of the greatest representations I have ever seen upon paper. . . .”

← “Enoch’s Pillar, as mentioned by Josephus, is upon the same roll. . . .”



The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd has also noticed the similarity between the fragments and Oliver Cowdery's description of the Book of Joseph:

... scenes somewhat similar to these verbal descriptions seem to be on the papyri rediscovered by Dr. Atiya, papyri which have already been reported to be of the Book of the Dead. In fact, Dr. Hugh Nibley, Brigham Young University scholar and linguist appointed by the First Presidency to interpret and explain the papyri, titled Fragment IV the "Framed Trinity" papyrus. Fragment V, he titled "The Serpent with Legs," and on this same fragment appears a scene which Oliver apparently described verbally as Enoch's Pillar. Perhaps Oliver's representation of the judgment, with the Savior on the throne, is depicted by fragment's III A III B, which Dr. Nibley titled "Court of Osiris," in which Osiris sits on the throne, and Thoth is recording. Osiris was the Egyptian god of the underworld and the judge of the dead. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 194)

Joseph Smith and his scribes evidently considered the drawing of the serpent with legs to be of importance, for a copy of it was included in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, stated:

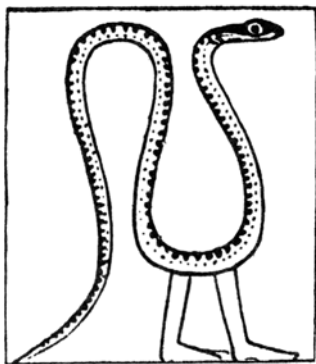
There is a reproduction of that serpent with legs in the Egyptian Grammar as Joseph Smith or Oliver Cowdery copied it from the papyrus of Abraham or of Joseph. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 114)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry made this remark with regard to some of the material found in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*:

Some of this material may be from the book of Joseph. Here Eve is apparently talking to the serpent. Notice, the serpent is on legs! Well, I am sure Dr. Clark can bring out more of this material. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, Dec. 10, 1960, 1964 edition, p. 8)

Egyptologists who have examined the Joseph Smith Papyri feel that "The fragment with the snake walking on two legs is surely from some chapter of the Egyptian Book of the Dead" (Letter from Richard A. Parker, January 9, 1968). Below is an example of a snake on legs from *The Book of the Dead*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, vol. 2, page 277.

[From Papyrus of Nu (Brit. Mus. No. 10,477, sheet 11).]



**Vignette:** The serpent Sata with human legs.

In a letter to the Egyptologist John A. Wilson, Marvin Cowan asked this question: "Mormon sources claim that the papyrus showing a snake walking on two legs toward a man is the 'Book of Joseph.' Do you agree?" Dr. Wilson replied:

You ask about one of the illustrations which shows a walking snake. It is just above three other illustrations all of which occur in regular order in late Books of the Dead. Papyrus Ryerson . . . and

Papyrus Milbank . . . both in the Oriental Institute, published by T. George Allen, . . . with the texts here noted on Plates XXIV-XXV and LXVIII.

In each papyrus, vignette of a man with a stick, along with a snake walking on two legs—vignette for Book of Dead, Chapter 72.

In each papyrus, next vignette in order shows a man with a stick, facing a column—vignette for B.D. 73.

In Ryerson only, next vignette in order shows a man with a stick—vignette for B.D. 74.

In each papyrus, next vignette shows a bird with a sceptre projecting from its back—vignette for B.D. 75. (Letter from John A. Wilson, January 5, 1968)

Evidently the Mormon leaders have chosen to repudiate Joseph Smith's identification of the scroll of Joseph, for in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40, they admit that the drawing of the snake on legs is "from the Book of the Dead."

When Dr. Nibley was asked if the papyri contained the Book of Joseph, he replied: "If the papyri contain any of the Book of Joseph it is not a part that has been translated" (Letter dated February 8, 1968).

On March 1, 1968, Sidney B. Sperry, James R. Clark and Ross T. Christensen discussed the "Book of Joseph":

DR. CHRISTENSEN: Personally, I wonder whether the seven sheets I said looked to me like hieratic, are connected with the Book of Abraham or the Book of Joseph at all.

DR. SPERRY: It is just possible that out of the 11 papyri we now have, there is little or nothing of the Book of Joseph. However, it would seem to me, from my study of what the Prophet did, that he had translated that record and knew what was in it. There are references in the *History of the Church* which indicate the Prophet told other people something about its contents. I hope within my heart that some day the Book of Joseph will be found and acquired by the Church.

DR. CLARK: You are undoubtedly referring, Dr. Sperry to Oliver Cowdery's letter to William Frye, published in the *Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate* of December, 1835, which definitely gives a brief description of the Book of Joseph. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A.*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, p. 8)

While it is probably true that we do not have all of the roll which the Mormon leaders described as the "Book of Joseph," it is very obvious that we have part of it. Since the part which we have is found to be nothing but the Egyptian Book of the Dead, it is evident that Joseph Smith was mistaken when he stated that it contained "the writings of Joseph of Egypt."

## Joseph's Egyptian Alphabet

For 130 years the church suppressed a document which absolutely proves that Joseph Smith did not understand the Egyptian language. This document is known as the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." Joseph Smith recorded the following in the *History of the Church* for the month July, 1835:

The remainder of this month, I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 238)

After Joseph Smith's death the "Egyptian Alphabet" was brought to Utah. Little was known about it however until the year 1935. James R. Clark reported:

Your author was from 1932 to 1936 a student of Dr. Sperry's at Brigham Young University and was in "on the ground floor" of this research with Dr. Sperry. This included our "discovery," with the assistance of A. William Lund, assistant Church Historian, in February, 1935 of Joseph Smith's translation of Abraham's Alphabet and Grammar to accompany his (Abraham's) record which we discussed in Chapter 8. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, p. 156)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry made this statement about the “Egyptian Alphabet”:

I went up to the Church Historian’s office and lo and behold we found this old Egyptian grammar in the archives of the Church. . . . I am amazed even to this day how we managed to persuade the Church authorities to let us bring that Egyptian grammar down here to the B.Y.U. to have Dr. Hales photograph it for us. Here is the book. You will notice it says, “Egyptian Alphabet.” (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 7)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe probably knew that the “Egyptian Grammar” was in existence prior to the “discovery,” for Dr. Sperry stated:

In July, 1835, the Prophet had written, “The remainder of this month I was continually engaged in translating the alphabet to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients” . . .

Since I had been studying ancient Semitics, particularly Bible languages, I was very much intrigued by this statement and wondered why the church authorities during the Spalding incident hadn’t brought out the grammar which the Prophet said he was making. I quite naturally concluded that the Church didn’t have it. So I set out to do two main things: (1) find evidence of the papyri which we knew were once in the hands of Joseph Smith and (2) find the Prophet’s “alphabet and grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients.” . . . After this, I tried once more to find the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar but finally had to give it up. I thought perhaps the boat containing the church records had overturned in the Missouri River and that they had thus been lost.

But I was mistaken in this, for some years later I was taking Dr. John A. Widtsoe . . . to his Salt Lake City home. As we arrived outside the town of Lehi, it suddenly dawned on me that the grammar and alphabet was in the LDS Church Historian’s Office. Lo and behold, when we made a search in that place, there it was! (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A. BYU*, March 1, 1968)

Dr. Sperry anticipated that the “Egyptian Alphabet” would help the Mormon Church to “answer more specifically the accusations that had been made by the Egyptologists who had made their pronouncements upon the material supplied by the Reverend Mr. Spalding of Salt Lake City.” Instead of helping Mormons answer the “accusations” made by Egyptologists, the “Egyptian Alphabet” has turned out to be a source of embarrassment. Dr. Clark, in fact, said that he was not in favor of submitting it to scholars:

Many people have asked me, “Well, why don’t they submit the grammar and alphabet to scholars?” Well, my answer is this, that the Prophet didn’t complete it. They have already disagreed with him, most of the scholars, on his translation. I’m wondering if there would be any change in their approach to it now to what it has been, and so I’m not personally in favor of submitting it. . . . I’m not in favor of re-opening the question. I’m in favor of doing what we’ve done with the Book of Mormon. Let the thing keep rolling and depend on our testimonies of the gospel. (*Prophets and Problems of the Pearl of Great Price*, BYU, p. 75)

Even though the Church Historian’s Office had the original document and also a microfilm copy, members of the church were required to get special permission from Joseph Fielding Smith to even see the film. Although the Mormon leaders did their best to prevent it, we obtained a microfilm copy of this document, and in 1966 we made a photo-reprint of it. Richard P. Howard, who is Church Historian of the Reorganized LDS Church, made this comment:

Until recently this document was available to only a few scholars at the Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, . . . However, Jerald Tanner of Salt Lake City managed to obtain a microfilm of this document and published enlarged prints from this film. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 91)

In the preface to *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* and in a number of our other publications we have told how the Mormon leaders suppressed this important document. Dr. James R. Clark charges that we have not told the truth about this matter:

. . . Jerald Tanner has charged, in his publication of the Grammar and Alphabet and in the *Salt Lake Messenger*, that this has been kept a deep, dark secret all these years. . . . I have had copies of these manuscripts—most of the manuscripts—since 1935, and so has Dr. Sperry and Dr. Hyrum Andrus. The Church Historian’s Office is always willing to make materials available to responsible scholars. I claim to be a responsible scholar. That may sound egotistical, but I think my record shows it. And I have found that these things are always available to responsible scholars. They are not available to irresponsible scholars and the most irresponsible piece of work—I am not speaking as an historian—that I have ever seen is Jerald Tanner’s publication of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, because he didn’t check his sources and he didn’t know what he was publishing. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 22)

These statements by Dr. Clark cannot be taken very seriously, for the reader will remember that this is the same man who suppressed the fact that the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar contains an actual fragment of papyrus. The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd revealed:

Outside of a few associates, Dr. Clark had kept the fragment a matter of confidence, under instructions from the Historian’s Office, for over 30 years. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 364)

We feel that a truly “responsible scholar” would not have suppressed this important evidence from his own people. Actually, Dr. Clark’s own statements make it clear that *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* was suppressed, and that our statements concerning it are true.

Evidence shows that the Mormon leaders were well aware of the existence of the Grammar and papyrus fragment long before James R. Clark and Sidney B. Sperry made their “discovery” in 1935. The LDS Church Section of the *Deseret News* for February 10, 1968, seems to indicate that the Assistant Church Historian A. William Lund knew about the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar as early as 1908:

The latest fragment “find” has been in the vaults as long as A. William Lund and Earl E. Olson, assistant Church historians, can remember. Mr. Lund has been in his post since 1911 and worked in the office since 1908. Mr. Olson has been in the historian’s office since 1934.

The fragment is part of a collection the Church has regarding the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar prepared by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

According to Dr. Clark’s own statements it would appear that on “a number” of occasions prior to the “discovery,” they had discussed the matter with the staff at the Historian’s Office only to be told that “perhaps the Grammar was lost”:

Dr. Sperry and I had previously discussed the problem of the apparent disappearance of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar many times, . . . On a number of previous occasions, we had consulted members of the Church Historian’s staff, including the Assistant Church Historian, and we had been told that perhaps the Grammar was lost with other Church records during the Mormon exodus period. Armed, however, with this additional information from the *Deseret News*, Dr. Sperry and I visited the Historian’s office again, during the week of February 18-22, 1935. We met with A. William Lund, Assistant Church Historian, in his office, and presented the problem of the location of the Grammar in light of the new evidence of its survival of the exodus and its location in the Historian’s office in 1855.

Elder Lund took us both back into the library to large tables by the east window and asked us to wait. As I recall, he came back to the table in about fifteen minutes and laid the Grammar in front of



us on the table, . . .” (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 21)

Dr. Clark admits that even after the “discovery,” they were not allowed to make a public announcement:

No public announcement was made of this find at the time. Later, Dr. Sperry and I secured permission from the Assistant Church Historian to have documents photographed for our own scholarly study. . . .

Dr. Sperry and I were not “cleared” for a public announcement of this discovery in 1935; however, we continued individually and cooperatively to work on the ramifications of this new find during 1935 and 1936. (*Ibid.*, pp. 21-22)

Dr. Clark tries to make it appear that Dr. Sperry made a public announcement of the discovery of the Grammar in 1938:

In reality, there was a description of that Grammar given in that MIA manual in 1938. You will find it on page 69 of the Mutual manual, *Ancient Records Testify*. Sperry did describe it; he described it rather carefully. This, again, gives a lie to what some people have published with regards to the fact that there had been no public announcement of this, that the Church didn’t know about it; and if the adult department of the MIA followed the procedure of the Church, every MIA of the Church discussed that description on November 8, 1938, in their classrooms.

And so, this was known churchwide, through that manual. (*Ibid.*, p. 22)

A careful reading of Dr. Sperry’s statements show that he did not announce the fact that the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar had been discovered, but only that some pages of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham had been located. In our *Case*, vol. 2, page 164, we stated:

In 1938 the Church leaders allowed Dr. Sperry to publish two pages of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham which is found in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The photographs are so poor, however, that the Egyptian characters are not readable.

Dr. Sperry did discuss Joseph Smith’s statement that he prepared an Alphabet and Grammar, and what it may have looked like, but he never directly stated that it had been discovered. In fact, from the way his statement is written a person would be led to believe that he had not actually seen the document:

For many years the writer has been intrigued by the statement of the Prophet that he was “translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham.” Just what is meant by this phrase? A little by way of explanation—evidence leads us to the conclusion that the Prophet found it anything but easy to translate the Abrahamic records . . . The Seer would of course receive the interpretation of all new and unknown signs or hieroglyphics, but after their meaning had been given to him it is not likely that the Lord would repeat the process when the same characters appeared again. Possibly for that reason the Prophet decided to make a sign list in which would be recorded the meanings of each new symbol as it appeared upon the papyrus of Abraham. Once recorded it could be consulted as often as the Prophet needed to refresh his mind. It seems therefore quite probable that the alphabet was arranged very much as follows. On the extreme left of the page the signs in question would be written down in a vertical column. To the right of this column would appear the sounds of the Egyptian sign or hieroglyphic in English letters together with an interpretation of the character in question. We can readily imagine that some grammatical phenomena of the language would be revealed in the notes which the Prophet wrote down. It would seem rational to suppose that after the Prophet had written down many pages of these signs with their meanings he would become more and more competent to read them as they appeared on the papyrus. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, 1938, pp. 68-69)

Dr. Clark would have us believe that this was a public announcement of the discovery of the “Grammar,” but it is

interesting to note that in 1960 Clark admitted that Dr. Sperry had only “hinted” of its existence in his statement:

His “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” survived his death and the Mormon exodus to the West. An entry in the L.D.S. Church Historian’s Office Journal under the date of October 17, 1855, states that the “Egyptian Alphabet” was among the early records of the L.D.S. Church when they were moved on that day into the fireproof vault of the new Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City.

Nothing more appears in L.D.S. literature so far as we are aware concerning Joseph Smith’s “Egyptian Alphabet” until 1938 when Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, in an M.I.A. course of study, hinted of its existence after having personally examined it in the Historian’s Office along with the present investigator.

After having had a photographic copy of this document for a number of years, the present investigator secured permission from the L.D.S. Church Historian to describe the document in brief and to publish photographs of the outside covers and label and of page one and to quote from other pages. (*Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, p. 27)

(The photographs James R. Clark speaks of are printed in his book, *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, pages 101, 103.)

On December 10, 1960, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry was asked if the “Egyptian Alphabet” could be published:

Question: Why not publish the Egyptian grammar?

Answer: Well, I do not know whether the Church authorities would let us do it now or not. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., p. 9)

We published *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* in 1966. Four years later Dr. Clark was still not sure whether the church would allow it to be printed by Mormon scholars. After Dr. Clark finished the speech in which he attacked us for saying the “Grammar” was suppressed, he was asked if the church would publish it. His reply was as follows:

Well, Dr. Sperry, I think, was asked that same question in 1960 and Tanner has published his reply. I think the answer is still the same one that Dr. Sperry gave. That is anyone’s guess, so far as I am concerned. The power is with the First Presidency . . . This whole problem, since the discovery of the Metropolitan Papyri, is in the hands of President Nathan Eldon Tanner, of the First Presidency. . . . I have talked with him about the relationship of the Grammar and the manuscripts, however, and that is still in abeyance, so far as I know, until further research and study and careful work is done, to collate all the manuscripts, before the publication takes place. I don’t know that there are any plans for publication to take place, but I do know that this is the point of view of both Howard W. Hunter, the present Church Historian, and Nathan Eldon Tanner, that more work, careful and scholarly work, needs to be done on the collation of the documents before we do anything about publication. (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 23)

Although Dr. Clark would like us to believe that the Mormon leaders were not ashamed of *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, the evidence proves just the opposite. In a speech given on March 7, 1972, Reed Durham, who was then serving as Director of the L.D.S. Institute of Religion at the University of Utah, made it plain that the Grammar was suppressed prior to our publication:

All my life I’ve heard about it [Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar]. I kept getting little snatches here and there from people. . . . Its been reproduced. Not only has it been reproduced, they photoed it for me. I can look at the very page myself. You couldn’t ever get that before. You had to be on the inner circle and then you couldn’t get it wholly. But now it was reproduced, and not only was it reproduced with the exact writing on the book of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, but the



Tanners went to the labor to type, in actual typing, each one of the writings. . . . they transliterated the manuscript for me. Such work! Bless their hearts! (Speech by Reed Durham, LDS Institute of Religion, University of Utah, March 7, 1972)

Even Dr. Hugh Nibley admitted that *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* "was hidden and suppressed . . . because it was nobody else's business" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 176).

Writing in *BYU Studies*, Summer 1971, page 398, Professor Nibley says that the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar was "wisely kept out of circulation, for such things could easily be misinterpreted by malicious minds."

Grant Heward, who was excommunicated from the LDS Church because he challenged "the validity of the translation" of the Book of Abraham, made this statement about his experience with Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar":

It was toward the end of my fourth local mission for the church that I received the shock that changed my entire life. The occasion appeared to be an opportunity to prove to the doubter once and for all that Joseph Smith was in fact a prophet of God. . . . Two of our investigators were giving us many difficult questions, but the challenge that the Egyptian problem offered, particularly caught my eye. James Wardle, a local supplier of hidden, forbidden, and unusual Mormon documents, told me that Joseph Smith himself had written an Egyptian Grammar—and that he had a copy—and that I might use it! What a windfall! Fortified with the Egyptian Grammar that Joseph Smith had written ought to make the job as certain as taking candy from a baby. My elated enthusiasm was born of complete confidence in Joseph Smith's claims to frequent revelation from God. Certainly God can read Egyptian, and the English He brought forth would, without a doubt, match the meaning of the Egyptian it was taken from. Just such a testing spot was to be found with the Egyptian Grammar: A scripture—The Book of Abraham—in English with English with the Egyptian to match! Everything pointed to success. The strength of the Mormon position to me was comparable to the strength of a hugh bull among young calves. My job was simply to gather up the proof.

I started studying the grammar, but to my utter dismay, I soon found it was full of nonsense and double-talk. Among my first reactions was the thought that it must not be authentic. Perhaps someone was trying to make Joseph Smith look bad. Most certainly the Lord and Joseph Smith could do better than this! I decided to check with the Church Offices and the Brigham Young University Library. I called the Church Offices and asked one of the highest officials in the Historian's Office about Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. He denied ever having heard of it; In fact, when I told him I was studying a copy of it, he said I knew more about it than he did—it was all brand-new to him! I found that a professor at the BYU had written about it in his book: *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*; So I called him up by long distance telephone. He told me that there was indeed such a document and that it was authentic. He named the goodly brother, who had denied any knowledge of it, as one of two who brought it to the Brigham Young University for photographing. I told him of the denial, but it didn't seem to surprise him. He merely suggested that I might possibly have obtained better results had I gone to the Church Historian's Office and talked to him in person. So I did just that. I asked a clerk there about seeing the document. He replied that I wouldn't be able to see the original, but they might let me look at a copy (microfilmed). First, I'd have to get permission from brother \_\_\_\_\_ (the one who denied ever having heard of it). As fate would have it, he was standing directly behind me. Under these circumstances he would have found it somewhat awkward to deny it again. In any event, he manifest a full knowledge of the document. However, he said I'd have to get permission from the Church Historian—who (according to him) happened to be out of town—in Chicago! At any rate, I met with both of them early the next morning. After a session of interrogation, I was granted the permission I sought; But their

cynical questions left me with a dismal impression that they had no confidence in Joseph Smith's translating ability and a fear of honest open research.

The Church Office's copy of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar proved to me that the copy Mr. Wardle had was absolutely authentic. Authentic, yes—but nonsense nonetheless. It was difficult for me to believe that anything Joseph Smith did on Egyptian could be absurd. Yet, I knew it was so.

The intensive questioning of the brethren left me with the unavoidable conclusion that they were afraid that the contents of the Grammar might be made public. I realized then, that if they had anywhere near the confidence in Joseph Smith they pretended to have, they would have proudly published it years before instead of keeping it quietly hidden away. Obviously, I had just found out what they had already known for years. Their authoritarianism had a respectability that was above and beyond any facts. It was as though they had a correct and proper "righteous indignation" toward any truth that made them uncomfortable. The thought of having to face my friends and relatives with what I learned horrified me. However, the stifling opposition and deliberate misrepresentation from official sources made me feel obliged to try to bring what I learned out into the open. I therefore wrote up the facts as carefully and charitably as I knew how, and had it printed. Then I passed it out at the April Conference of 1967. That was probably the most difficult task I had ever tried to do in my life. The memory of it still makes me cringe.

As most everyone knows who grows up in the church, those out of harmony with the established thought are considered in a state of wickedness—just like that! It is apparently a sin to talk about such wrongs or perhaps even know about them until officially informed of them by those who have the "authority" to understand such matters. The church's official spokesman has reluctantly admitted everything I stated about the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. On June 21, 1967, I was excommunicated from the church for holding such views.

On June 14, 1967, Mr. Heward received a letter from his Stake Presidency which contained this statement:

"You are hereby requested to appear before a Stake High Council court of the Midvale Stake . . . on Wednesday the 21st day of June, 1967 at 8:00 p.m. for investigation of alleged circulation of literature challenging the validity of the translation of a standard work of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

(A photograph of this letter is found in our *Case*, vol. 2, page 178.)

The Stake Presidency was apparently acting under orders from Joseph Fielding Smith, who later became the tenth President of the Mormon Church. Mr. Heward made this statement concerning his trial:

. . . the court was very kind and courteous. There was not so much as an unkind word spoken during the entire proceedings. The Stake President proved to be a kind and loving man. The Bishop, who held an inquiry some weeks previous, was also warm and friendly. I am grateful for their kindness. Both stated that the charge came from the office of Joseph Fielding Smith.

When asked if I had any witnesses, I replied that I brought none, but that truth itself and God were my witnesses. I later thought that if they really investigated the testimony of "Truth," they would find him a very faithful witness indeed. Most people simply refuse to examine the evidence.

In this case the truth did not seem to count. Mr. Heward was excommunicated from the Mormon Church on June 21, 1967.

Mr. Heward went on studying the Egyptian language, and made some of the most important discoveries concerning the papyri and the Book of Abraham.

The information which we have presented clearly shows that the Mormon leaders have suppressed Joseph Smith's "Egyptian

no.

1

character  
E

# Grammar & Alphabet of the Egyptian Language

This is called *Za Kiran hikh*, or *Chal sidion hikh*. This character is in the fifth degree, independent and arbitrary. It may be increased in the fifth degree while it stands independent and arbitrary: that is, without a straight mark inserted above or below it. By inserting a straight mark over it thus (1) it increases its signification five degrees: by inserting two straight lines, thus (2) its signification is increased five times more. By inserting three straight lines thus (3) its signification is again increased five times more than the last. By counting the number of straight lines and passing them, or considering them as qualifying adjectives we have the degree of comparison. There are five connecting parts of speech in the above character, called *Za Kiran hikh*. These five connecting parts of speech, for verbs, participles, prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs. In translating this character, the subject must be continued until there are as many of these connecting parts of speech used as there are connections or connecting parts found in the character. But when the character is found with one horizontal line, as (1) the subject must be continued until the number of connecting parts of speech are used; or, the full sense of the writer is not conveyed. When two horizontal lines occur, the number of connecting parts of speech are continued five times further - or five degrees. And when three horizontal lines are found, the number of connections are to be increased five times further. The character also has 5 parts of speech, increase by one straight line thus 5 x 5 = 25.

2

E

3

E

4

E

Photograph of a page from Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The Mormon leaders suppressed this document for many years.



No char of the blessings of the earth.

See To point out Subject. that is, it signifies a continuation of the subject; also to designate one sentence from another, according to the different marks of punctuation signifying the whole of any thing or the whole earth.

Down lower take take true. Under the Sun; under heaven; downward; pointing downward going downward; stooping down going down into a better place; any place; going down into the grave; going down into Misery - even Hell; Coming down in lineage by royal descent, in a line by or into one of the royal families of the Kings of Egypt.

Jota. See, saw, seeing, or having seen or having been seen.

Jota land Zepi: The land of Egypt which was first discovered by a woman, <sup>fully understood</sup> and afterwards settled by her sons. She being a daughter of Ham - Any land overflow with water & did not see when overflowed by water. Land overflowed by the seasons, land enriched by being overflowed low marshy ground.

L Duse-shari The same as the first.

Haeospheth Sheketh Patriarchal government, or authority; a land governed according to the pattern or order given to the patriarchs or fathers; rules and laws <sup>of the government</sup> administered by the direction of Heaven or God. a people living under the laws of the gospel; in that law by which they may be sanctified and see the face of God.

Photograph of another page from Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The Mormon leaders suppressed this document for many years.



Alphabet and Grammar,” and that Dr. Clark’s charge that we misrepresented the facts with regard to this matter is without foundation.

“Mere Imagination”

The reader will remember that Dr. Clark said that he was “not personally in favor of submitting” Joseph Smith’s “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” to scholars. He went on to say that he was “in favor of doing what we’ve done with the Book of Mormon. Let the thing keep rolling and depend on our testimonies of the gospel.”

Grant Heward could not agree with Dr. Clark on this matter. He submitted the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” to some of the world’s top Egyptologists and they have declared that it is fraudulent. After examining the Grammar, I.E.S. Edwards, Dept. of Egyptian Antiquities, British Museum, wrote a letter in which he declared: “The commentary, such as it is, shows that the writer could not possibly have understood ancient Egyptian. They simply do not deserve serious study” (Letter dated December 22, 1965). In a letter dated June 9, 1966, I.E.S. Edwards wrote that “Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar . . . is largely a piece of imagination and lacking in any kind of scientific value. . . . The whole document reminds me of the writings of psychic practitioners which are sometimes sent to me.”

In 1966 Dr. Labib Habachi visited Salt Lake City. The Mormon leaders entertained him and even published an article about him, the title of this article read: “Egyptian Expert Sees Famed Vault in Canyon.” Grant Heward wrote to Dr. Habachi and sent him the facsimiles from the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. Dr. Habachi examined the documents, and in a letter dated January 15, 1967, he commented:

I have been very late in answering your letters, but believe me, I have been hesitating to write the answer at all. The reason is that when I have been in Salt Lake City and saw the wonderful organisations of the Mormons, I could only admire them and their way of life. . . .

Now you are sending me a film, an Egyptian Grammar, some quotations about Egyptians and coloured people. These, I have to say, are simple imaginations and no scholar at all can ever approve anything in these documents of the Mormons. A long time ago, the Mormons were able to purchase some chapters of the Book of the Dead found everywhere in many tombs of the New Kingdom. These were interpreted in a rather funny way, not based on any scientific foundations. . . .

I would not like to shake your faith. There is no question that the Mormons have planned a wonderful organisation, but I have to tell you, as an Egyptologist, that their claim to understand hieroglyphics is mere imagination. So forget about that claim and go on with a true Christian spirit in the life you are leading. (Letter from Dr. Labib Habachi to Grant Heward, dated January 15, 1967)

Richard A. Parker, Dept. of Egyptology, Brown University, has also expressed an opinion concerning the Grammar:

5. I have seen Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The interpretation of signs purported to be Egyptian have no resemblance to the meanings ascribed to them by Egyptologists. (Letter from Richard A. Parker to Marvin Cowan, dated January 9, 1968)

Thus we see that the “Egyptian Alphabet” proves that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination. We feel that a person does not have to be an Egyptologist to see that Joseph Smith’s “Egyptian Alphabet” is not authentic. For instance, a person has only to compare the Egyptian system of counting as found in the *Encyclopedia Britannica Junior*; 1953 ed., page 350, with Joseph

Egyptian Number	English	Explanation
1	one	one
2	two	two
3	three	three
4	four	four
5	five	five
6	six	six
7	seven	seven
8	eight	eight
9	nine	nine
10	ten	ten
11	eleven	ten and one
12	twelve	ten and two
13	thirteen	ten and three
14	fourteen	ten and four
15	fifteen	ten and five
16	sixteen	ten and six
17	seventeen	ten and seven
18	eighteen	ten and eight
19	nineteen	ten and nine
20	twenty	two tens
21	twenty one	two tens and one
22	twenty two	two tens and two
23	twenty three	two tens and three
24	twenty four	two tens and four
25	twenty five	two tens and five
26	twenty six	two tens and six
27	twenty seven	two tens and seven
28	twenty eight	two tens and eight
29	twenty nine	two tens and nine

Smith’s purported system of counting found on page “G” of the “Egyptian Alphabet.” Above is a photograph of part of Joseph Smith’s purported system of Egyptian counting. The real system of Egyptian counting does not resemble the one we use in America today, but Joseph Smith’s purported system looks almost like our own.

The reader will notice that in Joseph Smith’s system the numbers 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8 are almost identical to our numbers. The number 9 looks like our 9 written backwards. The number 10 looks like our 10 except that it is written backwards with a small cross through the 1.

The Mormon scholar Dr. Sidney B. Sperry admitted that Joseph Smith’s system is not the conventional system of Egyptian counting:

Now, I might point out that this Egyptian counting shows that we are not dealing with Egyptian in the conventional sense. For example, here, counting from one up to ten. (Dr. Sperry counts, reading from the book the Egyptian words). Now that counting, so far as I am aware, is not used in conventional Egyptian. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, BYU, 1964 ed., p. 8)

Although the Mormon leaders would not allow the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” to be published in its entirety, Mormon scholars have referred to it as the very key to the Book of Abraham. After the church obtained the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the *Deseret News*, LDS Church Section, carried an article mentioning the Alphabet and Grammar:

Hyrum L. Andrus in his recently-published work, “Doctrinal Commentary on The Pearl of Great Price,” notes that a study of a handwritten document by Joseph Smith designated as the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” shows each page divided by three columns.

These columns have a copy of a character in the first column, the English pronunciation in the second, and the translation in the third.

“A study of the document suggests that it was formulated by an ancient writer, probably Abraham, to assist a translator in deciphering the language in which the record was written. If this conclusion is correct, Joseph Smith literally translated an alphabet

to the Book of Abraham,” Dr. Andrus wrote. (*Deseret News*, LDS Church Section, December 2, 1967, p. 10)

The *Improvement Era*, January 1968, page 16, printed this statement about the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar”:

Some present-day scholars think that part of the papyri that Joseph had in his possession contained an actual primer in the Egyptian alphabet and grammar previously prepared by its ancient authors for the benefit of future translators.

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry related that he read Joseph Smith’s statement in the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 238, and decided that Joseph Smith probably used the Urim and Thummim to prepare the “Egyptian Grammar”:

Let me read that to you again: “I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet.” Now what did the Prophet mean by that, “translating an alphabet”? I pondered over this a great deal and finally came to the conclusion that what the Prophet meant by “translating an alphabet” was that as he copied the characters from the papyri which were in his possession, he would put down these characters, one after another, with the general meaning that he would get as he looked at them through the Urim and Thummim. I assume that he used the Urim and Thummim, in translating these materials, but I felt that the Lord never would condone laziness in a man or in a scholar, and that as the Prophet would go through these passages in Egyptian, he put down the meaning opposite the character. In so doing, then, it would not be necessary for him to call on the Lord, continually, to tell the meaning of a character. Well, that is the way I figured it out. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 4)

Dr. Clark made this statement in 1955:

By a more careful scrutiny of this Alphabet and Grammar than Dr. Sperry was able to give it at the time of his writing (1938) we have discovered some evidence which seems to indicate that it was Abraham not Joseph Smith who compiled the sign list to accompany his record and that Joseph Smith did literally translate this Alphabet to the Book of Abraham. . . . Evidently Abraham anticipated the difficulties that both ancient and modern readers would have in deciphering his script and provided a key to his language. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, 1955, pp. 109-110)

On December 10, 1960, Dr. Clark stated:

All of the characters that are in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar that Dr. Sperry mentioned have now been taken off onto cards. . . . We copied each character onto a 5 x 8 card and then typed Joseph Smith’s translation of the character, with the result that we have about 350 characters, with their translations. A study is in process on an analysis of these characters. . . . This project of research is now going on. I use these cards, get them all sorted and spread out on a big table and then I take the facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price* as printed in the *Times and Seasons*, because they are the only accurate ones—there have been printer’s errors in all the rest of them—and work from them. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., pp. 60, 63)

The Mormon scholar William E. Berrett made the following statement about Joseph Smith’s “Grammar”:

Joseph Smith . . . did not expect the Lord to forever aid him in understanding ancient languages. He could learn many of these for himself and he set about to do so. He began a study of Egyptian, Hebrew and Greek . . . This study continued at intervals until his death. His most notable achievement was the development at Kirtland of a grammar for the Egyptian hieroglyphic form of writing. This was used by him, as well as divine aid, in translating ancient writings of the Patriarch Abraham, now published as the Book of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price*. This grammar was never published, and was perhaps never used by any one other than the Prophet. It was, however, the first Egyptian grammar in America and was developed entirely independent of Champollion’s Egyptian Grammar. (*The Restored Church*, 1956 ed., pp. 133-134)

At the time we published *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* in 1966 we made this statement in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*:

*Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* suppressed for 130 years now comes to light. This document proves that Joseph Smith did not understand ancient Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a work of his imagination!

## Nibley Repudiates Grammar

In 1968 we heard that Dr. Hugh Nibley (who was supposed to be the church’s top authority on the Egyptian language) had repudiated *Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. We could hardly believe that Dr. Nibley would repudiate the document which was supposed to have been the very key to the translation of the Book of Abraham. This rumor, however, was confirmed in *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968. In this article Dr. Nibley makes some astonishing admissions:

Which brings us to the subject of Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Grammar, because a surprising number of people have recently undertaken studies of that remarkable work. This writer, however, has never spent so much as five minutes with the Egyptian Grammar, and does not intend to unless he is forced to it. When parties in Salt Lake procured and reproduced photographs of this document, they advertized it with the usual sensationalism as a “Hidden Document Revealed. Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar suppressed for 130 Years Now Comes to Light. This document proves that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a work of his imagination!” Joseph Smith never pretended to understand Egyptian, nor that the Book of Abraham was a work of his scholarship: if this document as advertized proves anything it is that some people will go to any length of skulduggery to make a case out of nothing. For if the so-called Alphabet and Grammar were meant as an inspired communication it would have been published as such, not “hidden” or “suppressed for 130 years.” It was hidden and suppressed for the same reason that Brigham Young’s laundry lists are hidden and suppressed, because it was nobody else’s business. Let us allow Joseph Smith at least for the time being the luxury of a moment of privacy, of a little speculation on his own there on his hands and knees in the front room of the Mansion House, with papyri spread out around him on the floor. The fact that he kept his notes strictly to himself is evidence enough that they were his own private concern and were never meant as a message to the Church.

This is a very important point. The whole attack against the Book of Abraham in the past has been based on the perfectly false principle that whatever a prophet does must be of a supernatural nature and whatever he says must have the authority of scripture, and that hence if a prophet ever betrays the slightest sign of human weakness or any mortal limitation he must necessarily be a false prophet. . . . The sectarian world has never been able to see how it is possible to have revelations and still learn by trial and error: . . . it should be perfectly clear to all that no one is bound by anything outside of the four standard works, and that to make an issue of the so-called Egyptian Grammar is to insist on a doctrine of infallibility that is diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Church. (*BYU Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 176-178)

This statement by Dr. Nibley must have come as a great shock to the Mormons. Notice that he admits that Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar “was hidden and suppressed.” He also concedes that Joseph Smith did not understand Egyptian and that the “Egyptian Grammar” is not worth “five minutes” study. It seems, then, that Professor Nibley is willing to admit that the “Egyptian Grammar” is worthless, yet he still maintains that the Book of Abraham came by divine revelation. We feel that this is an impossible stand to maintain. If the “Egyptian Grammar” is worthless, then the Book of Abraham must also be rejected.



Dr. James R. Clark seems to realize that Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar cannot be repudiated without also repudiating the Book of Abraham, and he has publicly differed with Dr. Nibley concerning this matter:

Q. At least one other scholar has called the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar speculation. What is your opinion, Dr. Clark?

A. I have been working with it for thirty-five years. I do not agree that it is speculation. Neither do I agree that it is "the equivalent of Brigham Young's laundry list." (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, p. 24)

In *Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, page 352, note 1, Dr. Nibley stated: "Clark's suggestion (pp. 109f) that this may be a translation of a grammar written by Abraham meets with many objections, . . ." On pages 350-352 of the same article, Professor Nibley made this critical statement about the work of Clark and Sperry:

When a bound manuscript captioned "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language" was turned up in the Church Historian's Office in February 1935, the finders were understandably eager to claim the discovery of a major writing of Joseph Smith himself, and not only accepted the thing without question or examination as his work, but even went so far as to label it "Joseph Smith's Translation of Abraham's Alphabet and Grammar."

Hugh Nibley claims that this has "laid the foundation of a massive misunderstanding . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 350)

In a letter dated June 18, 1968, Dr. Nibley made these statements:

Joseph Smith speculated on various aspects of Egyptian writing and in the process left a number of documents which have been called "The Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." The work was never completed or put into form for publication—it remained speculative and subject to change to the end. It is quite different from the Egyptian grammars we use today. . . . Since Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Grammar" has never had any official status in the Church it has not been used in the way of evidence. In the coming months I hope to go into the subject of the Prophet's interpretations of Egyptian writings in some detail. There is ample evidence that Smith did know what he was talking about, but the evidence is not at present to be found in the Grammar.

In the *Improvement Era* for March, 1968, page 18, Dr. Nibley made these comments:

Joseph Smith's work, here mentioned, on the Egyptian alphabet was never accepted or even presented to the Church as revelation, and no one is bound by it, but the zeal and application of the brethren was rewarded by a revelation that far transcended any intellectual efforts of man. It is this revelation that is comprised in the *Pearl of Great Price*, and it is by it and others like it that one may judge the Prophet Joseph, and not by such preliminary gropings as the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, which was never completed, never released for publication, and, so far as we have been able to discover, never even mentioned in public. Granted that diligent searching and study may be a preliminary to receiving revelation, the revelation when it comes is certainly not to be judged by them. We are not only permitted but also instructed to cast about for possible solutions in our minds before the real solution is given us, and if we find Joseph Smith doing just that, we should not rush to point out possible flaws in his preliminary speculations as proof that he was not inspired.

Where translation is concerned, Joseph Smith also operated on two levels, with no danger of confusing the two. . . . we must allow him the luxury of having his own ideas about things, and making his own mistakes and his own translations as long as he plays the game fairly and never presents them as binding on others.

The Mormon writers Keith Terry and Walter Whipple accused Dr. Nibley of scoffing at Joseph Smith's translations:

The "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" is presently preserved in the Church Historian's office. . . .

The complexity of the alphabet of the ancient writers is explained with the following statements: "By inserting a straight mark over it . . . its signification is increased five times more." At this point his explanation becomes quite complex and loses all but the most astute grammarians in the lengthy commentary, . . .

This information presented in the "Alphabet and Grammar" concerning horizontal lines has no correlation to Champollion's hieroglyphic decipherments. Modern Egyptologists, including Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley, have scoffed at such methods of translating. (*From the Dust of Decades*, 1968, pp. 36-37)

Professor Nibley has certainly "scoffed" at Joseph Smith's method of translating. Writing in *BYU Studies*, he made these statements about the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar:

5. Stranger still, the signs that are explained are not found in the real Egyptian documents, where no system is in evidence of the placing of one, two, or three strokes above a sign, for example, . . .

8. Because of the peculiar system of classes and degrees, almost every passage in the A. & G. appears more than once, and most of the symbols are given more than one interpretation. . . . it is of no help to a translator when any symbol can, without the slightest alteration, take on half-a-dozen different meanings. Which are we to take as the official translation? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, pp. 368-369)

Dr. Nibley tries to cast doubt upon the importance of Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar by stating that most of it is in the handwriting of his scribes:

The interesting thing is the way the three men disagree in their interpretations, each going his own way. . . . Each of these in interpreting the same sign, with no sovereign master-mind to bring them to a unity of the faith. Cowdrey and Phelps hear different sounds and come up with different meanings. And Joseph freely lets them go their own way while he goes his, each under obligation to "study it out in your mind" before asking for revelation. (*Ibid.*, pp. 364-365)

. . . the Kirtland Egyptian Papers were as much their baby as Smith's, but no matter who was responsible for them they contained nothing reprehensible, since no claims either of divine inspiration or of scholarly accuracy were made for them. (*Ibid.*, p. 397)

Actually, most of Joseph Smith's work is in the handwriting of his scribes. According to the *History of the Church*, vol. 4, page 1, Joseph Smith stated:

I was dictating history, I say dictating, for I seldom use the pen myself. I always dictated all my communications, but employ a scribe to write them.

If the Mormons only accepted what is written in Joseph Smith's own handwriting they would have to give up the Book of Mormon, for the entire book was dictated to his scribes. It would be ridiculous to claim that it is "as much their baby" as his just because it is in their handwriting. We know that Joseph Smith was responsible for the contents of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, for the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 238, related:

The remainder of this month, I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients.

It is also interesting to note that Dr. Nibley has to admit that part of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar is actually in Joseph Smith's own hand: "Egyptian Mss. #4, . . . Manuscript entitled 'Egyptian alphabet,' in the handwriting of Joseph Smith" (*BYU Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 351). Nibley concedes that this portion of the manuscript "occupies four pages" (*Ibid.*, p. 364).



Dr. Nibley must have received a great deal of criticism from members of the Church who felt that he had betrayed the church by rejecting Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar and claiming it was not worth five minutes study. While Nibley has never retracted his criticism of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, in an article written in August 1968 he reversed his position about the importance of studying the document. He said that a student of the Book of Abraham should be thoroughly familiar with the "Alphabet and Grammar":

Consider for a moment the scope and complexity of the materials with which the student must cope if he would undertake a serious study of the Book of Abraham's authenticity. At the very least he must be thoroughly familiar with (1) the texts of the "Joseph Smith Papyri" identified as belonging to the Book of the Dead, (2) the content and nature of the mysterious "Sen-sen" fragment, (3) the so called "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" attributed to Joseph Smith, . . . (*Improvement Era*, August 1968, pp. 55-56)

This is certainly a strange statement to be coming from the man who had previously stated that he had "never spent so much as five minutes with the Egyptian Grammar, and does not intend to unless he is forced to it."

The Mormon scholar John Tvedtnes admitted that Joseph Smith's "Grammar" is not really a grammar of the Egyptian language:

I refer here to Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar," which, in the light of what is known at present about the Egyptian language, clearly shows ignorance of that language on the part of Joseph Smith. . . . let us agree with the critic—e.g., the "Alphabet and Grammar" is not a grammar of the Egyptian language. . . . The "Alphabet and Grammar" seems to be, for the most part, speculative, . . . I suspect that he was attempting to historically analyze the origin and perhaps the development of symbols, without complete regard to the meaning of each. . . .

To summarize the matter of Joseph Smith's personal notes, then, it is my belief that, after having written down the Book of Abraham (or, at least, after having received it), the Prophet began to speculate on the nature of the language of the documents . . . His notes are evidence of his ignorance of that language, but also provide some evidence of rather educated guessing, . . . (*Book of Abraham Symposium*, April 3, 1970, pp. 72, 73, 74, 76)

Dr. Hugh Nibley made these confusing remarks concerning the Alphabet and Grammar:

From the very beginning this writer has been rightly accused of an almost callous unconcern for the newly located papyri (all except the one matching Facsimile 1) as evidence for or against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. Equal indifference to the so-called Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar springs neither from misgivings nor indolence, but from a principle which has been taught in the Church from the beginning and which cannot be too strictly enjoined on all students of the gospel, namely, that a Latter-day Saint is bound to accept as true scriptures only the standard works of the Church. (*Improvement Era*, November 1968, p. 36)

Whether the "Sen-sen" Papyrus or the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar (here-after cited as EAG) makes sense or not, the Book of Abraham makes very good sense, . . . There is every indication that the free-wheeling conjectures of the EAG were made after the Book of Abraham was completed, so that even the irrelevant argument of the book's dubious documentary background remains unfounded. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1968, pp. 71-72)

The Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar cannot be used as a close check on the Book of Abraham until a great deal more is known about both documents. We do not yet know just what the EAG is or in what light Joseph Smith regarded it. (*Ibid.*, p. 95)

Professor Nibley's statements regarding Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar have left some Mormons in a

state of confusion. The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd admits there is a division in the Church with regard to this matter:

In frank terms, no one seems to know the "grammar's" value. Dr. Hugh Nibley has suggested that the "grammar" represents the Prophet's personal "hobbying," personal ideas, and was never intended by the Prophet to represent revealed information. Other students, generally not familiar with Egyptian, however, have suggested that the "grammar" represents a major contribution in the cracking of an ancient language. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 314)

It is apparent that the Prophet projected confidence in his usage of Egyptian, as if he was quite familiar with the tongue. . . . What was this alphabet and grammar? Questions abound. All that is known at present is: Joseph Smith apparently felt quite confident about his Egyptian. . . . One wonders, after reading reports that the seer stone was the instrument for the reception of the Book of Abraham, if the Prophet was merely taking some of the information acquired from his experience in recording and viewing the translation and applying it to the papyri with the best ability and knowledge he had at the moment. If this were the case, such an alphabet and grammar would have the seeds of Joseph's personal notions as much as of inspired elements. Or, as is obvious, it could be the complete result of inspiration. It also could be the result of his own notions about cracking the Egyptian language. . . . The issue is a confusing one at present. (*Ibid.*, pp. 252-253)

## Master of All Languages

We feel that Dr. Nibley has put the Mormon Church in an embarrassing position, for it is impossible to repudiate Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar without also repudiating the Book of Abraham and casting a shadow of doubt upon the rest of Joseph Smith's works.

Nibley now claims that "Joseph Smith never pretended to understand Egyptian," and that the Book of Abraham came by revelation. In the Winter 1968 issue of *Brigham Young University Studies*, page 174, he claims that "Joseph Smith made no secret of his fallibility and claimed to know no language but English."

This statement is about as far from the truth as it is possible to get. Actually, Joseph Smith claimed to be a great linguist. Josiah Quincy related the following:

The prophet referred to his miraculous gift to understanding all languages, and took down a Bible in various tongues, for the purpose of exhibiting his accomplishments in this particular. (*Figures of the Past*, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, 1958, p. 136)

Josiah Quincy told Henry Halkett of his visit with Joseph Smith. The following remark by Joseph Smith was found in Halkett's notes:

"These are hieroglyphics, nobody can read them but myself. I can read all writing and all hieroglyphics . . ." (As quoted in *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 257)

In his "King Follett Sermon" Joseph Smith boasted of his ability to translate different languages:

. . . I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; . . . Berosheit. I want to analyze the word; baith, in, by, through, in, and every thing else. Rosh, the head. Sheit, grammatical termination. When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the baith there. A man, a Jew without any authority, thought it too bad to begin to talk about the head. It read first, "The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods," that is the true meaning of the words, Baurau, signifies to bring forth. If you do not believe it, you do not believe the learned man of God. No man can learn you more than what I have told you. . . . I have an old book of the New Testament in the Hebrew, Latin, German and Greek. I have been reading the German and find it to be the most correct, . . . I know

more than all the world put together, . . . The word create came from the word baurau; it does not mean so; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize a ship. . . . I have now preached a little Latin, a little Hebrew, Greek and German, and I have fulfilled all.—I am not so big a fool as many have taken me to be. The Germans know that I read the German correct. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, pp. 614, 615, 617)

On another occasion Joseph Smith quoted from seventeen different languages:

Were I a Chaldean I would exclaim: Keed' nauh to-me-roon lehoam elauhayauh dey-ahemayaua veh aur'kau lau gnaubadoo, yabadoo ma-ar'gnau comeen tehoat sheamyauh allah. (Thus shall ye say unto them: The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from these heavens.)

An Egyptian, Su-e-eh-ni. (What other persons are those?) A Grecian, Diabolos bssileuei. (The Devil reigns.) A Frenchman, Messieurs sans Dieu. (Gentlemen without God.) A Turk, Ain shems. (The fountain of light.) A German, sie sind unferstandig! (What consummate ignorance!) A Syrian, Zaubok! (Sacrifice!) A Spaniard, Il sabio muda conscio, il nescio no. (A wise man reflects, a fool does not.) A Samaritan: Saunau! (O stranger!) An Italian: Oh tempa! oh diffidenza! (O the times! O the diffidence!) A Hebrew: Ahtau ail rauy. (Thou God seest me.) A Dane: Hvad tidende! (What tidings!) A Saxon, Hwaet riht! (What right!) A Swede: Hvad skilia! (What skill!) A Polander: Nay-yen-shoo bah pon na Jesu Christus. (Blessed be the name of Jesus Christ.) A western Indian: She-mo-kah she-mo-keh teh oughne-gah. (The white man. O the white man, he very uncertain.) A Roman: Procul, O procul este profani! (Be off, be off ye profane!) But as I am I will only add; when the wicked rule the people mourn. (*The Voice of Truth* (1844), pp. 16-17, as quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, by Fawn M. Brodie, p. 292)

Dr. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, stresses: "Joseph Smith was no dilettante translator" (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 102).

Dr. Nibley claims that Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar "was never completed, never released for publication, and, so far as we have been able to discover, never even mentioned in public" (*Improvement Era*, March 1968, p. 18). Actually, Joseph Smith seemed to take his "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" very serious. The reader will remember that he made this statement in the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 238:

The remainder of this month [July, 1835], I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the Book of Abraham, and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients.

On October 1, 1835, we find Joseph Smith still working on the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar":

October 1.—This afternoon I labored on the Egyptian alphabet, . . . and during the research, the principles of astronomy as understood by Father Abraham and the ancients unfolded to our understanding, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 286)

Joseph Smith publicly used material from his "Egyptian Alphabet." The reader will remember that when Smith quoted seventeen different languages, one of them was the Egyptian language: "An Egyptian, Su-eeh-ni. (What other persons are those?)" This is taken from Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, page A: "Sue-e-eh-ni What other person is that? Who."

On November 13, 1843, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in which he stated: "Were I an Egyptian, I would exclaim Jah-oh-eh, Enish-go-ondosh, Flo-ees-Flos-is-is; [O the earth! the power of attraction, and the moon passing between her and the sun.]" (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 373). Joseph Smith took this information from his "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar," pages 29 and 30:

Jah-oh-eh The earth under the government of an other or the second

of the fixed stars, which is called Enish-go-on-dosh or in other words the power of attra[c]tion it has with the earth.

Flo-ees: The moon-signifying its revolutions, also going between, thereby forming an eclipse

Flos-isis: The sun in its affinity with Earth and moon-signifying their revolutions showing the power, the one has with the other

The problem goes much deeper than Joseph Smith quoting from his "Egyptian Alphabet" in his speeches, for when we examine the Book of Abraham we find that Joseph Smith actually uses some of the material from his "Egyptian Alphabet." For instance, in his interpretation of Facsimile No. 2 Joseph Smith states:

Fig. 1. Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians Jah-oh-eh. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, Facsimile No. 2, Fig. 1.)

When we compare *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, page 26, we find that it is the source for the statement in the explanation of Facsimile No. 2:

Kolob signifies the first creation nearer to the Celestial, or the residence of God, first in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time, the measurement according to Celestial time which signifies one day to a cubit which day is equal to a thousand years according to the measurement of this earth or Jah-oh-eh

In his interpretation of Facsimile No. 2, Figure 5, Joseph Smith uses the words "Enish-go-on-dosh," "Kae-e-van-rash," "Floeseese" and "Kliflos-is-es." These are all words taken from the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar." Richard P. Howard, Church Historian for the Reorganized LDS Church, makes these comments concerning this matter:

Therefore, since 1912 serious students of this subject have had to consider the probability that Joseph Smith had erred at many significant points in his interpretation of the drawings on the papyri, from part of which the text of the Book of Abraham itself was apparently derived. The implication of this is that if Joseph Smith erred in assessing the meanings of the papyri drawings, there is a strong likelihood that his interpretations of the ancient Egyptian language symbols on the papyri were inaccurate also.

A second development underscores this possibility: the publication in 1966 of a reproduction of a document known as Joseph Smith's "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language." . . . This reproduction, if of an authentic original, demonstrates significant connections between some words in it and identical words used by Joseph Smith in his interpretations accompanying the three facsimiles as published in 1842. It follows that if modern Egyptologists have or might yet clearly establish the inaccuracy of Joseph's interpretations of the three facsimiles, and if further research confirms the link already observed between Joseph's facsimile interpretations and his "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language," then the reliability of the Book of Abraham as a translation of ancient records could no longer safely be maintained. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 91)

Although Dr. Hugh Nibley does his best to separate Joseph Smith from the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar," the evidence shows that he must be held responsible. As we have already shown, the Mormon Egyptologist Edward H. Ashment feels that the evidence indicates that "the prophet has some positive connection with the production of the Joseph Smith Egyptian Papers. Therefore, even though involvement with them on his part has been disputed, thoughtful reexamination of the evidence leads to the conclusion that the prophet was connected with the entire project" (*Sunstone*, December 1979, p. 42).

The most devastating evidence against the Book of Abraham, of course, is found in the Book of Abraham manuscripts which are included in the collection of documents known as the “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar.” As we have discussed these manuscripts earlier, we do not need to deal with this matter here.

From the evidence we have presented above, the reader will see that it is impossible to divorce Joseph Smith’s “Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar” from his Book of Abraham. They must stand or fall together.

### Possible Sources

Now that Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham has been proven false by the very papyrus upon which it was supposed to have been based, Mormon scholars are desperately searching for some way to keep from facing the serious implications of this matter. Although the Book of Abraham is a small book, it has a tremendous influence on Mormon doctrine. Jay M. Todd pointed out:

Few writers and historians of the Prophet’s life have noted the apparent influence that the Book of Abraham had upon the Prophet. But those who take the time to review his speeches, writings, and thought soon realize that for nine long years—from 1835 to his martyrdom in 1844—the Prophet Joseph Smith relied heavily upon that which he had learned from Abraham. . . . Although the Prophet continued to receive revelations and gain other knowledge, nothing could push aside the great truths he had learned from Abraham. (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 264)

Because of the importance of the Book of Abraham to Mormon theology, Mormon writers are going to great lengths to find some way to save it.

### Imitation Genesis

Besides the devastating evidence against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham that has been furnished by the translation of the papyrus, there is additional evidence which we should consider. For instance, it is plain to see that Joseph Smith borrowed heavily from the King James Version of the Bible. Below is a comparison of some verses from the Book of Abraham with some verses from Genesis.

These parallels should be sufficient to convince the reader that the two texts are closely related. We feel that the only logical explanation for this relationship is that Joseph Smith merely borrowed from the Bible, rewriting and adding to the text as he went along. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, on the other hand, felt that the Book of Abraham was in existence before Genesis was written and that Genesis was taken from it! In his book *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, 1938, page 81, he declared:

. . . this writer believes that the second chapter of Abraham is the original, of which Gen. 12:1-13 is an abridgment. This is a remarkable fact . . .

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### GENESIS

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed

So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land

And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. (Genesis 12:1-13)

### BOOK OF ABRAHAM

Now the Lord had said unto me: Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing . . .

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee . . . shall all the families of the earth be blessed,

So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

And I took Sarai, whom I took to wife . . . and Lot, my brother’s son, and all our substance that we had gathered, and the souls that we had won in Haran, and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan, . . . to come to the land of Canaan

And then we passed from Jershon through the land unto the place of Sechem; it was situated in the plains of Moreh, . . . into the borders of the land of the Canaanites,

And the Lord appeared unto me . . . and said unto me; Unto thy seed will I give this land.

And I, Abraham, arose from the place of the altar which I had built unto the Lord, and removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched my tent there, Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and there I built another altar unto the Lord, and called again upon name of the Lord.

And I, Abraham, journeyed, going on still towards the south; and there was a continuation of a famine in the land; and I, Abraham concluded to go down into Egypt, to sojourn there, for the famine became very grievous.

And it came to pass when I was come near to enter into Egypt, the Lord said unto me: Behold, Sarai, thy wife, is a very fair woman to look upon;

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see her, they will say— She is his wife; and they will kill you, but they will save her alive;

. . . say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 2:3, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19-23, 25)



For a number of years I have strongly felt that chapter 2 of the Book of Abraham is the original account from which Gen. 12:1-13 was made. Putting it another way, the account in Genesis is nothing more or less than an abridgment of that in the Book of Abraham. . . . the writings of Abraham . . . must of necessity be older than the original text of Genesis. . . .

Let the reader make but a casual comparison of Gen. 12:1-13 and the second chapter of the Book of Abraham and he will discover that an apparently close relationship exists between them. . . . The similarity cannot be accidental. . . . a linguistic study of the Book of Abraham and of the parallel versions of the Bible points unmistakably to the independent character of the Egyptian record and to the conclusion that it is, at least, the possible original from whence the account in Genesis was taken. (*Ibid.*, pp. 83-84)

Although Dr. Sperry's idea that Genesis was taken from the Book of Abraham may seem fantastic, it is the only answer he could give that would not undermine the Book of Abraham. To say that the Book of Abraham came from Genesis is to label it a fraud. Of course, now that we have the original papyrus from which the Book of Abraham was "translated," we know that it is in reality nothing but an Egyptian funerary document and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. But even if the original papyrus were not available, there would be sufficient evidence to prove that the Book of Abraham was written after Genesis.

While Dr. Sperry would like us to believe that Genesis was derived from the Book of Abraham, he points out that there are differences between the two texts. He states that the Book of Abraham calls the patriarch "Abraham," whereas Genesis refers to him as "Abram" until the seventeenth chapter. After comparing Genesis 12:4 and Abraham 2:14, Dr. Sperry states:

Three things are immediately apparent. In the first place the account in the Book of Abraham is written in the first person, that of Genesis in the third person. Secondly, the accounts do not agree as to the age of Abraham when he left Haran. Thirdly, the Book of Abraham writes the name of the great patriarch "Abraham" as against "Abram" in the Genesis version. It is self-evident that the Book of Abraham does not copy verbatim, if at all, from the King James version as some of its critics may presume. Had Joseph Smith been an impostor the chances are very good that he would have made Abraham's age agree with that given in Genesis. Furthermore, it is doubtful that he would have called the patriarch "Abraham" before the latter came to Egypt. The version in Genesis does not call him "Abraham" until he had long been back from that country. (See Gen. 17:5). (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, p. 84)

Actually, Dr. Sperry's point concerning "Abram" and "Abraham" becomes of little value when we compare the original handwritten manuscripts and the first printed version of the Book of Abraham with the way it is printed today. The manuscripts and the first printed version in the *Times and Seasons* show that Joseph Smith was very confused over the name and used both versions. Abraham 2:14 contains the name "Abraham" in modern editions, but the first printed version reads "Abram" just like the King James Version of the Bible. Below is a comparison showing the text as it appears in the Bible, the text as Joseph Smith first printed it in the *Times and Seasons*, and the altered version that appears in modern editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*.

GENESIS 12:4: So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

TIMES AND SEASONS, vol. 3, p. 706: So I, Abram, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me, and I, Abram, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, Abraham 2:14: So, I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

Dr. James R. Clark admits that the text of the Book of Abraham has been changed regarding this matter:

From the *Times and Seasons* printing of the translation it would seem that Abraham used the earlier form of his name—Abram—when he referred in his autobiography to events in his life preceding his offering of the sacrifice on the altar at Sechem or at Jershon. . . .

Our present text of the Book of Abraham loses this significance of the difference in the meanings of the two forms of Abraham's name by printing the name in one form only. This change in the text evidently came in England when Parley P. Pratt or Thomas Ward republished the Book of Abraham in the July and August, 1842 issues of the *Millennial Star*. . . .

It is the personal opinion of the author that for the very substantial reasons presented above, the *Times and Seasons* contains the correct translations or transliterations of the names for Abraham and that our present editions are in error on this point. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, p. 176, 178)

It is extremely interesting to note that the text of the Book of Abraham itself seems to catch Joseph Smith in the process of changing his doctrine concerning the Godhead. In the first part of the Book of Abraham we do not find the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. For instance, in Abraham 2:1 we read: "Now the Lord God caused the famine to wax sore . . ." This part of the Book of Abraham was probably written in 1835. The Mormon writer Jay M. Todd points out: "Another fact of relevance in the matter is the amount of present-day Book of Abraham in the hand of Warren Parrish: chapter 1:1-2:18. This is also the exact length of the first installment in the 1842 *Times and Seasons*. One tends to wonder if that is as far as the Prophet reached in his 1835 work" (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, by Jay M. Todd, p. 324). In 1842, however, Joseph Smith "translated" more of the Book of Abraham. Under the date of March 8, 1842, we find this statement in his History: "Recommended translating from the Records of Abraham for the tenth number of the *Times and Seasons*, . . ." Jay M. Todd makes this remark concerning the entry in Joseph Smith's *History*: "This is a very important entry, the first entry since November 1835 in which the Prophet is mentioned as 'translating.' Interestingly, it is after the publication of the first installment, which was up to Abraham 2:18" (*The Saga of the Book of Abraham*, p. 288). As we examine the text of the Book of Abraham we find that it is the part which was "translated" in March 1842 which contains the doctrine of a plurality of Gods. The words "the Gods" appear more than forty times in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Book of Abraham.

Actually, chapters four and five of the Book of Abraham appear to be nothing but the first part of Genesis rewritten to include a plurality of Gods. The word "God" is changed to "the Gods," and wherever the word "he" refers to God it has been changed to "they." It would appear, however, that in one instance Joseph Smith forgot to change the word "he" to "they" and that it had to be changed after his death. He was apparently copying from Genesis 1:16, which reads:

And **God** made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; **he** made the stars also. (Genesis 1:16)

Joseph Smith rewrote this to read as follows:

And **the Gods** organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light **he** set the stars, also; . . . (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 721)

This was reprinted the same way in the *Millennial Star*, August 1842, vol. 3, p. 51. In the *Pearl of Great Price*, however, it has been

changed to read:

And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light they set the stars also; (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 4:16)

### Other Sources

Although the King James Version of the Bible was the primary source for Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham, he seems to have used other sources as well. It is very possible that the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus had some influence on the Book of Abraham. In Abraham 1:23 we read of "the daughter of Egyptus, . . ." This name is not found in the Bible, but in "Flavius Josephus Against Apion," we read: ". . . Manetho says that Sethosis himself was called Egyptus, . . ." (*Josephus*, Translated by William Whiston, Michigan, 1966, p. 612).

According to the Book of Abraham, the Lord revealed the principles of astronomy to Abraham before he went into Egypt. In Abraham 3:15 we read: "And the Lord said unto me: Abraham, I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words." At the bottom of the explanation to Facsimile No. 3 in the Book of Abraham we find this statement: "Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of astronomy, in the king's court." While the Bible does not even use the word "astronomy," Josephus claimed that Abraham taught the Egyptians "the science of astronomy":

. . . Abram conferred with each of them, . . . He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for, before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; . . . (*Josephus*, p. 33)

The Mormon leaders must have been familiar with Josephus at the time the Book of Abraham was written, for in a letter, dated Dec. 22, 1835, Oliver Cowdery referred to the writings of Josephus (see *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 2, p. 236).

Another book which probably had an influence on Joseph Smith's "Book of Abraham" was Thomas Dick's *Philosophy of a Future State*. For more information on this matter see our *Case*, vol. 3, pages 83-83.

Fawn Brodie makes the following statement about Dick's book and its influence on Joseph Smith:

. . . Joseph created Abraham an eminent astronomer who penetrates all the mysteries of the universe. Abraham relates that there is one star, Kolob, lying near the throne of God, . . . Kolob and countless lesser stars are peopled by spirits that are eternal as matter itself. These spirits are not cast in the same mold, but differ among themselves in quality of intelligence as the stars differ in magnitude.

These concepts, which developed peculiar ramifications in Joseph's later teachings, came directly from Dick, who had speculated that the stars were peopled by "various orders of intelligences," and that these intelligences were "progressive beings" in various stages of evolution toward perfection. (*No Man Knows My History*, by Fawn Brodie, p. 172)

One of the most offensive doctrines contained in the Book of Abraham is that concerning blacks. The Book of Abraham, of course, teaches that all the descendants of Ham were cursed so that they could not hold the priesthood. Joseph Smith's doctrine of the curse on the blacks was obviously derived from the thinking of his time. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1969, page 93, Lester Bush states that "the parallels between Mormon Scripture and the contemporary proslavery arguments are striking." He goes on to point out that even before Joseph Smith received the papyri, W. W. Phelps had published an article which contained ideas similar to the Book of Abraham. This article was published in the *Messenger*

and *Advocate* in March, 1835, and contained these interesting statements:

Is or is it not apparent from reason and analogy as drawn from a careful reading of the Scriptures, that God causes the saints, or people that fall away from his church to be cursed in time, with a black skin? Was or was not Cain, being marked, obliged to inherit the curse, he and his children, forever? And if so, as Ham, like other sons of God, might break the rule of God, by marrying out of the church, did or did he not, have a Canaanite wife, whereby some of the black seed was preserved through the flood, and his son, Canaan, after he laughed at his grandfather's nakedness, heired three curses; one from Cain for killing Abel; one from Ham for marrying a black wife, and one from Noah for ridiculing what God had respect for? Are or are not the Indians a sample of marking with blackness for rebellion against God's holy word and holy order? And can or can we not observe in the countenances of almost all nations, except the Gentile, a dark, sallow hue, which tells the sons of God, without a line of history, that they have fallen or changed from the original beauty and grace of father Adam? (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 82)

In his Book of Abraham, Joseph Smith seemed to follow the same argument used by Phelps—i.e., that Ham married a Canaanite woman and thus "the curse" was preserved in the land:

Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden.

When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it, and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:21-24)

James R. Harris, Assistant Professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University, may have uncovered another source for some of the text of the Book of Abraham, although he does not seem to realize the serious implications of this important discovery. Mr. Harris has found that part of Abraham 1:2 seems to have a definite relationship to some material written by Oliver Cowdery. Cowdery, of course, was one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

Below the reader will find a comparison of Oliver Cowdery's words with those found in the Book of Abraham.

*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 1:2:

. . . I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, . . .

**Oliver Cowdery** ("Patriarchal Blessing Book," No. 1, pp. 8-9, as cited by Richard L. Anderson in *The Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 20):

. . . we diligently sought for the right of the fathers, and the authority of the holy priesthood, and the power to administer in the same; for we desired to be followers of righteousness and the possessors of greater knowledge, . . .

James R. Harris makes these surprising comments concerning this matter:

A possibility that the text of the Book of Abraham may have been defective and therefore both inadequate and unnecessary to the production of a revealed translation is explored and proposed by [Jay M.] Todd. . . .

We may have observed additional support for this theory about a month before Todd went to press. The second article in a series on The Three Witnesses was published by Richard L. Anderson. In a quote from a patriarchal blessing recorded in 1833, December 13,



(Patriarchal Blessing Book, No. 1, pp. 8-9) Oliver Cowdery (recorder) added this comment: . . . [see above]

Comparing this quote with Abraham 1:2 would support the theory that a papyrus text in the hands of the prophet was not essential to production of the translation: . . .

The near identical wording of these passages would indicate that some of the text of the Book of Abraham was revealed and recorded before the Abraham papyri came into the possession of Joseph Smith. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1969, pp. 126-127)

From these comments it would appear that James R. Harris is willing to accept the idea that the Book of Abraham did not come from the papyrus. He would apparently have us believe that at least some of the text of the Book of Abraham was revealed to Joseph Smith before December 13, 1833, and that Oliver Cowdery borrowed his statements from there. While this would explain the “near identical wording,” it is not facing the reality of Joseph Smith’s statements that the Book of Abraham came from the papyrus. A much more logical explanation is that Joseph Smith’s Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination, and that he derived his ideas from Oliver Cowdery and several other sources.

There seems to be some question as to when Cowdery’s statement was actually written. One scholar maintains that the blessings “that were given December 18, 1833 were not recorded until the latter part of September 1835 and early part of October 1838,” which would be after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri. Joseph Fielding Smith also gives the year as 1835: “We also have Oliver’s testimony, recorded by his own hand, as early as the year 1835. The account is quite interesting, and was recorded in the patriarchal blessing book of Patriarch Joseph Smith, Sen., by Oliver, . . .” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 99).

The Mormon scholar Richard L. Anderson, however, maintains that the “entry originated December 13, 1833; . . .” (*Improvement Era*, September 1968, p. 24, n. 16). Perhaps Dr. Anderson means that the entry was originally written in 1833 but not copied into the Patriarchal Blessing Book until 1835.

However this may be, it is very likely that Joseph Smith read Oliver Cowdery’s statement before he dictated the handwritten manuscript of the Book of Abraham. That Joseph Smith may have borrowed ideas from W. W. Phelps or Oliver Cowdery is not too surprising, for both these men were good writers and worked with him on the papyri (see *History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 236).

The Mormon Scholar Kirk Holland Vestal has recently written a defense of the Book of Abraham. In this unpublished paper he accepts James R. Harris’ argument that the text of the Book of Abraham came by revelation some two years before Joseph Smith received the papyri. Vestal seems to feel that Joseph Smith actually saw Abraham’s record in vision and that when he received the Book of Breathing papyrus it looked so much like what he had seen that he mistakenly identified it as the “very original manuscript of the Book of Abraham”:

Several years back James Harris pointed out that a significant portion of the text of the Book of Abraham had been translated by Joseph Smith before December 1833. . . . This would suggest that the translation of the Book of Abraham was a process [sic] prior to and independent of any “Egyptian papyri.” . . .

Phelps’ and Cowdery’s familiarity with the contents of the Book of Abraham prior to the arrival of the papyri demonstrate their keen interest in the production of this book. . . . Like Joseph Smith, these two may have been lead [sic] to believe that the papyri were the original sources of the Book of Abraham that Joseph had already translated by the Urim and Thummim. . . . Cowdery’s and Phelps’ close involvement with Joseph Smith and the Egyptian papyri strongly evidence that the Book of Abraham had been significantly translated well before the papyrus came into their hands in July 1835.

History supports the idea that the text of the Book of Abraham was translated by the Urim and Thummim—by revelation—soon

after July 1833. . . . The Egyptian papyri that came into the hands of Joseph Smith in early July 1835 have been recognized as fairly common copies of the Egyptian “Book of the Dead.” Under the date of Sunday, the fifth of July 1835, Joseph reports that . . . the scrolls contained the records of Joseph and Abraham: “. . . much to our joy found that one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt. . . .”

However, when it came down to serious study, we observe that this initial enthusiasm wanes . . .

Joseph Smith had taken the already translated portion of the Book of Abraham, and had attempted to translate the newly found Egyptian Book of the Dead papyri by matching the two texts. It comes as little surprise that Joseph Smith may have indeed thought that what the papyri contained were the original Egyptian texts of the Book of Abraham. In Abraham 1:12 and 14, Abraham refers his readers to an illustration at the beginning of his record. The illustration at the beginning of the Egyptian papyri, as will be shown, is a copy of a scene which dates back to the time when Abraham was in Egypt and before. The scene Abraham placed at the beginning of his record which was translated by Joseph Smith could have and would have resembled the illustration found at the beginning of the papyrus, the latter finding its place at the fore of all present day publications of the Book of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price*. The striking similarity of the scenes in both documents would have led Joseph Smith to naturally assume that what he had in his hands in July 1835 was in fact the very original manuscript of the Book of Abraham. (“*Approaching The Book Abraham*,” by Kirk Holland Vestal, 1980, pp. 2, 4-6)

It would appear that Mr. Vestal would go to almost any length to escape the obvious conclusion that the Book of Abraham is spurious. Kirk Vestal and Arthur Wallace have written a book entitled, *The Firm Foundation of Mormonism*. In this book the authors admit that “Each of the three facsimiles are connected with ancient Egyptian funeral rites, and are associated with the Book of the Dead” (*The Firm Foundation of Mormonism*, Los Angeles, California, p. 183).

Vestal and Wallace would have us believe that the first and third facsimiles found in the Book of Abraham illustrate scenes of a ritual drama in which “various players assume the roles of the different Egyptian mythological gods” (*Ibid.*, p. 184). These authors go on to claim that “Although this role of Osiris was at many other times assumed by other prominent individuals in Egypt, the Book of Abraham makes clear that at least once Abraham assumed the role, which is historically consistent” (*Ibid.*, p. 189).

We find it incredible that the patriarch Abraham would participate in a pagan ritual in which he played the role of the Egyptian God of the Dead!

Vestal and Wallace have a strange method of trying to prove the Book of Abraham. They have taken carefully selected portions from the works of Dee Jay Nelson and other writers which they feel are favorable to Joseph Smith’s work and tried to use them to prove the Book of Abraham. Now, it is true that there are a few parallels, but anyone looking at the pictures shown in the facsimiles would get a few points right. And while Nelson went out of his way to point these out, his work is almost completely unfavorable to Joseph Smith’s interpretations. In spite of this, Vestal and Wallace have carefully selected out the points of agreement and tried to make a case. Their chapter on the Book of Abraham contains no less than nine footnotes referring to Nelson’s work—i.e., footnotes 23, 25, 41, 42, 43, 44, 48, 50, 54.

Another strange thing about the whole matter is that the man they refer to as the “Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson” (*The Firm Foundations of Mormonism*, p. 189) is used extensively to prove the case, yet Vestal himself undercuts Nelson in his paper dated “December, January 1980.” (We feel that this date is probably a mistake and should read as follows: December 1980, January 1981.) Vestal charges:

A superficial glance at Nelson’s credentials, if indeed there



were any to begin with, reveals a college drop-out . . . Nelson's lack of scholarly ability becomes visibly acute with his smug rejection of the Book of Abraham as translation material when one realizes that not one soul on earth has been able to present the original source of the translation to begin with! (*Approaching the Book of Abraham*, pp. 1-2)

Since Vestal was aware of this information when *The Firm Foundations of Mormonism* was published in 1981 (the Preface is dated April 1981), why is there no mention of "Nelson's lack of scholarly ability" in the chapter on the Book of Abraham in this book?

### The Moment of Truth

We feel that we would be very ungrateful if we did not acknowledge the hand of God in bringing the truth about the Book of Abraham to light. He has blessed this work in a wonderful way. We are able to testify that God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

In an article published in the *New York Times*, May 3, 1970, Wallace Turner wrote:

SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 2—The "Book of Abraham," which provides the theological basis for the Utah Mormon churches excluding Negroes from its priesthood, has been described as "simply the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s imagination" by a leading scholar in a branch of the church Mr. Smith founded. . . .

The description of the Book of Abraham as the product of Joseph Smith's imagination is in an article . . . in the pilot issue of "Courage: A Journal of History, Thought and Action" issued for members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The author is Richard P. Howard, historian for the church branch commonly called R.L.D.S., the largest of the groups that splintered away from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints . . .

Mr. Howard pointed out that the publication in 1966 by Modern Microfilm Company of Salt Lake City of Joseph Smith Jr.'s original "Egyptian alphabet and grammar" allowed scholars to discover how the prophet worked in producing the Book of Abraham. . . . He also suggested that the Prophet Joseph used the "curse of Ham" argument against Negroes as a means of reconciling differences that arose among his followers when Elijah Abel, was ordained into the priesthood March 3, 1836, . . .

"Whatever the intent of Joseph Smith in expounding this view of the Negro," Mr. Howard wrote, "it is clear that the ancient papyrus from Egypt contained no such information."

Mr. Howard wrote that "It may be helpful to suggest that the 'Book of Abraham' represents simply the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s imagination, . . ." (*The New York Times*, May 3, 1970)

Although the RLDS Church seems to have come to grips with this important issue, the Utah Mormon leaders will not face the truth concerning this matter. In an article entitled "LDS Affirm 'Abraham'" we find the following:

The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the "Book of Abraham" as "scripture given to us through the Prophet (Joseph Smith)," President N. Eldon Tanner said Sunday night. . . . Tanner . . . made the statement in response to an article saying the translation of the "Book of Abraham" was the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s "imagination." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 4, 1970)

That the Utah Mormon leaders would continue to endorse the Book of Abraham in the face of the evidence which has been presented is almost beyond belief.

We feel that if any person will honestly examine this matter he will see that the evidence to disprove the "Book of Abraham" is conclusive. We have shown that the original papyrus fragment Joseph Smith used as the basis for the "Book of Abraham" has been identified and that this fragment is in reality a part of the Egyptian "Book of Breathings." It is a pagan text and contains absolutely nothing concerning Abraham or his religion.

Perhaps one reason the Mormon leaders refuse to face the facts concerning the Book of Abraham is that to do so would cast

a serious shadow of doubt upon the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Samuel A. B. Mercer concluded:

. . . both books were translated from the same Egyptian language, and if the translator failed in the translation of the one book, our faith in his translation of the other must necessarily be impaired . . . (*The Utah Survey*, September 1913, p. 5)

Some Mormons have maintained that Joseph Smith did not use the Urim and Thummim when he "translated" the Book of Abraham, and therefore any mistakes found in it would not reflect upon the Book of Mormon. Actually, the early Mormon leaders claimed that Joseph Smith did use the Urim and Thummim. Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the Church, recorded this statement in his journal in 1842:

The Lord is blessing Joseph with power to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to translate through the Urim and Thummim ancient records and hieroglyphics as old as Abraham and Adam. Joseph the Seer has presented us [with] some of the book of Abraham . . . (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 58)

James R. Clark makes this observation concerning the Book of Abraham:

Well, Wilford Woodruff said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. Parley P. Pratt said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. Orson Pratt said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. He translated with a divine instrument. That was the only way he could translate this. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., p. 62)

Thus we see that the Mormon leaders cannot repudiate the Book of Abraham without casting serious doubt upon the validity of the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Hugh Nibley has stated:

. . . a few faded and tattered little scraps of papyrus may serve to remind the Latter-day Saints of how sadly they have neglected serious education. . . . Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the moment of truth the Mormons have to face the world unprepared, after having been given a hundred years' fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 171-72).

Truly this is the moment of truth for the Mormon people. The Book of Abraham has been proven untrue, and even Dr. Nibley is unprepared to face the situation. For a number of years we have been calling upon the Mormon leaders to repudiate the Book of Abraham and the anti-black doctrine contained in its pages. They have finally yielded to pressure and allowed blacks to hold the priesthood. We feel, however, they should go one step further and admit the Book of Abraham is a work of Joseph Smith's imagination.

### The Browns' Attack

In 1981 Robert L. and Rosemary Brown published the book, *They Lie in Wait to Deceive*. This book purports to tell "The amazing story of how "Dr." or "Prof." Dee Jay Nelson, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, and other anti-Mormons work to obstruct and distort the truth." Actually, this book is nothing but a smoke screen to divert attention from the Book of Abraham problem to Dee Jay Nelson. In this work Mr. and Mrs. Brown make a devastating attack on Nelson, the man who translated the Joseph Smith Papyri in 1968. The reader will remember that earlier in this chapter we have shown that Nelson made a false statement that he had obtained a doctor's degree in 1978—ten years after translating the Joseph Smith Papyri. After a careful examination of *They Lie in Wait to Deceive*, we concluded that the Browns did an excellent job of exposing some false claims made by Dee Jay Nelson. Unfortunately, however, in their zeal to destroy Mr. Nelson they have made a number of false statements concerning Dee Jay Nelson, their most

flagrant violation of the principle of honesty occurs when they accuse us of being part of a cover-up. Those who are acquainted with the facts about the situation know that nothing could be further from the truth.

The Browns claim that “in the latter part of 1980,” they “sent information about Dee Jay Nelson to Moody Press”—the publishers of our book *The Changing World of Mormonism*. They go on to state that we were given “instructions to revise the section concerning Dee Jay Nelson. At this time they were also informed that no more copies of their just printed book would be released for sale, and all future editions must also be revised. In 1981, the new revised edition was printed . . . Between the Moody Press and us, it looks like the Tanners had no choice but to come clean” (*They Lie in Wait to Deceive*, p. 161).

While the Browns would have their readers believe that we covered up the situation until they and Moody Press forced us “to come clean,” the truth of the matter is that we commenced our own investigation into Nelson’s credentials as soon as we became convinced there was a problem. The results of that investigation were published immediately in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. By March 20, 1980, we had learned that Pacific Northwestern University (the school from which Nelson claimed he received his degree) was really a diploma mill, and we wrote to Nelson that his “claim to a doctor’s degree in anthropology cannot be substantiated. Even though we have never made this claim, we feel that it would not be right for us to continue selling your booklets.” Just about one week after we wrote this letter to Nelson, we were contacted by Charles F. Trentelman of the Ogden *Standard-Examiner*. Mr. Trentelman had heard that Nelson’s credentials had been questioned and asked us if we could throw any light on the subject. We informed him of all we had learned about Pacific Northwestern University, and on March 29, 1980 he wrote the following:

Mrs. Tanner said they investigated the claims and found Nelson’s diploma was from a university that was shut down recently by the federal government as being a diploma mill, an operation that sells diplomas without requiring any schooling. (*Standard-Examiner*, March 29, 1980)

Immediately after Mr. Trentelman’s article appeared in the *Standard-Examiner*, we published the 42nd issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. This was printed in April 1980 and fully exposed Nelson’s deception with regard to the doctor’s degree. A copy of this paper was mailed to the Moody Bible Library, and there was no attempt to hide the matter from anyone. As a matter of fact, we printed somewhere in the neighborhood of 10,000 copies of this issue!

In spite of these facts, the Browns try to make it appear that we were covering up the matter. To do this they had to entirely omit any reference to the fact that we published an expose of Nelson in the April 1980 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. Instead of telling the truth about the matter, they assert that “Between the Moody Press and us, it looks like the Tanners had no choice but to come clean” (*They Lie in Wait to Deceive*, p. 161). On the same page the Browns admit that they “sent information about Dee Jay Nelson” to Moody Press “in the latter part of 1980.” It should be obvious, then, that the Browns are completely misrepresenting the situation. Since we had already exposed Nelson in the April 1980 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, how could the Browns and Moody Press force us “to come clean” in the “latter part” of the same year? This, of course, just doesn’t make any sense.

In a new booklet entitled *Can the Browns Save Joseph Smith?* we deal with other false claims which the Browns have made concerning us and Dee Jay Nelson. For instance, the Browns accuse Nelson of lying when he said he went to President Tanner’s office to obtain photographs of the papyri which were being suppressed from the general public. In *Can the Browns Save Joseph Smith?* we quote from a letter written by N. Eldon Tanner himself which supports Nelson’s claim. Furthermore, we reproduce a photograph of a memorandum from President Tanner’s office which verifies Nelson’s visit. Robert L. Brown has charged that “the Tanners are being deceitful” with regard to this matter. The evidence, however, completely supports our statements regarding this incident.

In his booklet, *Joseph Smith’s “Eye of Ra,”* page 4, Dee Jay Nelson discussed the four standing figures in Facsimile No. 2, Fig. 6. As we have already pointed out, Egyptologists identify them as the four sons of Horus—an Egyptian god. (The heads of these same gods appear on the canopic jars in Facsimile No. 1.) Nelson gave the names of these pagan gods in his booklet. His identification agrees with the Egyptologist Richard A. Parker’s work and shows that Joseph Smith was completely wrong in his work on Fac. No. 1. Nelson commented, however, that in Fac. No. 2, “Joseph Smith correctly identified them as representing the four quarters of the earth!” Although Nelson’s work is almost completely unfavorable to Joseph Smith’s interpretations, he was a Mormon elder at the time and wanted his people to read his work. Therefore, he tried very hard to find anything that would support Smith’s claims. The quotation cited above is a good example. In any case, the Browns have seized upon this isolated example to try to make a case for Joseph Smith as an interpreter of Egyptian documents. The Browns accuse us of “deception” because we did not include Nelson’s statement about the four quarters of the earth in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* It should be noted, however that we were the ones who published Nelson’s pamphlet in the first place. Furthermore, we reprinted another booklet which mentions this matter (see *Why Egyptologists Reject the Book of Abraham*, Part 2, p. 24). In this work the Egyptologist Samuel A. B. Mercer remarked that “credit must be given for a certain similarity, though it is merely a coincidence in number and in general treatment.” Taking Joseph Smith’s work as a whole, however, Professor Mercer maintained that he “failed completely in his attempt or pretense to interpret and translate Egyptian figures and hieroglyphics” (*Ibid.*, p. 11).

It would appear that the Browns are clutching desperately to a straw in their attempt to save Joseph Smith’s work. The reader will remember that Joseph Smith identified the four gods shown in Facsimile No. 1 as the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah and Korash. Egyptologists, however, identify them as Imseti, Hapy, Duamutef and Kebehsenuf (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, p. 86). It is evident, then, that Joseph Smith’s identification of the gods is totally incorrect. The Browns put forth the claim that the names which Joseph Smith gave in his explanation concerning the gods are really geographical regions. In the book *Can the Browns Save Joseph Smith?* we show that this fantastic theory is built on a very dubious foundation.

In our rebuttal to the Browns, we examine the charge that some of the information found in their book was obtained through secret tape-recording of telephone conversations. We also show that they have cut out a paragraph from a photograph of a letter written by the Egyptologist Klaus Baer, and that the other parts of the letter have been pasted back together to make it appear that nothing is missing! The Browns have also suppressed over 900 words from a letter which we wrote. The reason for the suppression of these words is very obvious: we tell that the Mormon Church itself used a fake Ph. D. (“Dr. Webb”) to defend the Book of Abraham at the time of Spalding’s attack. In their book, the Browns’ main thesis appears to be that the critics of the Mormon Church have been discredited because one of them used a fake Ph. D. The Browns, however, completely suppressed the fact that the church previously used a man with an assumed name as well as a fake doctor’s degree. We feel that Mr. and Mrs. Brown are operating under a double standard. They accuse us of deception, but the truth of the matter is that we were completely unaware of Nelson’s false claim to a Ph. D. As soon as we found out, we exposed him and quit selling his books. The Mormon Church leaders, on the other hand, allowed Mr. Homans to call himself “Robert C. Webb, Ph. D.” They engaged in a cover-up concerning this matter and continued to print his books for many years. As late as 1936 Church President Heber J. Grant took out a copyright on R. C. Webb’s book *Joseph Smith As a Translator*. Nothing was said in this book about Webb’s earlier claim to a Ph.D.

In any case, the Browns have tried to divert attention from the Book of Abraham problem. On the “Mormon Miscellaneous” radio program (KBBX), August 3, 1981, we challenged Robert L. Brown



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out that Dr. Nibley's book contains some very serious errors. Michael Marquardt has prepared a good rebuttal entitled, *The Book of Abraham Papyrus Found: An Answer to Dr. Hugh Nibley's Book 'The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment.'*

As we have already shown, Dr. Nibley's book was published in 1975. In 1979, however, he spoke at the Sunstone Theological Symposium and his statements seem to discredit his own book:

**"I refuse to be held responsible for anything I wrote more than three years ago. For heaven's sake, I hope we are moving forward here. After all, the implication that one mistake and it is all over with—how flattering to think in forty years I have not made one slip and I am still in business! I would say that about four fifths of everything I put down has changed, of course."** (*Sunstone*, December 1979, page 49)

Dr. Nibley would have us believe that the science of Egyptology is in a constant state of upheaval. Now, while it is true that there will always be refinements, the basic principles remain the same. We feel that the constant state of confusion that Dr. Nibley finds himself in is caused by his attempt to defend a work of Joseph Smith's own imagination—i.e., the Book of Abraham. While our case against the Book of Abraham stands on the same unshakeable foundation it did 12 years ago, Dr. Nibley has to constantly change his ideas. First, he was going to answer the critics in the *Improvement Era*. When this did not work, he prepared a book which "is 800 pages long"—actually 305 large printed pages. Four years later, however, he says that "I refuse to be held responsible for anything I wrote more than three years ago." After all this one would think that Dr. Nibley would give up, but instead he threatens the critics with the possibility of still another book: **"Of these things and much, much more we speak in what we hope is a forthcoming book."** (*Ibid.*, p. 51)

**Dr. Nelson?**

Although Dr. Nibley was not able to translate the papyri at the time it came to light, there was an elder in the church who was qualified—Dee Jay Nelson. When Nibley learned of Nelson's ability as an Egyptologist, he wanted him to help defend the church. In a letter dated June 27, 1967, he told Nelson that he could "see no reason in the world why you should not be taken into the confidence of the Brethren if this thing ever comes out into the open; in fact, you should be enormously useful to the Church...there are parties in Salt Lake who are howling for a showdown on the P.G.P.; if they have their way we may have to get together."

On January 4, 1968, Dee Jay Nelson visited with Dr. Nibley at Brigham Young University and examined the original papyri. Dr. Nibley agreed that Nelson should translate the papyri, and he sent a note to N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency, stating that "it would be a good idea to let Prof. Dee J. Nelson have copies" of the papyri. Mr. Nelson translated the papyri, but he was unable to find any mention of Abraham or his religion in any portion of the papyri. He found the names of many pagan gods who were worshiped by the Egyptians but nothing concerning the God of Abraham. After completing his translation, Mr. Nelson contacted us and asked if we wanted to print it. Since the translation proved unfavorable to the church, it was obvious that the church would not print it. When we completed the publication we tried to advertise it in the *Deseret News* but church leaders would not allow the ad to be run.

Unfortunately, about ten years after completing his translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri, Dee Jay Nelson put forth the claim that he had a doctor's degree from an institution he later identified as Pacific Northwestern University. On February 13, 1980 we attended a lecture in Brigham City, Utah

where we heard Mr. Nelson proclaim he had a Ph. D. in anthropology. We became a little suspicious, however, when he failed to give the name of the school. A few weeks later a woman called us from Arizona and said that Nelson had claimed the school he had attended was in Seattle. When she called information, however, she was unable to locate it. We tried the same thing and obtained a similar result. On March 11-12, 1980 we wrote to Nelson asking for documentation which would prove he had a doctor's degree. Mr. Nelson did send us a photograph of what purports to be his diploma from Pacific Northwestern University. After examining this document and another paper he sent, we became very suspicious that Pacific Northwestern University was not a legitimate university. We contacted a noted educator from the University of Utah who checked with Dr. James Bemis, Executive Director of the Higher Commission of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and found that Pacific Northwestern University was only a "diploma mill of the worst kind." We confirmed this report by calling the U.S. Postal Department in Seattle and the King County Attorney's Office. (More information concerning this matter will be sent to the reader free upon request.)

In the letter of March 11-12, 1980 we made it clear to Mr. Nelson what we would do if his claim concerning a doctor's degree could not be substantiated:

**"It is with great sorrow that I sit down to write this letter to you. I feel, however, as the publisher of four of your booklets I am obligated to find out the truth about certain matters that have recently come to my attention....While it is true that I have never published anything about you having a Dr.'s degree, any statements you have made about this matter subsequent to the translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri could have a tendency to reflect upon my integrity in the eyes of many people.**

**"If I were to overlook misrepresentation on the part of non-Mormon writers I would be operating on a double standard. You will no doubt remember what we wrote about 'Dr. Webb'—the great defender of the Mormon faith. It is summed up in our new book, *The Changing World of Mormonism*, page 333:**

**"The other Egyptologists whom Spalding contacted rendered a similar verdict—i.e., the 'Book of Abraham' was a work of Joseph Smith's imagination and had no basis in fact.... Mormon historian B.H. Roberts admitted that there 'were no Egyptian scholars in the church of the Latter-day Saints who could make an effective answer to the conclusions of the eight scholars who in various ways pronounced against the correctness of Joseph Smith's translation...' (A Comprehensive History of of [sic] the Church, vol.2, p. 139).**

**"The Mormons, however, did receive help from a writer who called himself 'Robert C. Webb, Ph.D.' Fawn M. Brodie claimed that Robert C. Webb's real name was 'J.E. Homans,' and that he was 'neither an Egyptologist nor a Ph.D.' (No Man Knows My History, 1957, p. 175). From this it is rather obvious that the Mormon leaders were guilty of deception. Strange as it may seem, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, confirmed the fact that Robert C. Webb was no Ph.D: 'He wrote a wonderful book,...under the name of Robert C. Webb, Ph.D. I regret that the brethren let him put down Robert C. Webb, Ph.D., because he was no Ph.D.' (Pearl of Great Price Conference, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p.9). On page 6 of the same publication, Dr. Sperry stated that Dr. Webb's 'real name was J.C. Homans.'**

**"At any rate, the Mormon church was able to survive Spalding's attack on the 'Book of Abraham' with very little injury because church members felt that 'Dr. Webb' had answered the critics. Writing in the *Improvement Era*, April 1913, N.L. Nelson stated: 'Dr. Webb has, indeed, vindicated the prophet better than he knew himself.'**

A photograph of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for April 1980. Notice that we exposed Nelson's false claim in this issue of the *Messenger*.



to a public debate concerning the Book of Abraham, but he said he would only debate on the Dee Jay Nelson affair. We feel that this is just another attempt to avoid facing the real issue. As long as the Browns continue side-stepping the evidence against the Book of Abraham, their work will be of no real value.

### Nibley's New Book

As we indicated earlier, in 1979 Dr. Hugh Nibley claimed he was working on a new book. This book, entitled *Abraham In Egypt*, was published by Deseret Book in 1981. As in all of his other works on the subject, Dr. Nibley skirts the main issue concerning the accuracy of the translation of the Book of Abraham and returns to his old theme that the Book of Abraham bears resemblance to apocryphal writings. On page 2 of his book, Nibley admits that the Egyptologist E. A. W. Budge pointed out a possible relationship in 1913 when he commented that the Book of Abraham "is clearly based on the Bible, and some of the Old Testament apocryphal histories." Nibley, however, maintains that Joseph Smith could not have had access to these writings. Now, while it is true that Smith would not have had access to all of the apocryphal writings available today, Wesley P. Walters points out there was structural material available to him in the "popular commentaries" and other writings of his day (see *Joseph Smith Among the Egyptians*, p. 39).

In his new book, Nibley has some interesting comments concerning the charge that Joseph Smith misidentified two women as men in Facsimile No. 3:

Anyone wishing to demolish Joseph Smith's interpretation of Facsimile No. 3 with the greatest economy of effort need look no further than his designating as "King Pharaoh" and "Prince of Pharaoh" two figures so obviously female that a three-year-old child will not hesitate to identify them as such. Why then have Egyptologists not simply pointed to this ultimate absurdity and dismissed the case? Can it be that there is something peculiarly Egyptian about this strange waywardness that represents human beings as gods and men as women? We have already hinted at such a possibility in the case of Imhotep in which, to carry further, we see both his wife and mother dressed up as goddesses, the latter as Hathor herself. . . . Even more surprising, Wildung notes an instance in which "we can identify Anat [the Canaanites' version of Hathor] as 'Anat of Ramses' as a divine form of Ramses [the king] himself in the shape of a goddess." . . . There you have it—the lady Hathor, who is Figure 2 in Facsimile No. 3, may be none other than Pharaoh himself. The two ladies in the Facsimile, Figures 2 and 4, will be readily identified by any novice as the goddesses Hathor and Maat. They seem indispensable to scenes having to do with the transmission of power and authority. The spectacle of men, kings and princes at that, dressed as women calls for a brief notice on a fundamental issue peculiar to the Egyptians and the Book of Abraham, namely, the tension between the claims of patriarchal vs. matriarchal succession. (*Abraham In Egypt*, p. 133)

But would "King Pharaoh" and the "Prince of Pharaoh" actually dress up as the goddesses who embodied their majesty at the moment of transition? Ask them . . . It was no doubt the worldwide "primitive" practice of masking and miming, as natural and as spontaneous as dancing, of which it was a part, that suggested such things. "Because there was no real identification or fusion," E. Hornung explains, "the god could with impunity take any form or sex he pleased without disturbing anyone." . . . Isis as Neith was "two-thirds man and one-third woman," making it possible for her to fuse with Chnum, the Creator, both male and female elements being indispensable to any act of creation. . . . This woman comes forth wearing the familiar white crown but adding a beard to her costume, thus "showing her androgenous character." (*Ibid.*, pp. 139-40)

As far as translation is concerned, Dr. Nibley's *Abraham In Egypt* is very disappointing. He does confirm that the words "Grant that the Ba of the Osiris Sheshonq live" appear in Facsimile

No. 2 (p. 64), but he does not provide a translation of the important hieroglyphs found on the original papyrus used for Facsimile No. 1. After fourteen years he has still only provided a translation of two of the ten translatable fragments of the Joseph Smith Papyri.

In his booklet, *What Mormonism Isn't—A response to the Research of Jerald and Sandra Tanner*, Ian Barber leans heavily upon Dr. Nibley's research. He tries to excuse Nibley's errors by saying: "With a writer as prolific as Nibley, in fields where new information is constantly emerging, some of it involving certain aspects of near and contemporary historical processes which are not his forte, a somewhat uncrystallised position is understandable in preliminary analysis (Although some of the contradictions Walters and the Tanners suggest are pretty pedantic, and some are just plain misunderstandings of Nibley's often tongue-in-cheek style)" (p. G-1). Mr. Barber says that Nibley "admits that in initially dealing with the Joseph Smith papyri, 'I frankly skirmished and sparred for time,' while gathering further expertise." Barber, however, believes that Nibley "has certainly now arrived." We feel that since Nibley now admits that he "skirmished and sparred for time" when he was put forth as the church's great authority on the Egyptian language, there is no reason to trust his work today. There is, in fact, every reason to believe that he is still stalling and that his great display of learning is only a smoke screen to cover up his inability to face the real issues.

In any case, Ian Barber is very impressed with Nibley's research on apocryphal writings. His views on the Joseph Smith Papyrus seem to be very liberal, and he is even willing to concede that two of the facsimiles in the Book of Abraham are from the Book of Breathing:

Facsimiles 1 and 3 it is now known belong to a late Egyptian document, the English name of which is commonly translated as the Book of Breathing . . . while facsimile number 2 is an example of a literary document known as a hypocephalus. . . . facsimile number one was found to be a textual component of the Sensen Papyrus—a late Egyptian funerary document. . . . it is apparent that Joseph and his scribes quite arbitrarily attempted to restore missing portions of the facsimiles when copying them. This involved the insertion of writing (as in the hieratic in the rim of Facsimile 2) as well as at least one pictorial representation (ie. Re in the solar bark in Facsimile 3, Figure 2) from the Book of the Dead fragments also in Joseph's possession. . . . Along with the clear evidence that the facsimiles have been altered in copy, I submit that Joseph Smith did not believe that he possessed Abraham's original writings, but rather reproductions that had been altered and perhaps placed in an entirely new context. The story that the Egyptologists . . . have given us describes this new context and not necessarily Abraham's world view some 4000 years ago. . . .

In their form within the Sensen Papyrus Facsimiles 1 and 3 date to around the time of Christ. The Sensen papyrus is very correctly a funerary document often placed under the head of the deceased in the same manner as the rounded hypocephalus. In this context the theme of the facsimiles relates to the mysteries of the Egyptian God Osiris . . .

Facsimile 1 has the candidate (identified by the texts recovered in 1967 as Hor) pictured in the guise of Osiris, for each candidate to prove successful had to become identified with the God of the Underworld. Hor is being embalmed on the lion couch (figures 2 and 4) by Anubis (figure 3) the type of the priest, while underneath the four canopic deities (figures 5-8) in the form of vases await as repositories of the soft viscera of Hor. . . . Facsimile three is the end of the journey, as Hor (figure 5) is guided by Anubis (figure 6) into the presence of Osiris (seated on the throne, figure 1) with Hathor-Isis and Maat representing truth and justice, the principles by which Hor is to be judged.

Now let me hasten to add that this very same scene is absolutely unoriginal, being duplicated in hundreds of instances extending back to the time of Abraham, and although Hor has had the two facsimiles prepared for his "breathing permit" there is absolutely no reason to preclude their existence in different

contexts and at different times, certainly extending back to 2000 BC. . . . (As I have already noted, the free manner in which Joseph Smith took Re in Figure 3 from the Book of the Dead fragments in his possession and placed the figure in what was a gap in the hypocephalus suggests that the prophet understood that the vignettes originally explaining aspects of the Book of Abraham had not all ended up in the same form after several thousand years). . . .

It is my personal opinion that Joseph didn't actually own the Abraham text, however. . . . I believe, that Joseph only refers to having the "writings of Abraham and Joseph" in his possession, and I believe that as with his 1842 comments, he is speaking broadly and referring to the facsimiles and not to an actual text. . . . I believe that God revealed to him further details (and the full name) of an Abraham text perhaps safely stored elsewhere. . . . In my opinion the facsimiles and Egyptian material served as revelatory aids for the prophet to prepare him intellectually and spiritually for the direct revelation of the Book of Abraham text. Apart from what was divinely revealed in this context, therefore I believe that Joseph Smith did not know Egyptian, as the Kirtland Egyptian alphabet document seems to prove. (*What Mormonism Isn't*, Auckland, New Zealand, 1981, pp. F-1, 2, 5, 8, 9)

While we are encouraged to find Mr. Barber admitting that the facsimiles are from the Book of Breathing, we do not understand how he can believe that "Joseph didn't actually own the Abraham text." We have previously shown that this idea is in direct contradiction to the statements of Joseph Smith himself (see *History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 236, 350-51; vol. 6, p. 476; *Pearl of Great Price*, p. 29).

Although we feel that Ian Barber has not really given an adequate answer to the problems we have raised, we feel that he has succeeded in his endeavor to "remain above vitriolic attack." In this regard his booklet stands in sharp contrast to the Browns' attempted rebuttal. The reader will remember that the Browns accused us of deception in the Dee Jay Nelson affair. Ian Barber, on the other hand, commended us for our actions in the matter:

To their credit, Jerald and Sandra Tanner have acknowledged such details in a publicly circulated letter, are not reprinting Nelson's titles, and have deleted references to him from current works (such as *The Changing World of Mormonism*). Such information is not directly relevant to the arguments for or against the Book of Abraham, of course, and is mentioned only because I have made the mistake of calling Nelson an Egyptologist as he had styled himself. (*What Mormonism Isn't*, p. F-15)

### More on the God Min

On page F-5 of *What Mormonism Isn't*, Ian Barber concedes that the god shown in Facsimile No. 2, Figure 7, is an "ithyphallic deity":

The seated god Min in Figure 7, (Joseph Smith: "God sitting upon his throne.") revealing through the heavens "key words of the priesthood" (represented by the Udjat eye as I have suggested) is an ithyphallic deity. The Tanners call this "a pornographic representation," and remark that it is "hard to believe that Abraham would draw an obscene picture of God." (*Answering Dr. Clendinning*, pp. 19-20). However, as a careful analysis of Joseph's explanations to Facsimile 2 has indicated, such does not appear to be Abraham's work, but rather that which was "said by the Egyptians" with the figures being "made to represent God" after their unique understanding. For the Egyptians, the ritual portrayal of the phallus was not understood to be obscene, but rather symbolic of the divine, regenerative powers, and it was even respectfully mummified on occasion. The Tanners are correct in implying that such an emphasis would be inappropriate in our contemporary Western culture, and that the explicit portrayal offended Mormon sensibilities is evidenced by the fact that the phallus has been removed from several printings of the *Pearl of Great Price*, including current versions. In any case, this is clearly the work of someone with an Egyptian understanding trying to correlate Abraham's astronomical/theological truths with the most appropriate Egyptian deity and not to be credited (or blamed) on Abraham.

We do not feel that this facsimile can be divorced from the Book of Abraham. The title of it, which is printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, page 34, reads as follows: "A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham."

In his new book *Abraham In Egypt*, Hugh Nibley has some interesting comments concerning the god Min:

As the supreme sex symbol of gods and men, Min behaves with shocking promiscuity, which is hardly relieved by its ritual nature. . . . But his promiscuity went far beyond that. "The Egyptians," wrote Plutarch, "are accustomed to call Horus 'Min' meaning visible," referring to the symbol of reproduction publicly paraded at his festival. . . . The Greeks identified him with the lustful Pan . . . His sacred plants were aphrodisiacal . . . and he is everywhere represented as indulging in incestuous relationships with those of his immediate family; he had the most numerous and varied religious entourage of all the gods, consisting mostly of his huge harem . . . (*Abraham In Egypt*, p. 210)

That Joseph Smith would identify this personage in Facsimile No. 2 as "God sitting upon his throne" shows a complete lack of inspiration. The reader will remember that the hieroglyphs which appear on the original papyrus which was printed as Facsimile No. 1 mention "Min Bull-of-his-Mother" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 116). Dr. Nibley has never dared to translate these hieroglyphs, but on page 211 of his new book he speaks of Min's title, "Bull of his Mother":

The rites of Min were secret, and the Chief Priest was "the Director of the Mysteries of the god in his character of Kamutef," literally the Bull of His Mother. . . . His special bull titles always denote his too-intimate relationships with his mother. . . . For he is the divine beast, the irrepressible rampant bull ready for anything. In this regard he is the double of Seth, . . . Their outstanding characteristic, as Te Velde describes it, is their insistence on going "beyond the bounds" of discretion and morality, completely unrestrained in their appetites and passions. . . .

The whip that the Min-images hold with upraised arm is always viewed as a fertility symbol . . . some Egyptologists have maintained that it signifies that Min took advantage of his mother by brute force, seizing the matriarchal rule of the land by violence and incest—a tradition also associated with Ham and Nimrod on counts of both brutality and gross immorality. . . . What suggested that was his commonest epithet, Ka-mut-ef, "Bull of his Mother," the title that the youthful successor to the throne went by at the coronation, by virtue of which he mounts the throne with his mother's approval and as her champion.

### Return to Old Facsimiles

For a number of years we criticized the Mormon Church for reproducing altered facsimiles in the *Pearl of Great Price*. Even Mormon scholars, including Dr. Hugh Nibley, were disturbed about this matter. Earlier in this chapter, we indicated that pressure had been exerted and that there was a rumor that the church would revert back to using the original woodcuts prepared for the *Times and Seasons* in 1842. In the new "triple combination" of the Book of Mormon, *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*, which was just published in 1981, we find that the church has yielded to the criticism and has gone back to using the original facsimiles. The *Ensign*, October 1981, page 17, makes this comment about the change:

. . . the reproduction of the facsimiles in the *Pearl of Great Price* had lost some of their clarity over the years, so the reproductions in the new triple were made from earlier versions for improved accuracy.

An examination of Facsimile No. 2, Figure 7, reveals that what the Mormon apologist Ian Barber refers to as the "explicit portrayal" of the god Min, which "offended Mormon sensibilities," has been restored.



## 23. Old Testament Practices

There are several Old Testament practices that have found their way into Mormonism; one of these is the practice of cursing one's enemies. Both the Bible and the Book of Mormon state that this practice was to cease with the coming of Christ. Now that Christ has come, we are supposed to rely upon him and let him take all hate out of our hearts. If we have no hate in our hearts, we will have no desire to curse our enemies or wish any evil upon them. The words that Jesus spoke in the Sermon on the Mount are also recorded in the Book of Mormon:

And behold it is written also, that thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy;

But behold I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you; (3 Nephi 12:43-44)

In the Bible we read as follows:

Bless them which persecute you;

**Bless, and curse not.** (Romans 12:14)

In spite of these clear teachings in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which sanctioned the cursing of ones enemies:

And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you . . . ye shall **curse them**:

And whomsoever **ye curse**, I will curse, **and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies.** (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 103:24-25)

### Wine and Curses

The cursing of enemies was actually carried out in the Kirtland Temple. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith gave this account:

Now I will illustrate this still further. The Lord did actually reveal one principle to us there, and that one principle was apparently so simple, and so foolish in their eyes, that a great many apostatized over it, because it was so contrary to their notions and views. It was this, after the people had fasted all day, they sent out and got wine and bread, and blessed them, and distributed them to the multitude, that is, to the whole assembly of the brethren, and they ate and drank, and prophesied, and bore testimony, and continued so to do until some of the High Council of Missouri stepped into the stand, and, as righteous Noah did when he awoke from his wine, commenced to **curse their enemies**. You never felt such a shock go through any house or company in the world as went through that. There was almost a rebellion because men would get up and **curse** their enemies; . . . Some of the brethren thought it was best to apostatize, . . . The Lord dared not then reveal anything more; He had **given us all we could swallow**; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 216)

One man, William Harris, who left the Mormon Church, made this comment concerning the cursing:

In the evening, they met for the endowment. The fast was then broken by eating light wheat bread, and drinking as much wine as they saw proper. Smith knew well how to infuse the spirit which they expected to receive; so he encouraged the brethren to drink freely, telling them that the wine was consecrated, and would not

make them drunk. As may be supposed, they drank to the purpose. After this they began to prophecy, pronouncing blessings upon their friends, and **curses** upon their enemies. If I should be so unhappy as to go to the regions of the damned, I never expect to hear language more awful, or more becoming the infernal pit, than was uttered that night. The curses were pronounced principally upon the clergy of the present day, and upon the Jackson county mob in Missouri. After spending the night in alternative blessings and cursings, the meeting adjourned. (*Mormonism Portrayed*, by William Harris, Warsaw, Ill., 1841, pp. 31-32)

When Joseph Smith wrote the *History of the Church*, he told of the cursing in the Kirtland Temple; however, his words have been censored in modern editions of the *History of the Church*. In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 15, page 727, Joseph Smith's words were given as follows:

The brethren began to prophesy upon each other's heads, and **cursings** upon the enemies of Christ, who inhabit Jackson county, Missouri;

In modern editions of the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith's words have been censored to read as follows:

The brethren began to prophesy upon each other's heads, and upon the enemies of Christ, who inhabited Jackson county, Missouri; . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 431)

Notice that the word "cursings" has been removed from this statement, making it appear that they just prophesied concerning the inhabitants of Jackson County, instead of cursing them.

Benjamin F. Johnson made this comment: "In Missouri we were taught to 'pray for our enemies, that God would damn them, and give us power to **kill them**'" (Letter from Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, 1903, mimeographed copy).

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated: "As I remarked, we were then very pious, and we **prayed the Lord to kill the mob**" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 107).

In the *Millennial Star*, vol. 19, page 360, Joseph Smith was quoted as saying: "Preached on the hill near the Temple, . . . and **pronounced a curse on** the merchants and the rich, who would not assist in building it." When this was reprinted in the *History of the Church* it was changed to read: "Preached on the hill near the Temple, . . . and **reproved** the merchants and the rich who would not assist in building it" (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 601).

Some other statements concerning the cursing of enemies were left uncensored in modern printings of the *History of the Church*. Joseph Smith made the following statement in 1842: ". . . to the apostates and enemies, I will give a lashing every opportunity, and I will **curse** them" (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 139).

In the *History of the Church*, vol. 6, page 346, we find the following:

President Brigham Young also spoke very pointedly and very truly about Dr. Foster and others. Dr. Foster was **cursed**, and the people cried "AMEN."

On September 20, 1846, Hosea Stout reported the following



has devised for the good of man correspond with the plans and views which men devise for their own good. Now if the Lord had considered it wisdom, on the day of the Kirtland endowment and great solemn assembly, to come forward and reveal to the children of men the facts that are laid down plainly in the Bible, and had told them that, without the law of sealing, no man could be exalted to a throne in the celestial kingdom, that is, without he had a woman by his side; and that no woman could be exalted in the celestial world, without she was exalted with a man at her head; that the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord; had He revealed this simple sentiment, up would have jumped some man, saying, "What! got to have a woman sealed to me in order to be saved, in order to be exalted to thrones, dominions, and eternal increase?" "Yes." "I do not believe a word of it, I cannot stand that, for I never intended to get married, I do not believe in any of this nonsense." At the same time, perhaps somebody else might have had faith to receive it. Again up jumps somebody else, "Brother Joseph, I have had two wives in my lifetime, cannot I have them both in eternity?" "No." If he had said yes, perhaps we should all have apostatized at once.

Now I will illustrate this still further. The Lord did actually reveal one principle to us there, and that one principle was apparently so simple, and so foolish in their eyes, that a great many apostatized over it, because it was so contrary to their notions and views. It was this, after the people had fasted all day, they sent out and got wine and bread, and blessed them, and distributed them to the multitude, that is, to the whole assembly of the brethren, and they ate and drank, and prophesied, and bore testimony, and continued so to do until some of the

High Council of Missouri stepped into the stand, and, as righteous Noah did when he awoke from his wine, commenced to curse their enemies. You never felt such a shock go through any house or company in the world as went through that. There was almost a rebellion because men would get up and curse their enemies; although they could remember well that it is written that Noah cursed his own grandson, and that God recognized that curse to such an extent that, at this day, millions of his posterity are consigned to perpetual servitude.

Many men are foolish enough to think that they can thwart the power of God, and can liberate the sons of Ham from that curse before its time has expired. Some of the brethren thought it was best to apostatize, because the spirit of cursing was with men who had been driven from Missouri by mob violence. Yet every word that they prophesied has been fulfilled. They prophesied that the bones of many of those murderers should bleach on the prairie, and that birds should pick out their eyes, and beasts devour their flesh. Men who have traversed the plains of Mexico, California, Nebraska, and Kansas, have often seen the fulfilment of that prophecy in the most marvellous manner. We have seen their names upon trees, on the heads of old trunks, and bits of boards; the names of men that I knew, and I knew just as well, in the Kirtland Temple, what would be their fate, as I know now. But that tried us, some of us were awfully tried about it. The Lord dared not then reveal anything more; He had given us all we could swallow; and persecution raged around us to such an extent that we were obliged to forsake our beautiful Temple, and flee into the State of Missouri.

He there put us into another sieve, and sifted us good, and we were then

composed of links; and is there not room to put on more links, to extend the chain, so as to reach to the bottom of the deepest waters? Yes. You must become a link on that chain and strengthen it, or you will be lost.

If you prefer the figure of a cable made of flax, sea-grass, or hemp, go to work and increase the strength of it, and tie yourselves to the Priesthood and to the man that you are connected with, or let there be a final conclusion to dissolve the partnership, and go somewhere else. I do not want half-hearted characters to labour with me. Poor miserable creatures; they are not fit for anything. Some of them have been in the house of Israel from fifteen to twenty years, and are following the Devil. Are there any such characters in this congregation? Yes, several, both men and women. There are men and women ready to oppose brother Brigham in what he said last Sunday. He told the truth of God in every word he spoke. Do you suppose that he is so unwise to say a thing which he does not know to be true? He understands what he speaks, and he looks before he jumps, and God Almighty will lead him straight, and he will never stumble—no, never, from this time forth; nor will you, brother Hyde, if you will follow him; neither will any other man.

There are poor, miserable curses in our midst; and there is not a thing spoken of but what there are men and women who will go and tell them every thing that is said, (thank God for that!) and tell more than what is true. There are men and women in this congregation of that stamp. I wish I had some stones; I want to pelt your cursed heads, for you lie like hell. Are you valiant to stand by the work of God, and by your brethren? If you are not, you had better put out, you poor curses.

There is a poor curse who has written the bigger part of those lies which

have been printed in the States; and I curse him, in the name of Israel's God, and by the Priesthood and authority of Jesus Christ; and the disease that is in him shall sap and dry up the fountain of life and eat him up. Some of you may think that he has not the disease I allude to; but he is full of pox from the crown of his head to the point of its beginning. That is the curse of that man; it shall be so, and all Israel shall say, Amen. [The vast congregation of Saints said, "Amen."] He is laying plans to destroy us, and is striving with his might to stir up the Government of the United States and the President to send troops here to bring us into collision and destroy this pure people—man, woman, and child. May God Almighty curse such men, [Voices all through the congregation: "Amen!"] and women, and every damned thing there is upon the earth that opposes this people. I tell you I feel to curse them to-day. [Voice: "And they shall be cursed."] Yes, they will be; and the Devil shall have full possession of every man and woman that raises the tongue to sympathise with those poor curses. I ask no odds of them, no more than I do of the dirt I walk on; for if it was not there I could not walk upon it. Now, go home and sympathise, all of you who wish to.

I tell you that the most of this people are a God-blessed people, as Amasa says; and you shall ever be blessed, with your wives and children after you, for ever. And I bless you in the name of Israel's God, and you shall be blessed.

Are there any poor, miserable devils in our midst? I cannot step into the street but what some poor, miserable curse is ready to pounce on me if he dare. Tell about your religion! Shame on you! Go home and put on sackcloth and ashes, and repent of your meannesses. Are such kind of characters here? Yes, in this congregation.



in his diary:

Brigham said that he did not feel very religious now . . . he said that instead of praying for our enemies he would pray that our enemies & all dissenters might be sent to hell cross lots. (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1833-1861*, vol. 1, 1964, p. 195)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in a sermon delivered in the Tabernacle in 1858:

. . . they were so damnable, mean, and cowardly as to make war on the sick and infirm that could not leave. The poor, miserable, cursed, damned scoundrels, I pray that they may go to hell. [The whole congregation shouted “Amen.”] (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 122)

Heber C. Kimball, First Councilor to Brigham Young, often cursed his enemies from the pulpit. He even went so far as to curse the President of the United States. Below are some extracts from his sermons:

There are men and women in this congregation of that stamp. I wish I had some stones; I want to pelt your cursed heads, for you lie like hell. . . .

There is a poor curse who has written the bigger part of those lies which have been printed in the States; and **I curse him, in the name of Israel’s God, and by the priesthood and authority of Jesus Christ**; and the disease that is in him shall sap and dry up the fountain of life and eat him up. Some of you may think that he has not the disease I allude to; but he is full of pox from the crown of his head to the point of its beginning. That is the **curse** of that man; it shall be so, and all Israel shall say, Amen. [The vast congregation of Saints said, “Amen.”] . . . May God Almighty **curse** such men, [Voices all through the congregation: “Amen!”] and women, and every damned thing there is upon the earth that opposes this people. I tell you I feel to **curse** them to-day. [Voice: “And they shall be cursed.”] Yes, they will be; and the Devil shall have full possession of every man and woman that raises the tongue to sympathise with those poor curses. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 32)

Will the President that sits in the chair of state be tipped from his seat? Yes, he will die an untimely death, and God Almighty will **curse** him; and He will also curse his successor, if he takes the same stand; and he will curse all those that are his coadjutors, and all who sustain him. . . . God Almighty will **curse them**, and **I curse them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**, according to my calling; and if there is any virtue in my calling, they shall be **cursed**, every man that lifts his heel against us from this day forth. [Voices: “Amen.”] (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 133)

And may God Almighty **curse** our enemies. [Voices: “Amen.”] I feel to **curse my enemies**: and when God won’t bless them, I do not think he will ask me to bless them. If I did, it would be to put the poor curses to **death** who have brought death and destruction on me and my brethren . . . Poor rotten curses! And the **President of the United States**, inasmuch as he has turned against us . . . he **shall be cursed, in the name of Israel’s God**, and he shall not rule over this nation, . . . and I **curse him** and all his coadjutors in his cursed deeds, **in the name of Jesus and by the authority of the holy priesthood**; and all Israel shall say amen. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 95)

I feel, in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ and my calling, to **curse** that man that lifts his heel against my God and his cause and kingdom; and the curse of God shall be upon him; the angels of God shall chase him, and he shall have no peace. The **President** of the United States and his coadjutors that have caused this thing shall never rest again, for **they shall go to hell**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 38)

John D. Lee reported in his journal that Brigham Young made the following remarks:

. . . Pres. B. Young arose & said...that Miller, the Omaha & Ota agent was stirring them up to commit depredations on our cattle & for this he cursed him in the name of Iseral[s] god with curruption & rotenous of Bones & that he should go Down to Hell & all the Saints

Said Amen. . . . He then cu[r]sed all the gentiles that inhabited the Pottowatony Lands & that lived in the state of Mo. with the Same curse . . . (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, vol. 1, p. 27)

In Romans 12:20 we read: “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; . . .” According to Charles L. Walker, Brigham Young taught just the opposite:

Sun., Apr. 28. Went up to the Tabernacle . . . Bro. Brigham . . . said that those who sell their provisions to feed our enemies either man or women should be **cursed**, and said he, **I curse them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ** and the congregation shouted, Amen. (“Diary of Charles L. Walker,” 1853–1902, Excerpts typed, p. 13)

Jesus said, “love your enemies,” but the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith remarked:

You must know that I love my friends, and God Almighty knows that I **do hate my enemies**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 110)

Jesus said that we should pray for our enemies. Heber C. Kimball prayed for his enemies in the following manner:

Pray for them? Yes, **I pray that God Almighty would send them to hell**. Some say across lots; but I would like to have them take a round about road, and be as long as they can be in going there. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 89)

## Animal Sacrifice

Animal sacrifice after the death of Christ is another Old Testament practice that has found a place in Mormon beliefs. It was Joseph Smith himself who taught this doctrine:

. . . it is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when the Great Sacrifice . . . was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of sacrifice in future: but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the priesthood, or with the Prophets. . . .

**These sacrifices**, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, . . . be fully **restored and attended to** in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 211)

In the *Journal of Wandle Mace* the following is found:

Joseph told them to go to Kirtland, and cleanse and purify a certain room in the Temple, that they **must kill a lamb and offer a sacrifice unto the Lord** which should prepare them to ordain Willard Richards a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (“*Journal of Wandle Mace*,” page 32, microfilmed copy at the Brigham Young University Library)

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, still upholds the doctrine of animal sacrifice after the death of Christ. He states as follows:

Now in the nature of things, the law of **sacrifice** will have to be **restored**, . . . Sacrifice by the **shedding of blood** was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity **will have to be restored**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 94)

It is interesting to note that even though the Mormon Church teaches animal sacrifice after the death of Christ, they cannot find any support for this doctrine in the Book of Mormon. In fact, the Book of Mormon condemns it in the strongest terms. In 3 Nephi 9:19 Jesus was supposed to have said the following:

And ye shall offer up unto me no more **the shedding of blood**; yea, **your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings**.

There are many other Old Testament practices in Mormonism. This should be sufficient, however, to convince the reader that the Mormon Church leaders have sometimes taken the teachings of the Old Testament in preference to the teachings of Christ.



## 24. Mormon Scriptures and the Bible

The Mormon Church accepts the Bible as one of its four standard works. The Book of Mormon quotes large portions of the King James Version of the Bible, and Joseph Smith's other revelations are filled with material from the Bible. Since the King James Version was printed about 200 years before Joseph Smith was even born, it is in no way dependent upon Mormon scriptures. Joseph Smith's works, on the other hand, could not stand if the Bible were proven false, for many of his revelations are built upon the historical accuracy of the Bible, even though they may differ in doctrinal content. Nevertheless, many Mormons, seemingly ignorant of the fact that they are undermining the whole foundation of their own church, have made some vicious attacks upon the Bible. Most of these attacks are not based upon sound historical evidence or methods. In fact, they reveal a lack of knowledge concerning Bible history and problems. Heber C. Snell, a former LDS Institute Director, has made these observations regarding the status of the Bible in the Mormon Church:

In 1830, when the Church was organized, it had two sacred books, the Bible and the Book of Mormon, . . .

From occupying the status of the first of two books of scripture in the Church the Bible became, in the course of about two decades, one of four. There are indications that it has now declined to the position of third or even fourth place among the Church's sacred books. . . .

This change of status of the Bible seems to be well attested by the relatively little attention given it by Church speakers and writers. . . . An examination of the *Improvement Era* Master Index, . . . gave thirty-six titles under Bible, or 137 pages as compared with 124 titles and 725 pages under Book of Mormon. . . . My work, as a teacher of the Bible in L.D.S. collegiate institutions over a period of a quarter of a century, has failed to convince me that our people have made much advancement in biblical knowledge. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1967, pp. 56-57)

### Paine's Influence

Davis Bitton has this to say concerning the "Mormonism of the nineteenth century":

For the Mormons the Bible was only one among several scriptures; its message was often described as applicable to a certain time and place in the past, with modern problems requiring new revelation; it was seen as having been corrupted, distorted, and inaccurately translated, . . . The Mormons could scarcely be charged with Bibliolatry, and it is perhaps understandable that Protestant ministers saw Mormon criticism of the Bible to be essentially the same as that of the rationalists. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 113)

In a footnote on the same page, Davis Bitton states: "J. B. Turner, . . . argues rather convincingly that Mormons were so convinced of the inadequacy of the Bible and the apostate condition of Christianity that, if they ever abandoned Mormonism, they were almost inevitably agnostic toward all religion." Although Davis Bitton does not feel that Mormons were as radical in their criticism of the Bible as some others, he does feel that "rationalists such as Thomas Paine had furnished valuable ammunition" for the Mormon attack on the accuracy of the Bible.

Thomas Paine's book, *The Age of Reason*, undoubtedly had an influence on Mormon thinking. This book, written in the 1790's,

caused a great deal of controversy and was therefore well known in Joseph Smith's time. While Paine was a brilliant man and raised a number of important questions in his book, he wrote with such sarcasm that his work was very offensive to a Christian. In one place he talks of "the stupid Bible of the church, that teacheth man nothing" (*The Age of Reason*, reprinted by The Thomas Paine Foundation, New York, p. 189).

Joseph Smith has been accused of reading Thomas Paine's book before he wrote the Book of Mormon. Now, while this is possible, it must be conceded that the Book of Mormon for the most part appears to be diametrically opposed to Paine's ideas. For instance, Paine claimed that the first five books of the Bible were not written by Moses. The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, states that they are "the five books of Moses, . . ." (1 Nephi 5:11). The Book of Mormon does contain a rather subtle attack upon the Bible, but whether this could be linked to Paine's book would be debatable.

Thomas Paine was very critical of the account of the creation found in Genesis. The first verse of this account reads: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Paine made this comment concerning this matter:

The manner in which the account opens shows it to be traditionary . . . Moses does not take it upon himself by introducing it with the formality that he uses on other occasions, such as that of saying, "**The Lord spake unto Moses, saying.**"

Why it has been called the Mosaic account of the Creation, I am at a loss to conceive. (*The Age of Reason*, p. 20)

An examination of Joseph Smith's "inspired" translation of this portion of Scripture, leads us to believe that he was answering Thomas Paine's argument:

...the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: . . . in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 2:1)

Notice that Joseph Smith adds the exact words that Thomas Paine said should be in Genesis to prove that it was written by Moses. The Mormon scholar Richard L. Anderson has recently brought forth some new information which shows that the Smith family were well aware of Paine's book. According to Dr. Anderson, Lucy Smith's manuscript for her book contained some information which never appeared in the published version. He states:

. . . about 1803 Asael strongly disapproved of Methodism, . . . Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 54. Lucy's preliminary manuscript here adds the further detail of Asael Smith's demonstrating disapproval of the Methodist interest of his son Joseph Smith, Sr. Asael "came to the door one day and threw Tom Paine's *Age of Reason* into the house and angrily bade him read that until he believed it. (*Joseph Smith's New England Heritage*, 1971, p. 207)

Thomas Paine felt that the Bible could not be trusted as "the word of God" because of the problems involved in translation:

But how was Jesus Christ to make anything known to all nations? He could speak but one language, which was Hebrew, . . . and as to translations, every man

who knows anything of languages knows that it is impossible to translate from one language to another, not only without losing a great part of the original, but frequently of mistaking the sense; . . . human language, . . . is incapable of being used as an universal means of unchangeable and uniform information, and therefore it is not the means that God useth in manifesting himself universally to man. (*The Age of Reason*, pp. 31-32)

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith also cast doubt upon the translation of the Bible, for in “The Articles of Faith,” he wrote:

8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God. (*Pearl of Great Price*, The Articles of Faith)

In his pamphlet, “Spiritual Gifts,” the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt used arguments which resemble the ideas of Thomas Paine:

God gave many revelations to Hebrew Prophets, in the Hebrew language. . . . The same revelations have been translated many times by different authors: . . . These clashing translations are circulated among the people, as the words of God, when, in reality they are the words of translators; and words too, selected by their own human wisdom. . . . the Bible in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Danish, and indeed, in all the languages of the earth, except the original in which it was given, is **not** the word of God, but the word of uninspired translators. . . . so far as the uninspired translators and the people are concerned, **no part** of the Bible can, with certainty, be known by them to be the word of God.

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

It is very interesting to compare the words of Thomas Paine with those uttered by the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt half a century later. In *The Age of Reason*, Thomas Paine wrote:

It is a matter altogether of uncertainty to us whether such of the writings as now appear under the name of the Old and New Testaments are in the same state in which those collectors say they found them, or whether they added, altered, abridged, or dressed them up. . . . they decided by vote which of the books out of the collection they had made should be the word of God, and which should not. (*The Age of Reason*, p. 18)

. . . the presumption is that the books . . . ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and that they are impositions. . . . they have been manufactured, as the books of the Old Testament have been, by other persons than those whose names they bear. (*Ibid.*, pp. 150-151)

There is not the least shadow of evidence of who the persons were that wrote them, nor at what time they were written; . . . They decided by vote, . . . which of those writings, out of the collection they had made, should be the word of God, and which should not. (*Ibid.*, pp. 165-166)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these comments in a pamphlet published in the 1850’s:

Many Protestants say they take the Bible as their only rule of faith: . . . What evidence have they that the book of Matthew was inspired of God, or any other of the books of the New Testament? The only evidence they have is tradition. . . . If it could be demonstrated by tradition, that every part of each book of the Old and New Testament, was, in its original, actually written by inspiration, still it cannot be determined that there is one single true copy of those originals now in

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

While we would expect an open enemy to Christianity like Thomas Paine to make the statements he did about the Bible, it is quite shocking to find a man who professed to be a Christian making such an attack upon the Bible. The Apostle Pratt’s statement that the Bible may have been changed so much that we can’t even rely upon one verse sounds very strange in light of the fact that the Book of Mormon quotes hundreds of verses from the Bible. In almost all cases these verses carry the same meaning as they do in the Bible. This alone should be sufficient evidence to show the Mormons that Orson Pratt was wrong in implying that we don’t know “that even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now” as it did in the original. Thus it is plain to see that the Bible cannot be discredited without casting a shadow of doubt on the Book of Mormon also. If the Bible is all wrong, then the Book of Mormon is also.

The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen is more tactful than Pratt in his criticism of the Bible. Although he claims that portions were removed from the Bible, the identical wording of scriptures found in the King James Version and the Book of Mormon has forced him to believe that “the Lord did have a hand in the translation of the King James version”:

The Book of Mormon gives many detailed quotations from the records of Laban, incidentally, giving irrefutable evidence of the accuracy of the King James version, even though much of the scripture as given originally **is now missing**. . . .

Quotations from ancient Jewish prophets appearing in the Book of Mormon are the most correct Old Testament passages in existence today. They were copied onto the gold plates directly from the plates of brass, and translated by the gift and power of God as a part of the Book of Mormon.

And yet—these passages resemble the King James translation more than any other Bible version.

This gives reason to believe that indeed the Lord did have a hand in the translation of the King James version, . . .

The remainder of the Ten Commandments might be compared similarly. Almost word for word, the King James translation harmonizes with the Book of Mormon account, indicating that there was an element beyond scholarship attending the preparation of the King James translation. The guidance of the Almighty must have been there in rich measure. . . .

The harmony . . . is a great tribute to the accuracy of the King James Version. . . .

Is not this similarity of language on the part of the Lord, likewise a great tribute to the King James translation—not to suggest a divine endorsement of it? (*As Translated Correctly*, Salt Lake City, 1966, pp. 45, 49-53)

The Apostle Petersen feels that the quotations from Isaiah found in the Book of Mormon are “no doubt the only truly accurate quotations in existence today” (*Ibid.*, p. 54). He even goes so far as to judge the text of the Bible by the text found in the Book of Mormon:

A direct reference to baptism was plainly deleted from Isaiah 48:1. In the Old Testament this reference reads:

Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which sware by the name of the Lord . . .

And now note this same passage from the brass plates [the Book of Mormon]:

Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, **or out of the waters of baptism**, who sware by the name of the Lord. . . . (1 Nephi 20:1)

How many similar deletions were made, no one knows, because we have only fragments from the brass plates.

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. (*As Translated Correctly*, p. 67)

The Apostle Petersen certainly picked a poor example to prove his charge, for there is definite proof that the change was made in the text of the Book of Mormon rather than in the text of the Bible. As we have already shown on page 91 of this book, the text of the original 1830 printing of the Book of Mormon did not have the clause concerning baptism in it. It followed the text of the Bible:

Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, . . . (Book of Mormon, 1830 edition, p. 52)

The clause “**or out of the waters of baptism**” was added in later editions. It did not appear in the original handwritten manuscript, and even Dr. Nibley has to admit that it is an interpolation:

It is said that Parley P. Pratt suggested the phrase, . . . Isaiah did not have to tell his ancient hearers that he had the waters of baptism in mind, but it is necessary to tell it to the modern reader . . . (*Since Cumorah*, p. 151)

We do not feel that it is right to condemn the text of the Bible on the basis of this verse from the Book of Mormon, especially since the evidence proves that the verse in the Book of Mormon has been falsified (for more information on this change in the Book of Mormon see page 91 of this book).

## Evidence Compared

We have previously quoted the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt as saying that “This generation have more than one thousand times the amount of evidence to demonstrate and for ever establish the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon than they have in favor of the Bible!” On January 2, 1859, Orson Pratt spoke in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. In this discourse he stated:

. . . I will endeavor to bring forth some few of the evidences which establish the Divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

I shall compare this evidence with the evidence for the Divine authenticity of the Bible . . .

The **oldest** manuscripts of any of the books of the Old Testament at the present day date from the **twelfth** century of the Christian era. . . . We are informed by learned writers that about three centuries before Christ the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, called the Septuagint; but have we any copies of the Septuagint? No. You may

search all the archives of the nations, and you cannot find one of these ancient copies. Fifteen hundred years after this supposed translation, you find some Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. . . . The oldest manuscripts of the New Testament which this age are in possession of are supposed to date from the sixth century of the Christian era. . . . We have five manuscripts in existence that were supposed to have been written as early as the sixth or seventh century after Christ. . . .

1st. The Vatican Manuscript, noted 1, 209. . . .

2nd. The Clermont or Regises Manuscript, 2, 245. This dates from the seventh century. . . .

3rd. The Ephrem Manuscript. This also is said to have been written in the seventh century. . . .

4th. The Alexandrian Manuscript. This was probably made in the sixth century; Cassimer Odin says the tenth. . . .

5th. The Cambridge Manuscript, or Codex Bezae . . . Bishop Marsh says—“Perhaps, of all the manuscripts now extant, this is the most ancient.” . . .

All the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament known to the world differ from each other in almost every verse.

The learned admit that in the manuscripts of the New Testament alone there are no less than one hundred and thirty thousand different readings. . . . No one can tell whether even one verse of either the Old or New Testament conveys the ideas of the original author.

Just think! 130,000 different readings in the New Testament alone! . . . now let us turn to the Book of Mormon, . . .

The Book of Mormon professes to be translated not from manuscripts containing 130,000 different readings, nor by the learning of men who can render a translation as they please; neither does it profess to be translated from altered, mutilated manuscripts manufactured by monks or impostors upon Mount Athos to impose upon Christian credulity; but it was translated from the original plates themselves. . . . We defy the world to produce a true copy of the original of any book of the Bible, . . . they cannot find an original copy, or even a copy written centuries after the original writer was known to exist. . . . Cassimir Oudin says that the Alexandrian Manuscript, instead of being written in the sixth century, was made in the tenth. . . . There are men now living that have seen the original of the Book of Mormon—that have heard the voice of God. Where is there a man who has heard the voice of God testifying concerning the truth of King James’ translation? . . . the testimony establishing the truth of the Book of Mormon is far superior to that establishing the Bible in its present form. . . . any person who will carefully examine this subject will be obliged in their own hearts to say there is a hundredfold more evidence to prove the Divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon than what we have to prove the Palestine records. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 36, 37)

The Apostle Pratt’s statement that there is “more than one thousand times” the amount of evidence to prove the Book of Mormon than to prove the Bible is certainly a misrepresentation. We have already shown that the only evidence for the Book of Mormon is the testimony of the witnesses and that this testimony can not be relied upon.

As far as historical and manuscript evidence is concerned Joseph Smith’s scriptures have absolutely no foundation. The “records of the Nephites,” for instance, were never cited by any ancient writer, nor are there any known manuscripts or even fragments of manuscripts in existence older than the ones dictated by Joseph Smith in the late 1820’s. Joseph Smith’s Book of Moses is likewise without documentary support. The only handwritten manuscripts for the Book of Moses are those dictated by Joseph Smith in the early 1830’s. Since Joseph Smith’s revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* do not purport to be translations of ancient records, we would not expect to find any ancient manuscript evidence concerning them. There is one revelation, however, which purports to be a translation of a “record made on parchment by John and hidden up by himself.” This revelation is found in the *Doctrine and Covenants* as Section 7. There is no documentary support for this revelation. The Book of Abraham purports to be a translation of an ancient Egyptian papyrus. We have already shown, however, that the original papyrus is in reality the Egyptian Book of Breathings



and has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. Therefore, we have no evidence for the Book of Abraham prior to the handwritten manuscripts dictated by Joseph Smith in the 1830's. It would appear, then, that there is no documentary evidence for any of Joseph Smith's works that dates back prior to the late 1820's.

When we turn to the Bible, however, we find a great deal of evidence—some of which dates back more than 2,000 years—showing that the Bible was known and used in early times. While this in itself does not prove that the Bible is divinely inspired, it does give a person a basis for faith.

### Dead Sea Scrolls

The reader will remember that the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated that the “oldest manuscripts of any of the books of the Old Testament at the present day date from the twelfth century of the Christian Era.” While this statement may have been true in Orson Pratt's time, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has changed the entire picture. We now have some manuscripts that date back prior to the time of Christ.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947 when a boy threw a rock into a cave near the Dead Sea. He was startled by the sound of something breaking and later came back to find jars with ancient manuscripts in them. This was only the beginning, for further search by a number of people led to the discovery of many important manuscripts. When scholars learned of these manuscripts they were elated. In *Compton's Encyclopedia* we find these statements:

The Biblical manuscripts known as the Dead Sea Scrolls have been called by scholars “the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times.” They include Old Testament books and non-Biblical texts dating from 100 B.C. to A.D. 68. . . .

The Dead Sea Scrolls were written during one of the most decisive periods in the history of the Jewish people, on the eve of the birth of Christianity. When the tens of thousands of fragments have been pieced together and translated, scholars will have a mass of new material for the study of Biblical texts and the people who wrote them. The scrolls will shed new light on the foundations of Christianity and on the influence of Judaism on the Christian faith. (*Compton's Encyclopedia*, vol. 6, 1970, pp. 41a-41b)

Edmund Wilson gives this interesting information:

Dr. Trever at once sent off prints of columns of the Isaiah scroll to Dr. W. F. Albright of Johns Hopkins, one of the ablest living Biblical archaeologists and an authority on the Nash Papyrus, which he had studied intensively over a period of years. They heard from him by air mail on March 15. He had written the same day he received the letter: “My heartiest congratulations on the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times! There is no doubt in my mind that the script is more archaic than that of the Nash Papyrus. . . . I should prefer a date around 100 B.C. . . . What an absolutely incredible find! And there can happily not be the slightest doubt in the world about the genuineness of the manuscript.” (*The Dead Sea Scrolls: 1947-1969*, by Edmund Wilson, New York, 1969, p. 18)

They set out now to examine systematically all the caves in the Qumran neighborhood. They entered two hundred and sixty-seven, and in thirty-seven of them found pottery and other relics of human occupancy. In twenty-five of these, the pottery was identical with the jars from the original cave. Several of the caves contained scrolls, which, unprotected by jars, were in a state of disintegration, often buried under layers of dirt. The fragments of these collected ran into the tens of thousands. It was becoming more and more apparent that a library had been hidden here—a library which seems to have included almost all the books of the Bible [the Old Testament], a number of apocryphal works and the literature of an early religious sect. (*Ibid.*, p. 25)



Isaiah Scroll — About 100 B.C.

Martin A. Larson gives this information in his book, *The Religion of the Occident*, page 227:

Space does not permit us to reproduce the archeological, paleographical, and other evidence which proves that the Dead Sea Scrolls were composed between 170 and 60 B.C. by a Jewish cult which flourished until 69 A.D. . . . Professor W. F. Libby of the University of Chicago subjected a piece of linen wrapping which covered one of the MSS. to the Carbon-14 Process and found that its date of origin was approximately 33 A.D. . . .

There can be no dispute concerning the authenticity of the Scrolls, which, in addition to several previously unknown and complete documents, now translated and published, include two MSS. of Isaiah and literally thousands of fragments found in various caves. Among these are portions of practically every book of the Old Testament.

In his book, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, Frank Moore Cross, Jr., gives this information:

A sketch of the contents of Cave IV may be helpful in the discussions to follow. At the end of four years' labor 382 manuscripts have been identified from this cave. . . . Of the manuscripts identified thus far, about one hundred, slightly more than one fourth of the total, are biblical. All of the books of the Hebrew canon are now extant, with the exception of the Book of Esther.

Three very old documents have been found in Cave IV. . . . They include an old copy of Samuel, preserved in only a handful of fragments; a patched and worn section of Jeremiah, . . . and a copy of Exodus . . . of which only a column and a few tatters are extant. . . .

The archaic Samuel scroll can date scarcely later than 200 B.C. A date in the last quarter of the third century is preferable. The Jeremiah is probably slightly later. The archaic Exodus has not been subjected to detailed paleographical analysis; . . . Nevertheless it appears to be no later than the old Samuel fragments and probably is earlier.

One copy of Daniel is inscribed in the script of the late second century B.C. . . .

The biblical scrolls from Qumran span in date about three centuries. A few archaic specimens carry us back to the end of the third century, as we have seen. The heavy majority, however, date in the first century B.C. and in the first Christian century, . . . (*The Ancient Library of Qumran*, by Frank Moore Cross, Jr., Garden City, New York, 1961, pp. 39, 40, 42, 43)

In a recent article Frank Moore Cross writes:

For the science of paleography, it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of these papyri. . . . the dating proposed by the writer for the archaic Samuel manuscript (ca. 225 B.C.E) now appears to be minimal. The chronology of the Archaic Period (pre-Hasmonean) may prove too low by a generation; the archaic Samuel then would date from 275-225 B.C.E. (*New Directions in Biblical Archaeology*, Edited by David Noel Freedman and Jonas C. Greenfield, Garden City, New York, 1969, p. 53)

Werner Keller makes these comments concerning the Isaiah scroll:

The text of Isaiah from the cave at Qumran had actually been copied about 100 B.C., as Professor Albright had been first to recognize. . . . with the discovery of the Dead Sea scroll of Isaiah we have a Hebrew text of the Bible. . . . And the remarkable and wonderful fact is that ancient scroll of Isaiah, just like the book of the prophet in any printed Bible, whether in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, or any other language, has sixty-six chapters and agrees with our present-day text.

Seventeen sheets of leather sewn together into a length of almost twenty-three feet—this must have been what the roll of the prophet looked like as it was handed to Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth so that he might read from it to the congregation. “And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [Isaiah].” (Luke 4:16, 17) “Every movement of Jesus’ hands is brought closer to us,” writes Professor Andre Parrot, “for we can still see on the reverse side of the leather the marks of the readers’ fingers.” (*The Bible as History*, by Werner Keller, Translated by William Neil, New York, 1957, pp. 423-424)

Mormon scholars accept the authenticity of the Dead Sea Scrolls, although they have not come to grips with the serious problems which these manuscripts create for the Book of Mormon and the “Inspired Version” of the Bible. The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen makes this comment concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Until recently, scholars depended on Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament dating only from the 9th to the 11th Centuries A.D., but now come the Dead Sea Scrolls dating back as far as **the 3rd century B.C.** They include a nearly complete text of Isaiah and fragments of all Old Testament books except Esther. (*As Translated Correctly*, 1966, pp. 3-4)

In his book, *The Bible and Archaeology*, J. A. Thompson gives the following information concerning the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Prior to the discovery of these texts, our earliest Hebrew manuscripts were dated about A.D. 900. It has always been the desire of Biblical scholars to obtain earlier manuscripts in order to make a comparison with the present-day Hebrew text. In this way they could discover how well the text had been preserved. As a result of these wonderful Qumran discoveries we now have documents as old as 100 B.C. or perhaps even earlier. . . . in the main these ancient texts agree fairly closely with the text with which we are familiar. Where they diverge they not infrequently follow the Septuagint text more closely, and this diverges from the Hebrew text in a number of places. It is evident also that there were versions of the Hebrew Bible in existence in those days that differed from both the present Masoretic and the Septuagint texts. (*The Bible and Archaeology*, 1962, p. 264)

Frank Moore Cross, Jr., made these statements concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls:

. . . we must cease to date any biblical work belonging to the Former or Latter Prophets (not to mention the Torah), or any extensive pericope within these books, later than the early second century B.C. . . . It is none the less a gain to have manuscripts, albeit fragmentary and incomplete, of the books of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, especially the Twelve, dating from the second century B.C., which rule out categorically speculations about extremely late additions to prophetic works. (*The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 1958, p. 164)

## Isaiah Text

Millard Burrows, a noted authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls, made this statement with regard to the Isaiah scrolls:

The first of the prophetic books, Isaiah, was evidently, as we have seen, the most popular in the Qumran community. In addition to the two scrolls from Cave 1, there are more or less extensive fragments of thirteen others from Cave 4. Like the later and incomplete scroll from Cave 1, the Cave 4 fragments agree closely with the Masoretic

text. This demonstration of the antiquity of our traditional text in the book of Isaiah is all the more important in view of the quite different indications in other books.

By far the most interesting and useful of all the Isaiah manuscripts for the study of the text is the complete St. Mark’s Isaiah scroll—as it may still be called for convenience, although it is now in Israel. It too supports the accuracy, by and large, of the Masoretic text (DSS, page 304). It presents, however, a more popular, less official form of the text than the other manuscripts. It was probably less carefully written and therefore contains a greater proportion of mistakes in copying, but it also preserves a number of ancient readings which were lost in the more orthodox tradition. (*More Light on The Dead Sea Scrolls*, New York, 1958, p. 146)

On page 172 of the same book, Millard Burrows states that the St. Mark scroll of Isaiah gives “the complete text of the book in a manuscript which cannot be dated much after 100 B.C. **at the latest.**” Gleason L. Archer, Jr., made this comment about the Isaiah scrolls:

Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (A.D. 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 per cent of the text. The 5 per cent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling. (*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 1964, p. 19)

Bible scholars have reason to rejoice over the discovery of manuscripts of Isaiah dating back to ancient times. Mormon scholars, however, are faced with a dilemma, for although these manuscripts support the text of the Bible, they could turn out to be one of the strongest evidences against Joseph Smith’s “Inspired Revision” of the Bible and his “translation” of the text of Isaiah found in the Book of Mormon. For years Mormon scholars have labored to prove that the text of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon is actually a translation of an ancient copy of Isaiah and is therefore superior to the translation found in the Bible. They have attempted to show parallels between the text of Isaiah found in the Book of Mormon and that found in some ancient manuscripts. In our book *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, pages 9-11, we show that these parallels are of little value because these manuscripts were known and studied in Joseph Smith’s time.

If Mormon writers could find similarities between the text of the Book of Mormon and documents that were not known in Joseph Smith’s day, this type of evidence would be impressive. The Dead Sea Scrolls, for instance, should provide a great deal of evidence for the Book of Mormon if it is really an ancient record. The Isaiah scroll found at Qumran Cave 1 should have caused a great deal of joy among Mormon scholars, for here is a manuscript of Isaiah which is hundreds of years older than any manuscript previously known. Surely, if the Book of Mormon were true, this manuscript would be filled with evidence to support the text of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon and thus prove that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. Instead of proving the Book of Mormon, however, it has turned out to be a great disappointment to Mormon scholars. Lewis M. Rogers, who was assistant professor of religion at Brigham Young University, wrote a paper which is entitled, “The Significance of the Scrolls and a Word of Caution.” In this article he stated:

It has been noted that deviations from the Masoretic text in the newly found Isaiah scrolls were minor, indicating a faithful preservation of the accepted Scriptures. However, variations from the standard in fragments from the Book of Samuel were startling, for they appeared to follow the Greek or Septuagint rather than the Masoretic text. . . .

Latter-day Saints have cause to rejoice with other Christians and Jews for the new light and fresh perspective



brought to them by the Dead Sea Scrolls, but occasionally they need to be reminded that their hopes and emotions make them vulnerable. It is quite possible that claims for the Book of Mormon and for L.D.S. theology **will not be greatly advanced** as a consequence of this discovery. (*Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, pp. 46-47)

Wayne Ham wrote his M.A. thesis for the Department of Biblical Languages at Brigham Young University in 1961. He made a study in which he compared the Isaiah scroll with the Book of Mormon. His thesis is entitled, “A Textual Comparison of the Isaiah Passages in the Book of Mormon with the Same Passages in the St. Marks Isaiah Scroll of the Dead Sea Community.” After making this study Mr. Ham was forced to the conclusion that the Isaiah scroll does **not** support the text in the Book of Mormon. In an article published in *Courage* in 1970, he stated:

Included in the Dead Sea finds was a complete Isaiah scroll and an incomplete one. Latter Day Saints were hopeful that these Isaiah scrolls would bring some supportive evidence for the Book of Mormon. The theory went like this: The language of the Isaiah passages in the Book of Mormon is that of the King James Version, with some variations. Since the King James Version had been translated from the Massoretic Hebrew text (a text developed by Jewish scholars during the early centuries of the Christian era), it was assumed by some Latter Day Saints that the variations in the Book of Mormon represented an older, more accurate text than the Massoretic text. The Dead Sea Isaiah scroll, which dates probably from the second century B.C., predates by one thousand years what was previously considered to be the oldest surviving text of the Old Testament.

After a thorough investigation of the matter, reported in “A Textual Comparison of the Isaiah Passages in the Book of Mormon with the Same Passages in the St. Mark’s Isaiah Scroll of the Dead Sea Community,” this writer found **no noteworthy instances of support for the Book of Mormon claims**. (*Courage*, vol. 1, no. 1, September 1970, p. 20)

The Mormon apologist Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, has to admit that the Dead Sea Scrolls do not help the case for the Book of Mormon:

After reading the Scrolls very carefully, I come to the conclusion that there is not a line in them that suggests that their writers knew the Gospel as understood by Latter-day Saints. In fact, there are a few passages that seem to prove the contrary. . . .

We should be especially interested in the light the Isaiah scroll throws on the problem of the Isaiah text in the Book of Mormon. I have compared in some detail the text of the scroll with its parallels in the Book of Mormon text. This tedious task has revealed that the scroll **seldom agrees** with the departures of the Book of Mormon text from that of the conventional Masoretic text of Isaiah and consequently the Authorized Version. The conclusions I come to as a result of these comparative studies may be set down as follows:

1. Despite the supposed antiquity of the scroll, its text is inferior to the conventional Hebrew text that has come down to us in the King James Version.

2. If the date assigned to the scroll is correct, we must conclude that serious changes took place in the text prior to the coming of Christ. If my thinking is correct, however, the pronouncement of Nephi concerning the perversion of the scriptures (1 Nephi 13:26) would suggest that we give thought to the possibility that the Isaiah scroll is dated a little too early—let us say about 150 years.

3. The Isaiah scroll is of relatively **little use to Latter-day Saints as showing the antiquity of the text of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon**.

4. The Book of Mormon text of Isaiah should warn us that the use of the Isaiah scroll of Qumran for purposes of textual criticism is open to grave suspicion.

What then do I see as valuable in the Scrolls? It should be understood that they have great value to the scholar in matters pertaining to Hebrew spelling, grammar and paleography. The Scrolls undoubtedly contribute much to the history of Judaism and

Christianity, and specialists of the Old and New Testaments are properly much concerned with them. . . .

But aside from their technical value to scholars, I believe that the importance of the Scrolls in a religious sense has been highly overrated by certain scholars. Their practical importance to Latter-day Saints is **relatively small**. (*Progress in Archaeology*, pp. 52-54)

It is interesting to see how Dr. Sperry has to detract from the Isaiah scroll in his attempt to save the Book of Mormon.

## Evidence For New Testament

The reader will remember that in his attack upon the Bible, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated that the “oldest manuscripts of the New Testament which this age are in possession of are supposed to date from the sixth century of the Christian era.” He mentions both the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Alexandrinus. Scholars now feel that the Codex Vaticanus was written in the fourth century. Bruce Manning Metzger, an authority on ancient Bible manuscripts, makes this statement:

B. One of the most valuable of all the manuscripts of the Greek Bible is codex Vaticanus. As its name indicates, it is in the great Vatican Library at Rome, . . .

The manuscript was written about the middle of the fourth century and contained both Testaments as well as the books of the Apocrypha, . . . (*The Text of the New Testament*, New York, 1964, p. 47)

Gleason L. Archer, Jr., feels that the Codex Vaticanus is “a magnificent” manuscript and states that it was written about “A.D. 325-350” (*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 40).

The Codex Alexandrinus was probably written in the fifth century. Bruce M. Metzger states:

A. This handsome codex, dating from about the fifth century, contains the Old Testament, except for several mutilations, and most of the New Testament . . . It was presented in 1627 by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, to King Charles I of England. Today it rests along with codex Sinaiticus in one of the prominent showcases in the Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum. (*The Text of the New Testament*, 1964, p. 46)

The same year (1859) that the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt was making one of his most vicious attacks on the Bible, Constantinus Tischendorf discovered the Codex Sinaiticus, which has turned out to be one of the most important manuscripts of the Bible. Scholars feel that this manuscript was written in the fourth century. George Eldon Ladd gives this information concerning this manuscript:

After the Russian revolution, the U.S.S.R. sold the manuscript to the British Museum in London for \$500,000—a sale which attracted world-wide attention. This manuscript, called Codex Sinaiticus, dates from the early fourth century, and has proved to be one of the best texts we possess of the New Testament. (*The New Testament and Criticism*, Michigan, 1967, p. 62)

Kenneth W. Clark, of Duke University, made this statement about this manuscript:

. . . it was at Saint Catherine’s monastery that Constantine Tischendorf discovered in 1859 a manuscript of the entire Bible in Greek. Written in the fourth century, Codex Sinaiticus has come to stand second only to Codex Vaticanus in age and importance, . . . (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, May 1953, p. 22)

In the book, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, pages 194-195, we find this information:

The date of the manuscript is in the fourth century, probably about the middle of it. It can hardly be much earlier than A.D. 340, . . . On the other hand, comparison with other hands of the fourth century, of which more are now available than was formerly the case, seems to show that it cannot be appreciably later than the middle of the century.



These three ancient manuscripts are very important as far as the text of the New Testament is concerned. Even some of the most zealous enemies of Christianity concede that they are authentic. The Moslem writer Al-Haj Khwaja Nazir Ammad stated:

There are three ancient manuscripts: the Codex Sinaiticus, otherwise known as the Alpha, found by Tischendorf on Mount Sinai in 1859, said to be of the fourth century; the Codex Alexandrinus known as A found by Cyril Luker, Patriarch of Constantinople, in 1621, which is traced to the fifth century, and the third, the Codex Vaticanus, otherwise known as B, said to be of the fourth century. (*Jesus in Heaven on Earth*, Pakistan, 1956, p. 15)

F. F. Bruce, a Christian writer from the University of Manchester, makes these statements concerning the documentary evidence for the New Testament:

The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no-one dreams of questioning. . . .

There are in existence about 4,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament in whole or in part. The best and most important of these go back to somewhere about AD 350, the two most important being the Codex Vaticanus, the chief treasure of the Vatican Library in Rome, and the well-known Codex Sinaiticus, . . .

Perhaps we can appreciate how wealthy the New Testament is in manuscript attestation if we compare the textual material for other ancient historical works. For Caesar's Gallic War (composed between 58 and 50 BC) there are several extant MSS, but only nine or ten are good, and the oldest is some 900 years later than Caesar's day. Of the 142 books of the *Roman History of Livy* (59 BC–AD 17) only thirty-five survive; these are known to us from not more than twenty MSS of any consequence, only one of which, and that containing fragments of Books iii–vi, is as old as the fourth century. Of the fourteen books of the *Histories of Tacitus* (c. AD 100) only four and a half survive; of the sixteen books of his *Annals*, ten survive in full and two in part. The text of these extant portions of his two great historical works depends entirely on two MSS, one of the ninth century and one of the eleventh. The extant MSS of his minor works (*Dialogus de Oratoribus*, *Agricola*, *Germania*) all descend from a codex of the tenth century. The *History of Thucydides* (c. 460–400 BC) is known to us from eight MSS, the earliest belonging to c. AD 900, and a few papyrus scraps, belonging to about the beginning of the Christian era. The same is true of the *History of Herodotus* (c. 480–425 BC). Yet no classical scholar would listen to an argument that the authenticity of Herodotus or Thucydides is in doubt because the earliest MSS of their works which are of any use are over 1,300 years later than the originals.

But how different is the situation of the New Testament in this respect! In addition to the two excellent MSS of the fourth century mentioned above, which are the earliest of some thousands known to us, considerable fragments remain of papyrus copies of books of the New Testament dated from 100 to 200 years earlier still. (*The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967, pp. 15–17)

## Papyri Finds

Since the time of Orson Pratt some of the most important discoveries concerning the New Testament have been made. In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, 1958 edition, page 185, we find this statement:

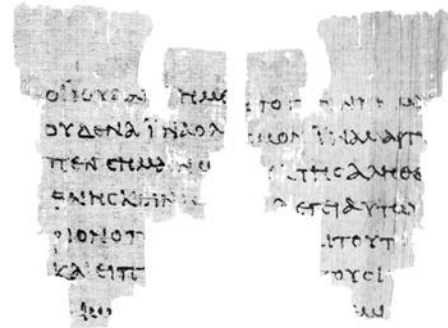
It has already been explained (p. 40) that to the two categories of vellum manuscripts, uncials and minuscules, there has now to be prefixed a third, which has only come into existence within the last seventy-five years, and indeed has only acquired much importance within the last twenty-five. That is the category of papyri, which has added a new chapter to textual history, and has gone far to bridge the gap between the autographs of the New Testament books and the great vellum uncials.

Floyd V. Filson gives the following information concerning the papyrus manuscripts:

. . . it is in Egypt that the overwhelming majority of papyri have survived. This is because the dry climate and drifting sands which cover abandoned sites have enabled the papyrus to survive through centuries without moisture reaching it. Even so almost every papyrus manuscript found is only fragmentary.

The importance of such surviving papyrus manuscripts is that they are early. Almost no parchment manuscripts of New Testament books have survived from ancient times; a few very important ones, such as the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus, date from the fourth century, and a few others from the fifth century, but it is the papyri which give us manuscripts that go further back than the fourth century. However, papyrus suffers from a serious drawback. It is fragile, and decays easily or becomes brittle and breaks in pieces; and so up to this time we have found only very limited fragments of papyrus manuscripts of New Testament books. Papyrus Bodmer II is outstanding in that so much of John is preserved in full page form. (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, September 1957, p. 55)

Below is a photograph of both sides of the Rylands Greek Papyrus 457, dated about 125–130 A.D., the oldest known fragment of a New Testament manuscript. It contains John 18:31–33 on one side and 18:37–38 on the other. A photograph of this papyrus can be found in *The Biblical Archaeologist*, September 1957, page 61.



In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, pages 189–190, we find this information concerning this fragment:

This scrap, measuring about 3 1/2 by 2 1/2 inches, was among some papyri acquired in 1920 by Dr. B. P. Grenfell for the John Rylands Library at Manchester, but remained unnoticed until Mr. C. H. Roberts identified it as the oldest existing manuscript of any part of the New Testament. It contains John xviii. 31–3, 37, 38 in a hand which can be confidently assigned to the first half of the second century. In the middle fifty years of the nineteenth century, if this scrap could have been produced and its date established, it would have created a profound sensation; for it would have convincingly refuted those who contended that the fourth Gospel was not written until the second century was far advanced. Now we see that it was not only written but had spread to a provincial town in Egypt by the middle of the second century, which goes far towards confirming the traditional date of composition in the last years of the first century.

Patrick Campbell maintained that the Gospel of John was not written until three centuries after the other Gospels: “The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke must be viewed together, and apart from the Gospel of John. The last belongs to a different category and was **composed some three centuries later**” (*The Mythical Jesus*, 1965, pp. 25–26). In light of the discovery of “Rylands Greek Papyrus 457” and several other important discoveries, Patrick Campbell's arguments cannot be maintained. J. A. Thompson says the following concerning the Rylands Fragment of John:

The style of writing enabled it to be assigned to the first half of the second century. . . . the fact that it was not only written in Egypt but that it had been used in a provincial town in Egypt at this early date points to the fact that John's Gospel, far

from being a late second-century production as some had maintained, was in fact far earlier, and more likely to have been written in the first century, or at least very early in the second. (*The Bible and Archaeology*, p. 437)

Frank Moore Cross, Jr., also feels that the Rylands Fragment of John should be dated to “the first half of the second century A.D.” (*The Ancient Library of Qumran*, p. 43). Floyd V. Filson made this statement concerning this fragment:

... it is certainly from the first half of the second century A.D., and the style of writing warrants a date about 125 or 130 A.D. It could be dated a little later or earlier. This is the earliest manuscript fragment of any New Testament book, and its date is remarkably close to the time of writing of the original Gospel. (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, Sept. 1957, p. 56)

William F. Albright, who was “one of the world’s foremost students of the ancient Near East,” made the following statement:

Meanwhile the sensational publication of a fragment of the Gospel from the early second century (C. H. Roberts, 1935) and of a roughly contemporary fragment of an apocryphal gospel dependent on John (H. I. Bell, 1935) has dealt the coup de grace to all radically late dating of John and has proved that the Gospel cannot be later than the first century A.D. (*From the Stone Age to Christianity*, by William Foxwell Albright, New York, 1957, p. 388)

F. F. Bruce, of the University of Manchester, gives this interesting information concerning the Rylands Fragment of John and other important discoveries:

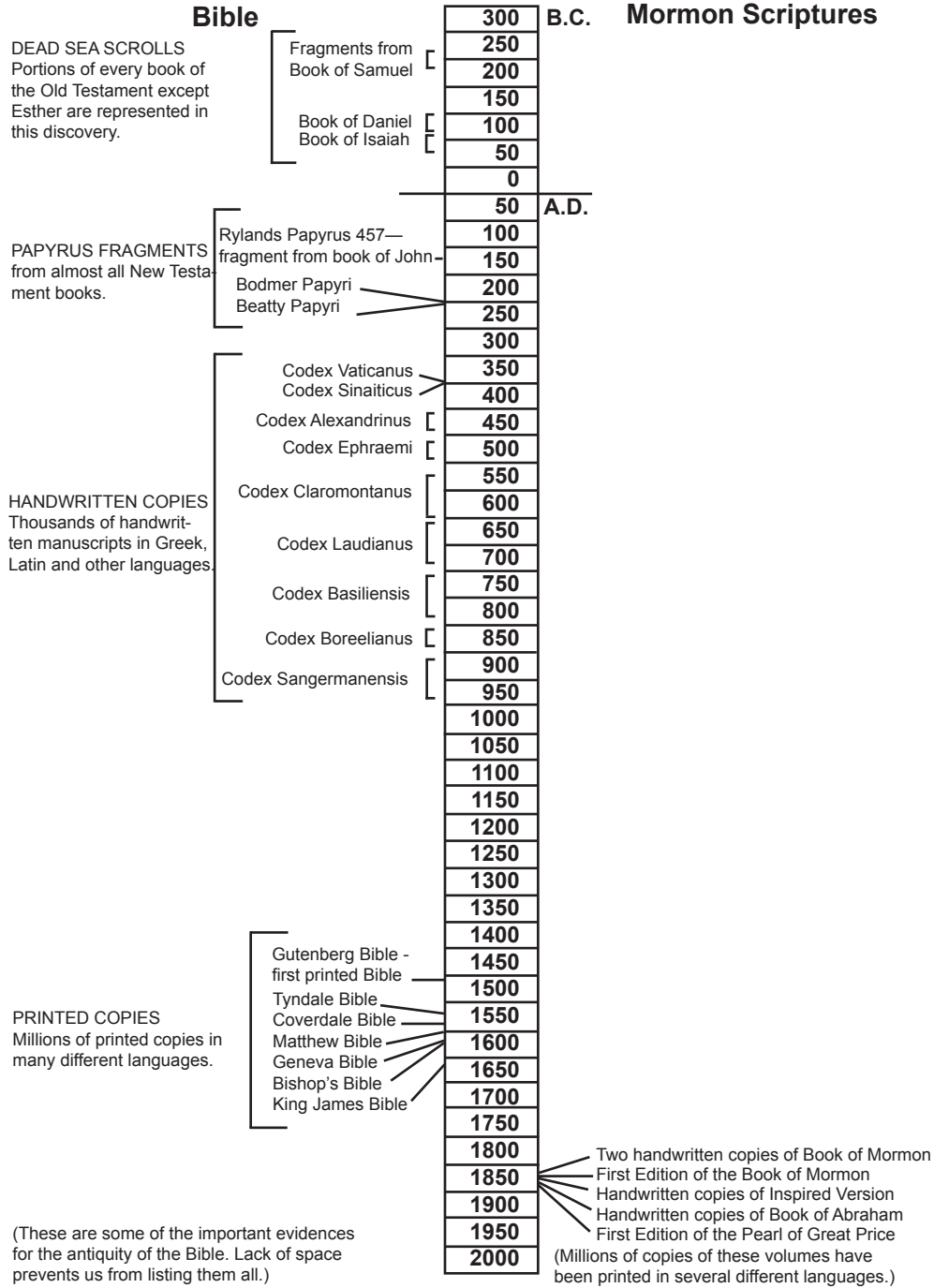
In addition to the two excellent MSS of the fourth century mentioned above, which are the earliest of some thousands known to us, considerable fragments remain of papyrus copies of books of the New Testament dated from 100 to 200 years earlier still. The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri, the existence of which was made public in 1931, consists of portions of eleven papyrus codices, three of which contained most of the New Testament writings. One of these, containing the four Gospels with Acts, belongs to the first half of the third century; another, containing Paul’s letters to churches and the Epistle to the Hebrews, was copied at the beginning of the third century; the third, containing Revelation, belongs to the second half of the same century.

A more recent discovery consists of some papyrus fragments dated by papyrological experts not later than AD 150, published in *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and other Early Christian Papyri*, ... Earlier still is a fragment of a papyrus codex containing John xviii. 31-33, 37f., now in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, dated on palaeographical grounds around AD 130, showing that the latest of the four Gospels, which was written, according to tradition, at Ephesus between AD 90 and 100, was circulating in Egypt within about forty years of its composition (if, as is most likely, this papyrus originated in Egypt, where it was acquired in 1917). It must be regarded as being, by half a century, the earliest extant fragment of the New Testament.

A more recently discovered papyrus manuscript of the same Gospel, while not so early as the Rylands papyrus, is incomparably better preserved; this is the Papyrus Bodmer II, whose discovery was announced by the Bodmer Library of Geneva in 1956; it was written about AD 200, and contains the first fourteen chapters of

**See graphic on next page**

## A Comparison of the Manuscript Evidence for the Bible and for Mormon Scriptures





the Gospel of John with one lacuna (of twenty-two verses), and considerable portions of the last seven chapters. (*The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* 1968, pp. 17-18)

Bruce M. Metzger gives this interesting information:

One of the oldest considerable portions of the Greek New Testament is a papyrus codex of the Gospel of John, the Bodmer Papyrus II, . . . According to its editor, the manuscript dates from about A.D. 200. . . . Still another early Biblical manuscript acquired by M. Bodmer is a single-quire codex of Luke and John. It originally contained about 144 pages, each measuring 10 1/4 by 5 1/8 inches, of which 102 have survived, either in whole or in part. . . . The editors, Victor Martin and Rodolphe Kaasser, date this copy between A.D. 175 and 225. It is thus the earliest known copy of the Gospel according to Luke and one of the earliest known of the Gospel according to John. (*The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 39-41)

Floyd V. Filson said that “The Bodmer Papyri, reported to have been found in Upper Egypt, must be listed with the Dead Sea Scrolls among the most remarkable finds in archaeological history” (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, May 1959, p. 48). In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* we find this information:

We now have, . . . substantial portions of a codex containing the four Gospels and Acts written in the first half of the third century, another of the Pauline Epistles of about A.D. 200, fifty leaves on an original codex of 108 leaves containing Numbers and Deuteronomy of the early second century, a tiny scrap of St. John of the same date, together with fragments of Genesis, Deuteronomy, Psalms, Matthew and Titus also of the second century. There is even a fragment of Deuteronomy from a roll of the second century before Christ. A considerable gap in the history of the transmission of the Bible text has thus been filled by the discoveries of recent years. (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, p. 43)

In the first edition of this work it was stated that “the early papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament have all perished (unless indeed some are still lying buried in the soil of Egypt, which is far from improbable).” This possibility has happily been realized, and, as has already been indicated, we now have a slender thread of tradition extending back to a point barely a generation later than the date of the Apocalypse or the Fourth Gospel. A list compiled by the Rev. P.L. Hedley in 1933 enumerated 157 New Testament fragments on papyrus (including vellum fragments found with papyri, and ostraka), and to these may now be added the Chester Beatty manuscripts and other recent discoveries, which bring the total up to 170 or more. (*Ibid.*, pp. 162-163)

. . . we have a nearly complete manuscript of the Pauline Epistles, written apparently about the beginning of the third century—that is to say, more than a century before the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. It emphatically confirms the general soundness of the text, . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 188-189)

Besides the thousands of Greek manuscripts, there is additional evidence for the text of the New Testament found in early translations into other languages and in quotations found in the writings of early Christians (for more information on this matter see our book *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, pages 15-16).

### “130,000 Different Readings”

The reader will remember that the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made these statements in a discourse delivered in 1859:

All the most ancient manuscripts of the New Testament known to the world differ from each other in almost every verse. . . .

The learned admit that in the manuscripts of the New Testament alone there are no less than one hundred and thirty thousand different readings. . . . No one can tell whether even one verse of either the Old or New Testament conveys the ideas of the original author.

Just think, 130,000 **different readings** in the New Testament alone! (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 27-28)

On another occasion the Apostle Pratt stated: “Who knows that even one verse of the whole Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original?” The Mormon scholar Dr. Hugh Nibley has stated: “. . . when we get the so-called original texts of the Bible before us with their stately apparatus of possible corrections, emendations, suggestions, recommendations, and whatnot, we first come to realize that the holy text is a maze of a thousand passages” (*The World and the Prophets*, Salt Lake City, 1954, p. 188). In a footnote at the bottom of the same page Dr. Nibley states: “There are more than 8,000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, no two of which read exactly alike!”

While it is true that there are many different readings in manuscript copies of the New Testament, Mormon writers have greatly exaggerated the importance of this matter. Gleason L. Archer, Jr., stated:

But what about the text of the Bible as we now possess it? Is that text necessarily free from all mistakes of every kind? Not when it comes to copyists' errors, for we certainly do find discrepancies among the handwritten copies that have been preserved to us, even those which come from the earliest centuries. Some slips of the pen doubtless crept into the first copies made from the original manuscripts, and additional errors of a transmissional type found their way into the copies of copies. It is almost unavoidable that this should have been the case. No man alive can sit down and copy out the text of an entire book without a mistake of any kind. (Those who doubt this statement are invited to try it themselves!) It would take nothing short of a miracle to insure the inerrancy of a copy of an original manuscript. (*A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 18)

F. F. Bruce made these interesting observations:

It is easily proved by experiment that it is difficult to copy out a passage of any considerable length without making one or two slips at least. When we have documents like our New Testament writings copied and recopied thousands of times, the scope for copyists' errors is so enormously increased that it is surprising there are no more than there actually are. Fortunately, if the number of MSS increases the number of scribal errors, it increases proportionately the means of correcting such errors, so that the margin of doubt left in the process of recovering the exact original wording is not so large as might be feared; it is in truth remarkably small. (*The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* p. 19)

George Eldon Ladd makes these observations:

Some of these textual variations involve matters of theological importance; but the majority of them do not essentially affect the meaning of the Bible, and vast numbers of textual errors deal only with trivial differences.

Errors in copying the Greek text arose when the copyist did not correctly read the text that lay before him. In 1 Timothy 3:16, the AV reads “God was manifest in the flesh,” while the RSV reads, “He was manifest in the flesh.” Some uncritical readers might attribute such a change to an alleged “lower theology” of the modern version; but the facts are simple. The earlier manuscripts read OC (“he who”), while many of the later manuscripts read **Θ**C (theos — “God”). The difference is only two small marks. (*The New Testament and Criticism*, pp. 63-64)

Through the developed science of textual criticism we have achieved a relatively accurate text of the New Testament. There remain, however, numerous readings where the weight of the divergent witnesses is so evenly balanced that it is impossible to decide with certainty which reading is to be preferred. (*Ibid.*, p. 71)

In his book, *The Text of the New Testament*, Bruce M. Metzger gives this information:

Words and notes standing in the margin of the older copy were occasionally incorporated into the text of the new manuscript. Since the margin was used for glosses

(that is, synonyms of hard words in the text) as well as corrections, it must have often been most perplexing to a scribe to decide what to do with a marginal note. It was easiest to solve his doubt by putting the note into the text which he was copying. Thus it is probable that what was originally a marginal comment explaining the moving of the water in the pool at Bethesda (John v. 7) was incorporated into the text of John v. 3b-4 (see the King James version for the addition). . . .

Odd though it may seem, scribes who thought were more dangerous than those who wished merely to be faithful in copying what lay before them. Many of the alterations which may be classified as intentional were no doubt introduced in good faith by copyists who believed that they were correcting an error or infelicity of language which had previously crept into the sacred text and needed to be rectified. . . . (*The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 194-195)

What would a conscientious scribe do when he found that the same passage was given differently in two or more manuscripts which he had before him? Rather than make a choice between them and copy only one of the two variant readings (with the attendant possibility of omitting the genuine reading), most scribes incorporated both readings in the new copy which they were transcribing. (*Ibid.*, p. 200)

In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* we find this information:

1. Errors of Hand and Eye. The mistakes of scribes are of many kinds and of varying importance. Sometimes the copyist confuses words of similar sound, as in English we sometimes find our correspondents write *there* for *their* or *here* for *hear*. Or he may pass over a word by accident; and this is especially likely to happen when the same word is repeated (it is then called haplography) or if two adjoining words end with the same letters. Sometimes this cause of error (known as homoioteleuton= "similar ending") operates more widely. Two successive lines of the MS. from which he is copying end in the same or similar words; and the copyist's eye slips from the first to the second, and the intermediate line is omitted. Sometimes a whole verse, or a longer passage, may be omitted owing to the identity of the first or last words with those of an adjoining passage. . . . sometimes the MS. from which he is copying is furnished with short explanatory notes or glosses in the margin, and he fails to see where the text ends and the note begins, and so copies the note into the text itself. . . . The veneration in which the sacred books were held has generally protected them against intentional alterations of the text, but not entirely so. The harmonization of the Gospel narratives, described in the last paragraph, has certainly been in some cases intentional; and that, no doubt, without the smallest wish to deceive, but simply with the idea of supplementing the one narrative from another parallel source or sources, or in order to smooth out discrepancies. . . .

One word of warning, already referred to, must be emphasized in conclusion. **No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading.** Constant references to mistakes and divergences of reading, such as the plan of this book necessitates, might give rise to the doubt whether the substance, as well as the language, of the Bible is not open to question. It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain. Especially is this the case with the New Testament. The number of manuscripts of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church, is so large that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other ancient book in the world. . . . the manuscripts of the New Testament are counted by hundreds, and even thousands. In the case of the Old Testament we are not quite in such a good position, as will be shown presently. In some passages it seems certain that the true reading has not been preserved by any ancient authority, and we are driven to conjecture in order to supply it. (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, pp. 50, 51, 52, 55)

In a footnote on page 55 of the same book we find this statement:

Dr. Hort, whose authority on the point is quite incontestable, estimates the proportion of words about which there is some doubt [in the New Testament] at about one-eighth of the whole; but by far the greater part of these consists merely of differences in order and other unimportant variations, and "the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation . . . can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text (Introduction to *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, p. 2).

Mormon leaders claim that the Catholics conspired to alter the Bible. In the Book of Mormon we read:

. . . thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have **taken away** from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.

Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things **taken away** from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.

. . . because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, . . . because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 13:26-29)

Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., who is the son of the tenth President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

Scholars do not deny that the original text of the Bible has been corrupted. **Truths have been removed in an attempt to preserve traditions.** Faulty translations and omissions of phrases and clauses have resulted in confusion. (*Religious Truths Defined*, 1962, p. 337)

The early "**apostate fathers**" **did not think it was wrong to tamper with inspired scripture.** If any scripture seemed to endanger their viewpoint, it was **altered, transplanted or completely removed** from the Biblical text. All this was done that they might keep their traditions. Such mutilation was considered justifiable to preserve the so-called "purity" of their doctrines. (*Ibid.*, p. 175)

The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen made these statements concerning 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*, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 4)

It is evident then that many of the "plain and precious" things were omitted from the Bible by failure to choose all of the authentic books for inclusion, and by **deliberate changes, deletions and forgeries**, . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 14)

Joseph Smith himself stated: "I believe the Bible as it read when it came from the pen of the original writers. Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or **designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors**" (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 57). On December 1, 1844, the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*, contained this statement: "Elder R. Richey followed him and showed the situation of our Bible, after passing through the hands of the Mother of Harlots" (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 726).

While it is true that there are various readings in the original handwritten manuscripts of the Bible, the Book



of Mormon's charge that the Catholics deliberately conspired to remove "many plain and precious things" out of the Bible is proven false by the Dead Sea Scrolls and other important manuscripts which have been discovered. Anthony A. Hoekema makes these observations:

The Mormon contention that "after the book [the Bible] hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church . . . there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book . . ." (1 Nephi 13:28), is completely contrary to fact. The many copies of Old Testament manuscripts which we now possess do vary in minor matters—the spelling of words, the omission of a phrase here and there—but there is no evidence whatsoever that any major sections of Old Testament books have been lost. The manuscripts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, generally dated from about 200 to 50 B.C., include portions of every Old Testament book except Esther; studies have revealed that these documents—older by a thousand years than previously discovered Old Testament manuscripts—are substantially identical to the text of the Old Testament which had been previously handed down. As far as New Testament manuscripts are concerned, the oldest of which go back to the second century A.D., the situation is substantially the same. The variations that are found in these manuscripts . . . are of a relatively minor nature. There is no indication whatever that any large sections of material found in the originals have been lost. Most of the manuscript variations concern matters of spelling, word order, tense, and the like; no single doctrine is affected by them in any way. (*The Four Major Cults*, Michigan 1963, pp. 30-31)

The Book of Mormon plainly states that the changes in the Bible were made **after** the time of Christ and **after** the formation of the Catholic Church:

The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, . . . the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, . . . these things go forth from the Jews **in purity** unto the Gentiles, . . . thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches, for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts . . . that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, . . . **after** the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, . . . there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God. (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 13:23-28)

In 1832 the Mormon publication *The Evening and the Morning Star* said that the changes in the Bible were made sometime between 460 and 1400 A.D.:

. . . the most plain parts of the New Testament, have been taken from it by the Mother of Harlots while it was confined in that Church,—say, from the year A.D. 460 to 1400: . . . (*The Evening and the Morning Star*, vol. 1, no. 1, June, 1832, p. 3)

As we have shown, the "great Isaiah Scroll" found at Qumran provides important evidence to show that the Catholics did **not** take away "many plain and precious things" from the Bible. This scroll is dated at about 100 B.C., and therefore could not have been touched by the Catholics. Also it should be remembered that this scroll is a Jewish production, and the Book of Mormon claims that the Jews had the Scriptures in their "purity." Why, then, does this scroll fail to support the text of Isaiah as found in the Book of Mormon or Joseph Smith's Inspired Revision of the Bible?

The Catholic Church certainly was not in existence prior to the time of Christ, and President Joseph Fielding Smith has stated that the Catholics did not become the "ruling power in religion" until after the beginning of the fourth century:

The Church established by the Redeemer was taken from the earth . . . The great ecclesiastical organization that arose and claimed to be the Church of Christ was of gradual growth. The change from truth to error was not made all in one day. . . . In the beginning of the **fourth** century this great religious power, under the Emperor Constantine became the state religion of the Roman Empire. From that time forth its dominion spread and before many years had passed away it became the ruling power in religion in the so-called

civilized world. By it "times and laws" were changed. (*Essentials in Church History*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 9-10)

In 1887 Rev. M. T. Lamb made this observation:

Have a great many of the best things in the New Testament been taken out of it by a great and abominable church since the Apostles' day, as the Book of Mormon tells us? . . .

Such a piracy of Holy Scripture could not have occurred later than 350 A.D., because there are now in existence copies of the Bible that are between fifteen and sixteen hundred years old, copies written out by hand not later than 350 years after Christ—250 years after the death of the Apostle John. (*The Golden Bible*, p. 329)

At the time M. T. Lamb wrote the above statement there was still a substantial gap between the original manuscripts and the earliest copies known to scholars. Consequently, Mormons would not accept these fourth century manuscripts as evidence against Joseph Smith's work. Since the turn of the century, however, the situation has entirely changed, for papyrus fragments have been found which virtually close the gap and prove that the Scriptures have not been rewritten by a "great and abominable church."

Floyd V. Filson stated:

Over seventy papyrus manuscripts of New Testament writing have been found . . .

These early manuscripts, although fragmentary, make a real contribution to our knowledge. They show that in early centuries the Gospel of John was widely known in Egypt (where most of the papyri are found), and that the text of the Gospels previously known from manuscripts of the fourth century and later agrees substantially with the text which we find in these third and second century fragments (second century fragments are admittedly rare and small). (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, February 1961, p. 3)

Sir Fredric Kenyon, who was the Director of the British Museum, made this statement:

"The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established." (*The Bible and Archaeology*, 1940, p. 288, as quoted in *The New Testament Documents—Are They Reliable?* p. 20)

In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* we find the following:

The discoveries of Greek papyri in Egypt have materially reduced the gap between the earliest extant manuscripts of the New Testament and Septuagint and the date at which the original books were written. They have established, with a wealth of evidence which no other work of ancient literature can even approach, the substantial authenticity and integrity of the text of the Bible as we now possess it. (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, pp. 318-319)

In September, 1957, *The Biblical Archaeologist* printed a photograph of the first page "of the Gospel of John in Papyrus Bodmer II." Although this photograph is small most of the writing is quite readable. This papyrus is dated about 200 A.D. We feel that this papyrus provides an excellent test for Joseph Smith's claim that the Catholics changed the Bible, and therefore we are including a photograph of it on the next page. Below the photograph we have copied the characters—written in the "Greek Uncial Script"—from the papyrus and with the help of *Berry's Interlinear Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament* we have divided the words and have given the English translation below each word. The fragment is damaged on the right side so we have had to restore a few words in brackets. We have numbered the lines for easy reference and have tried to end them at exactly the same place as on the original papyrus. The order of the words in a literal translation of the Greek differs from what we are accustomed to in English. Therefore, we have assigned numbers to the words so that the reader will see the order they should be read for proper understanding.



Papyrus Bodmer II  
About 200 A.D.



15	ΤΙΖΕΙ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΤΩΝ ΕΡΧΟ[ΜΕΝΟΝ]	every man coming
16	ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ· ΕΝ ΤΩ ΚΟΣΜΩ [ΗΝ ΚΑΙ]	into the world. <sup>3</sup> in <sup>4</sup> the <sup>5</sup> world <sup>1</sup> He <sup>2</sup> was, and
17	Ο ΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΔΙ ΔΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ Ο ΚΟΣ	the world <sup>3</sup> by <sup>4</sup> him <sup>1</sup> was <sup>2</sup> made, and the world
18	ΜΟC ΑΥΤΟΥ ΟΥΚ ΕΓΝ[Ω] ΕΙC [Τ]Α ΙΔΙΑ ΗΛ[ΘΕΝ]	<sup>2</sup> him <sup>3</sup> not <sup>1</sup> knew. <sup>3</sup> to <sup>4</sup> his <sup>5</sup> own <sup>1</sup> He <sup>2</sup> came,
19	ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΙΔΙΟΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΟΥ ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΟΝ· [ΟCΟΙ]	and his own <sup>2</sup> him <sup>3</sup> not <sup>1</sup> recieved; <sup>2</sup> as <sup>3</sup> many <sup>4</sup> as
20	ΔΕ ΕΛΑΒΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΔΩΚΕΝ [ΑΥΤΟΙC]	<sup>1</sup> but <sup>2</sup> recieved <sup>3</sup> him <sup>4</sup> he <sup>5</sup> gave <sup>1</sup> to <sup>2</sup> them
21	[Ε]ΛΟΥCΙΑΝ ΤΕΚΝΑ ΘΥ ΓΕΝΕCΘΑΙ ΤΟΙC	power <sup>3</sup> children <sup>4</sup> of <sup>5</sup> God <sup>1</sup> to <sup>2</sup> become [even] to those that
22	ΠΙCΤΕΥΟΥCΙΝ ΕΙC ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΟ[Υ] Ο[Ι] ΟΥ	believe on <sup>2</sup> name <sup>1</sup> his; <sup>1</sup> who <sup>4</sup> not
23	Κ ΕΞ ΑΙΜΑΤΩΝ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΚ ΘΕΛΗΜΑΤΟC	<sup>2</sup> of <sup>1</sup> blood, <sup>1</sup> nor <sup>2</sup> of <sup>1</sup> the <sup>1</sup> will
24	CΑΡΚΟC ΟΥΔΕ ΕΚ ΘΕΛΗΜΑΤΟC ΑΝ[ΔΡΟC]	<sup>1</sup> of <sup>1</sup> the <sup>1</sup> flesh, <sup>1</sup> nor <sup>2</sup> of <sup>1</sup> the <sup>1</sup> will <sup>1</sup> of <sup>1</sup> man,
25	ΑΛΛΑ ΕΚ ΘΥ ΕΓΕΝΝΗΘΗCΑΝ· ΚΑΙ	<sup>1</sup> but <sup>1</sup> of <sup>2</sup> God <sup>2</sup> were <sup>3</sup> born. and

line Translation

1	ΕΝ ΑΡΧΗ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟC ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟC ΗΝ ΠΡΟC ΤΟ[Ν ΘΝ]	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
2	ΚΑΙ ΘC ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟC· ΟΥΤΟC ΗΝ ΕΝ Α[Ρ]ΧΗ ΠΡΟC ΤΟΝ ΘΝ	and <sup>4</sup> God <sup>3</sup> was <sup>4</sup> the <sup>2</sup> Word. He was in the beginning with God,
3	ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ ΔΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ· ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙC Α[ΥΤΟΥ]	all things <sup>3</sup> by <sup>4</sup> him <sup>1</sup> were <sup>2</sup> made, and without him
4	ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕ [Ε]Ν Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ [ΕΝ ΔΥ]ΤΩ ΖΩ[Η] ΗΝ	was <sup>2</sup> made <sup>1</sup> not <sup>2</sup> anything that was made. In him <sup>2</sup> life <sup>1</sup> was
5	ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩC ΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΤΩ[Ν]	and the life was the light of men.
6	ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΦΩC ΕΝ ΤΗ CΚΟΤΙΑ ΦΑΙΝΕΙ ΚΑΙ Η	and the light in the darkness shines, and the
7	CΚΟΤΙΑ ΑΥΤΟ ΟΥ ΚΑΤΕΛΑΒΕΝ.	darkness <sup>4</sup> it <sup>1</sup> has <sup>2</sup> not <sup>3</sup> overcome.
8	[Ε]ΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟC ΑΠΕCΤΑΛΜΕΝΟC ΠΑ	There was a man sent from
9	ΡΑ ΘΥ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΩ ΙΩΑΝΝΗC ΟΥΤΟC ΗΛ	God, <sup>2</sup> name <sup>1</sup> whose [was] John. He came
10	ΘΕΝ ΕΙC ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑΝ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗCΗ	for a witness, that he might witness
11	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΦΩΤ[Ο]C· ΙΝΑ ΠΑ[Ν]ΤΕC ΠΙCΤΕΥ	of the light, that all might
12	CΩCΙΝ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ· ΟΥΚ ΗΝ ΕΙΚΕΙΝ[ΟC ΤΩ]	believe through him. <sup>3</sup> not <sup>2</sup> was <sup>1</sup> He the
13	ΦΩC ΑΛΛΑ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗC[Η] ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ	light, but [came] that He might bear witness of the
14	ΦΩΤΟC ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩC ΤΟ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΝ Ο ΦΩ	light. [That] was <sup>4</sup> the <sup>3</sup> light <sup>2</sup> true that enlightens

In order to give the reader an idea of how this papyrus compares with the King James and Revised Standard versions of the Bible, we have made three columns. We will follow the word order suggested above for the Papyrus Bodmer II.

KING JAMES VERSION	PAPYRUS BODMER II	REVISED STANDARD VERSION
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light in the darkness shines, and the darkness has not overcome it.	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 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: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And ... (John 1:1-14, King James Version, as printed in <i>The New Testament in Four Versions</i> )	There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might witness of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light. That was the true light that enlightens every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become children of God, even to those that believe on his name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And ... (Papyrus Bodmer II)	There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And ... (John 1:1-14, Revised Standard Version, as printed in <i>The New Testament in Four Versions</i> )

The reader will notice that the translation of Papyrus Bodmer II, written about 200 A.D., reads essentially the same as both the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version. While we have only worked with the first page of this papyrus, Floyd V. Filson made these comments concerning the entire manuscript:

In one respect the manuscript may disappoint those who hear of its early date and unusually good state of preservation. Such people may hope to learn something sensational concerning the wording of the text, something which would discredit later manuscripts and find new ideas in the Gospel of John. In these days when advertisers think it necessary to insist that this year's line of motor cars, cigars, or toothpaste is "all new," it may sound tame to many to hear that P66 [Papyrus Bodmer II] confirms the general accuracy of the Greek text of John behind the Revised Standard Version.

This does not mean that we can learn nothing from the manuscript. It teaches much about handwriting and the making of manuscripts about 200 A.D. . . . And it teaches a great deal about the Greek text of John about 200 A.D. Two examples: the manuscript omits 5:3b, 4 and 7:53-8:11. (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, September 1957, pp. 59-60)

Because of recent discoveries of papyrus manuscripts Mormon writers are faced with a serious dilemma. It is almost impossible to maintain Joseph Smith's teaching that the Catholics conspired to change the Bible in light of these discoveries. Dr. Richard L. Anderson, of Brigham Young University, is undoubtedly one of the top authorities on Bible manuscripts in the Mormon Church. In a paper read at the "Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures," Dr. Anderson seemed to be warning his people against the idea that the New Testament has been drastically altered:

In studying a particular author in antiquity, the classical scholar typically works with a few principal manuscripts, together with a few more extensive fragments or portions of manuscripts. The New Testament scholar, however, faces the wonderful but impossible prospect of attempting to comprehend a text preserved in about 3,000 manuscripts. . . . Nor is sheer quantity most impressive, for the antiquity of his manuscripts should be the envy of all ancient studies. . . . This process of uncovering the major papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament has largely taken place not only in our own century, but in our own generation. . . . Almost the whole New Testament is represented in the papyrus fragments. The only two exceptions now are 1 and 2 Timothy. The real achievement, then, is that the antiquity of the text has now been pushed back almost another century. Of almost eight catalogued papyrus manuscripts and fragments, about twenty-five are dated in the third century. . . . This means that the gap now separating the time of the writing of the New Testament and the oldest preserved manuscripts is now generally no more than 200 years, and as we shall soon see in the case of the letters of Paul and two Gospels, that gap has been narrowed by at least another fifty years. To underline the extent of the findings, let us stress that some part of every book of the New Testament is represented by papyrus dated as early as the third century with the present exception of Philemon, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, 1, 2, and 3 John.

The oldest New Testament papyrus furnishes an impressive example of the function of discovery in authenticating New Testament writings. . . . The fragment itself contains about thirty percent of the words of John 18:31-33 on its face and the same percentage of the words of John 18:37-38 on the reverse. . . . the Rylands fragment, . . . shows that the Gospel of John had been written and also had been disseminated in Egypt before the middle of the second century. . . . a copy of the Gospel of John made not very many years after the writing of that Gospel, is a dramatic confirmation of the essential claim of Christianity, as it relates in fragmentary but clear form the question of Pilate, "Are you a king?"—and Jesus' affirmation, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my

voice." . . . the most impressive of the Beatty papyri are the extensive portions of what originally was a collection of Paul's letters, given the number P<sup>46</sup>. . . . As to its antiquity, P<sup>46</sup> is thought by leading papyrologists to be no later than 200 A.D. This means that the oldest collection of Paul's letters now dates from a maximum of 150 years after Paul wrote. With such an early collection, the question naturally arises how the text is different from the traditional one. Differences lie in numerous details, but the outstanding conclusion is that **there is little, if any, significant change.** . . .

Only within the last decade have come what are in many ways the most important papyrus discoveries yet for New Testament study. Among a series of ancient papyri acquired, the Bodmer Library in Geneva has published a third-century copy of 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude, plus two second-century copies of the Gospel of John and one of Luke. . . .

Among the Bodmer Papyri, the greatest treasures are the copies of the Gospels dating back to the end of the second century. The original publication took place in 1956 of a manuscript enumerated P<sup>66</sup>. It is a practically complete copy of the Gospel of John, which the editor dates about 200 A.D. . . . the most impressive contribution of the new manuscripts of Luke and John is not the few differences, but the extent of their agreement with the life and teachings of Christ as preserved in other manuscripts.

It is easy to get lost in debate on details and fail to see the **overwhelming agreement of all manuscripts to the historical record of the New Testament.** . . . For a book to undergo progressive uncovering of its manuscript history and come out with so little debatable in its text is a great tribute to its essential authenticity. In tracing the history of manuscript investigation, the student finds that two great facts emerge. First, no new manuscript discovery has produced serious differences in the essential story. This survey has disclosed the leading textual controversies, and together they would be well within one percent of the text. Stated differently, **all manuscripts agree on the essential correctness of 99% of the verses in the New Testament.** . . . There is more reason today, then, to agree with him [Sir Frederic Kenyon] that we possess the New Testament "in substantial integrity" and to underline that "the variations of text are so entirely questions of detail, not of essential substance."

It is true that the Latter-day Saints have taken the position that the present Bible is much changed from its original form. However, greatest changes would logically have occurred in **writings more remote than the New Testament.** The textual history of the New Testament gives every reason to assume a fairly stable transmission of the documents we possess. . . .

Joseph Smith said that "many important points touching the salvation of man, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled." (*Documentary History of the Church*, I, 245, 1832.) Major losses might occur by elimination of whole books **rather than alteration of those admitted as canonical.** Nor do subsequent changes have to **be based on open changes of the writings.** The forces of evil are more effective at changing the meaning of true terms and concepts than removing them. (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium of the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, Brigham Young University, 1963, pp. 52-59)

These statements will probably come as a surprise to Mormon writers who claim that the Catholics conspired to change the Bible, especially since they came from the pen of one of their most noted scholars.

Before Mormon writers accuse Christians of altering the Bible they should take a serious look at some of their own revelations published in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. A careful examination of these revelations shows that thousands of words were added, deleted or changed (see pages 18-26 of this book).

If the churches which have preserved the Bible these many centuries had altered it at the same rate that Joseph Smith changed his revelations, we would be lucky to have anything the same as it was originally written.



## “Inspired Revision”

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett stated: “In the spring of 1831, Joseph Smith began what has come to be known as ‘The Inspired Translation of the Bible.’ It was in large part not a translation at all. It was rather a revision of the King James Bible” (*The Restored Church*, 1956, p. 134). Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, gives this information:

... at the command of the Lord and while acting under the spirit of revelation, the Prophet corrected, revised, altered, added to, and deleted from the King James Version of the Bible to form what is now commonly referred to as the Inspired Version of the Bible. ... the marvelous flood of light and knowledge revealed through the Inspired Version of the Bible is one of the **great evidences of the divine mission of Joseph Smith**. (*Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, 1958, pp. 351-352)

Actually, the Inspired Version of the Bible has been the source of much embarrassment for the Mormon Church leaders. It was never published during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. Joseph Smith’s wife, Emma, retained the manuscript and would not give it to Willard Richards, who was sent by Brigham Young to obtain it. We find the following in the *History of the Church*, vol. 7, page 260: “. . . Willard Richards called on Emma Smith, widow of the Prophet, for the new translation of the Bible: She said she did not feel disposed to give it up at present.” In 1866 Emma gave the manuscript to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and they published it.

Since Brigham Young was unable to obtain the manuscript from Emma, he tried to play down the importance of Joseph Smith’s Inspired Translation:

That made us very anxious, in the days of Joseph, to get the **new translation**; but the Bible is **good enough just as it is**, it will answer my purpose, and it used to answer it very well when I was preaching in the world. . . .

The Bible is **good enough as it is**, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 116)

This statement by Brigham Young seems to cast a shadow of doubt upon the revelations given by Joseph Smith, for Smith claimed that he was commanded by God to make this revision of the Scriptures. In a revelation given January 10, 1832, we read:

Now, verily I say unto you my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, saith the Lord, it is expedient to translate again;

And, inasmuch as it is practicable, to preach in the regions round about until conference; and after that it is expedient to continue the work of translation until it be finished. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 73: 3-4)

The Mormon scholar Reed C. Durham, Jr., gives the following information concerning this matter:

... God had commanded him to make that Revision. The command from God was reason enough, the knowledge gained from the above revelation conditioned his soul to better understand that command.

There are eighteen sections in the *Doctrine and Covenants* wherein the Lord gives commands and specific instructions relating to the Revision. (“A History of Joseph Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965, pp. 23-24)

Booth here revealed one of the strongest points oft-times overlooked by Latter-day Saint writers about the Revision. To the early Church members this work was considered to be an important and an essential part of the restoration work, whereas, in the present day, the Revision work is too often thought to be a lesser work not essential to the work of the Lord. Booth, however, revealed the thought of the early Church, which was consistent with the early revelations upon the subject. (*Ibid.*, p. 72)

Though it was clear to the Church that it was the Lord’s will that the Revision should be published, the lack of sufficient time and money, prevented its publication during Joseph Smith’s lifetime. (*Ibid.*, page 83)

The Reorganized Church printed the Inspired Revision in 1867. Brigham Young was very opposed to the idea of members of his church receiving the Revision from an “apostate” organization. The Apostle Orson Pratt, on the other hand, wanted to accept it, and this caused some conflict with Brigham Young.

Although the Mormon Church has never printed the Inspired Version, the Reorganized Church’s printing is now available at the Mormon-owned Deseret Book Store, and Mormon scholars use it freely in their writings. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement:

Towards the end of the year 1830, with Sidney Rigdon as assistant, he began a somewhat full “explanation and review” of the Old and New Testaments. The work then done is a **convincing evidence of Joseph’s inspiration**. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, 1951, p. 139)

Joseph Smith accepted the Bible as far as it was translated correctly but felt that many errors which should be corrected had crept into the work of the copyist and translators. During the first year of the Church and almost to the end of his life, he endeavored through inspiration from on high to correct those many departures from the original text. This was not fully completed when he died, but his manuscript exists in the original and in copies, and has been published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It is a **remarkable evidence of the prophetic power of Joseph Smith**. Hundreds of changes make clear many a disputed text. (*Ibid.*, p. 251)

Dr. Truman G. Madsen, of the Brigham Young University, made these comments concerning the Inspired Revision:

With the cooperation of the historians of both churches, the Institute of Mormon Studies at Brigham Young University, and other interested agencies, Dr. Matthews has compared, verse by verse, the Bernhisel manuscript, the two editions of the Reorganized Church, and, in several cases of variant readings, the original manuscript of the work in the library at Independence.

His study enables us to say:

1. The recent 1944 New Corrected Edition of the Reorganized Church, which book many interested Latter-day Saints have acquired, is faithful to the original manuscript and a **most accurate printing**. The editors have scrupulously worked to overcome normal scribal mistakes, typographical errors, and difficult notations (e.g., transposed sentences or confusing marginal notations). Matthews concludes that this edition is worthy of trust. (*Improvement Era*, March 1970, p. 70)

Before Joseph Fielding Smith became President of the Church he claimed that he wanted the church to publish its own edition of the Inspired Revision. In a letter to Joseph F. Merrill he stated:

Answering your inquiry in regard to “The Inspired Scriptures” I will say that several times I have suggested that we get out an edition for our own use but this has never met with very hearty approval. The last time President Grant merely said that since his predecessors had not seen fit to publish these scriptures in full that he was not inclined to do so. (Letter written by Joseph Fielding Smith, as cited in “A History of Joseph Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” by Reed Durham, pp. 271-272)

Joseph Fielding Smith became President of the Mormon Church in 1970, but the church has still not printed the Inspired Revision. Actually, we do not feel that any President of the Church will allow this book to be printed because it would tend to embarrass the church and to show that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God.

The Mormon Church is faced with a peculiar dilemma with regard to Joseph Smith’s Inspired Revision. They cannot reject it entirely without admitting that he was a deceiver. On the other hand, if they were to print the Revision and fully endorse it, they would be faced with



equally unsurmountable problems. The contents of the Inspired Revision actually contradict many of the doctrines that are now taught in the Mormon Church. Therefore, the Mormon Church can neither fully accept nor fully reject the Inspired Version of the Bible. They claim that Joseph Smith was inspired to translate, and then turn right around and use the King James Version. Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

The Church uses the King James Version of the Bible because it is the best version translated by the power of man. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 191)

Since the Mormon Church leaders cannot come right out and say that Joseph Smith made mistakes in his Inspired Version, they have devised another excuse to keep from fully endorsing it. They claim that Joseph Smith never finished the translation. Joseph Fielding Smith wrote:

The revision of the Bible which was done by Joseph Smith at the command of the Lord was not a complete revision of the Bible. There are many parts of the Bible in which the Prophet did not change the meaning where it is incorrect. He revised as far as the Lord permitted him at the time, and it was his intention to do more, but because of persecution this was not accomplished. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 191)

In his book, *Essentials in Church History*, page 139, Joseph Fielding Smith said:

In course of time the Prophet went through the Bible, topic by topic, revising as he was led by revelation. The work was never fully complete, . . .

Reed Durham gives this interesting information concerning this matter:

The Revision was incomplete because after it was finished it still contained errors and contradictions. The text of Mark 15:28 in the Revision contradicts that in John 19:14-16. The latter states that Jesus had not been crucified before the sixth hour; the passage in Mark states that his crucifixion was at the third hour. 1 Kings 4:26 relates that King Solomon had “forty thousand stalls of horses,” but 2 Chronicles 9:25 reveals that he had only “four thousand.” . . . He revised Genesis 5:32 of the Authorized Version (Revision, Genesis 7:85) in such a way as to inform the reader that Japheth was the eldest son of Noah; but he corrected Genesis 10:21 of the Authorized Version (Revision, Genesis 10:12) to reveal that Shem was the eldest son. Joseph Smith significantly altered a passage located in 2 Chronicles 18:20-22, but had apparently overlooked that same passage in 1 Kings 22:21-23. It is apparent that Joseph Smith went to great lengths to harmonize the Gospel accounts, but occasionally failed to correct apparent errors. He corrected Mark 10:11, but failed to do the same in Matthew 19:13 and Luke 18:15. These are only a few of the passages which offer evidence of the incompleteness of the Revision. (“A History of Joseph Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” BYU, 1965, pp. 128-129)

While we certainly agree that Joseph Smith’s Inspired Revision still contains “errors and contradictions,” there is evidence to show that at one time the early Mormons considered it to have been complete. In fact, in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Joseph Smith was commanded to “continue the work of translation **until it be finished**” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 73:4).

In the *History of the Church*, under the date of February 2, 1833, we find this statement attributed to Joseph Smith:

I **completed** the translation and review of the New Testament, on the 2nd of February, 1833, and sealed it up, no more to be opened till it arrived in Zion. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 324)

In the *Church Chronology*, by Andrew Jenson, we find the following under the date of February 2, 1833: “Joseph Smith, jun., completed the translation of the New Testament.” Under the date of July 2, 1833, this statement appears: “Joseph the Prophet **finished the translation of the Bible.**” In a letter dated July 2, 1833, signed by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and F. G. Williams, the following statement is found:

We this day **finished the translation of the scriptures**, for which we return gratitude to our Heavenly Father, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 368)

The Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds stated:

With the above commands and the letters of the Prophet to the Saints we see that the scriptures at that time were considered finished. This is proved by revelation from the Lord commanding the printing and publishing the same as stated in another chapter . . . This shows that the Lord felt that the Bible contained his word and also was given in fulness. (“A Study of Joseph Smith’s Bible Revision,” by Arch Reynolds, typed copy, p. 17)

In the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Joseph Smith was commanded to print the Inspired Version:

. . . I have **commanded** you to organize yourselves, even to shinelah [print] my words, the fulness of my scriptures, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants* 104:58)

. . . the second lot on the south shall be dedicated unto me for the building of a house unto me, for the work of the **printing of the translation of my scriptures**, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants* 94:10)

. . . let him [William Law] from henceforth hearken to the counsel of my servant Joseph, . . . and **publish the new translation of my holy word** unto the inhabitants of the earth. (*Doctrine and Covenants* 124:89)

These commandments were never fulfilled. The Mormon writer Arch Reynolds stated:

Why the Bible was not published is still an enigma; of course the Saints were unsettled: they were persecuted, but many other works were published so why not the Holy Scriptures? . . .

The Lord gave Joseph a **commandment** to publish the Bible to the world, and the Lord prepared the way to accomplish this but it was not fulfilled.

The *Doctrine and Covenants* commands the Saints to teach the scriptures (Bible) as given of the Lord to Joseph to all men when it is received in full. The three commands to publish and teach them to all the world is strong evidence of the need of them to all the world. (“A Study of Joseph Smith’s Bible Revision,” p. 32)

Even with all the money the Mormon Church has today, they still have not fulfilled the command to publish the Inspired Version of the Bible to the world.

Perhaps the strangest thing of all concerning the Inspired Version of the Bible is the fact that Joseph Smith himself did not take it seriously. For instance, on pages 167-68 of this book we show how Joseph Smith ignored his own “inspired” renderings concerning the Godhead. The Mormon writer Arch S. Reynolds stated:

At times Joseph Smith **ignored his own renderings** of the **Inspired Bible** and quoted the King James version in his letters, sermons, etc. . . . In twenty-six different quotations to different parties in and out of the Church . . . in the first six volumes of the *History of the Church*, they are like the King James Bible although he had given previous varied renderings in the Inspired Bible. These passages are pertaining to all the principles of the gospel. . . . The above various renderings as given by Joseph differing in essential parts from both the King James and his previous revision show that he had grown in doctrine and had broadened in learning German, Greek, and Hebrew. (“A Study of Joseph Smith’s Bible Revision,” pp. 20, 21, 25, typed copy) The Mormon scholar Reed Durham gives this information:

There is a conspicuous lack of use of the Revision in articles printed in the *Messenger and Advocate* and *Elders’ Journal*, and Bible quotations used by Joseph Smith in his discourses indicate an almost complete ignoring of that work (“A History of Joseph Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” p. 113).

After 1833, Joseph Smith prepared and delivered many discourses and sermons which have been preserved for study. . . .

Table III records the results of the study of every Bible passage quoted by Joseph Smith in his sermons and

discourses recorded in the *History of the Church*. . . .

The study indicates that Joseph Smith rarely used a corrected Bible passage from his Revision in any of his sermons or discourses. In fact, he only quoted the Revision three times; whereas 40 per cent of the Bible verses he did quote had been altered in his sermons to read differently from the way they were quoted in the Authorized Version—yet none of these corrections were included in his Revision. When he did quote Bible passages as they read in the Authorized Version, 38 per cent of them had already been altered and had a different reading in the Revision; all of these he apparently ignored in his sermons. (*Ibid.*, pp. 137-139)

If Joseph Smith was inspired by God to translate the Bible, we would at least expect to find his revision of the book of Isaiah in harmony with the text of Isaiah found in the Book of Mormon. Even a superficial examination reveals that this is not the case. The Mormon writer Ariel L. Crowley states:

Logically, therefore, the revision of the English Bible by the translator of the Book of Mormon should have embodied in it the corrections necessitated by the more perfect text of the Book of Mormon quotations.

Examination of the Inspired Version to determine whether or not this was accomplished, discloses that a start was made in that direction, many passages being exactly corrected to conform with the Book of Mormon, while in others the passage is only partially corrected, and in still others not at all. . . . The instances cited are not cited as attacks upon the revision, but as indications that the revision could not at any time have been considered by the prophet to be complete, as he, more than any other, knew the nature of the Book of Mormon text of these passages, and many more similarly uncorrected at his death. (*About the Book of Mormon*, by Ariel L. Crowley, 1961, pp. 135, 136, 138)

The Mormon writer Reed Durham gives this interesting information:

Additional evidence that Joseph Smith's Revision was not complete is apparent from a study of the Bible (Authorized Version) passages which were quoted in the Book of Mormon. The writer has identified 618 complete Bible verses quoted in the Book of Mormon. . . .

Three additional studies comparing the altered Bible verses in the Book of Mormon with the reading of those same verses in the Revision confirm the findings of this writer: that **Joseph Smith neglected to use in his Revision the majority of Bible passages which had already been divinely corrected in the Book of Mormon translation**, which is a strong evidence of the Revision's incompleteness. . . .

The findings recorded in Table I identify 207 significantly altered Bible verses quoted in the Book of Mormon. If the Revision had been complete, these verses, believed to be divinely altered, should be in the Revision. . . . Table I indicates that the Revision included only 64 out of the 207 verses in its texts (31 per cent), which means that approximately 70 per cent of the significantly altered verses in the Book of Mormon were totally ignored by Joseph Smith for use in the Revision. There were 107 verses, or 52 per cent, which remained unchanged in the Revision; and 36 verses, or 17 per cent, have a reading different from both the Authorized Version and the Book of Mormon readings. If the Revision had been completed, Joseph Smith would surely have produced a greater harmony of Bible corrections in the Book of Mormon with those in his Revision of the Bible. ("A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," pp. 129, 130, 131, 134)

In the Reorganized LDS publication, *Saints' Herald*, May 1, 1965, page 23, we find this statement:

Passages used in the Book of Mormon and also in the Inspired Version differ so greatly that I fear one cannot hold to a verbal accuracy in detail. In Isaiah 48 there are more than fifty differences between the Inspired Version and the Book of Mormon text.

Reed Durham states that in 1823 "an angel named Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith to reveal to him the ancient records known as the Book of Mormon. In his initial conversation with

Joseph, Moroni quoted several passages of scripture which differed from those same passages in the Authorized Version. After this, Joseph Smith no doubt questioned whether other passages were in error" ("A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," pp. 21-22). In his history, Joseph Smith made a point of the fact that the angel's quotations were different from what we find in the book of Malachi:

. . . he [the angel] quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles. Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books, he quoted it thus:

For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus:

Behold, I reveal unto you the priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

He also quoted the next verse differently:

And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming. (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History 1:36-39)

Since Joseph Smith emphasized the fact that the quotations were different from the King James Version of the Bible, we would expect these verses to have been changed in his Inspired Revision to agree with the message of the angel. Instead, however, Joseph Smith followed the text of the King James Version in his Inspired Revision. In fact, he marked the entire book of Malachi as "Correct" (see photograph in *Restoration Scriptures*, p. 188). Below is the way the verses from Malachi appear in Joseph Smith's Inspired Version:

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; **and the day that cometh** shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . .

Behold, I will **send** you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord;

And he shall **turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.** (Inspired Revision, Malachi 4:1-6)

The Mormon writer Merrill Y. Van Wagoner made this statement:

Verses one, five, and six of chapter four, as they were quoted by Moroni, differ from the usual reading found in both the King James version and Inspired Revision. . . .

Notice that Elijah was to reveal the Priesthood. This reference to the Priesthood is lacking in the present Hebrew text. Instance upon instance could be cited of mistranslations being carried over from the King James to the Inspired Revision and of errors going uncorrected. This in itself is indisputable evidence that the Prophet did not completely revise the Bible.

. . . The fact that the Prophet so seldom quoted or preached his revision is further testimony that he had not received the scriptures in full. . . .

Whenever the Prophet quoted from the Bible he either retained the words of the King James version or else flatly declared it to be wrong and then gave a rendering of the passage which differed from it. **He seems to take no account of his changes in the Inspired Revision**, which of course was not printed. (*The Inspired Revision of the Bible*, by Merrill Y. Van Wagoner, 1968 ed., pp. 48, 50, 51)



The problem concerning the verses from Malachi becomes even more serious when we find that in the Book of Mormon Jesus was supposed to have related to the Nephites “the words which the Father had given unto Malachi” (3 Nephi 24:1). An examination of these words found in 3 Nephi 25:1, 5 and 6, reveal that they are also in agreement with the King James version. LaMar Petersen points out that even one of Joseph Smith’s own revelations (*Doctrine and Covenants* 133:64) quotes from the King James version of Malachi rather than following the message of the angel:

Although many years had now elapsed since his encounter with the angel, Joseph, in recording the interview, remembered the exact words that Nephi used on that memorable September night of 1823, noting perhaps as he wrote them that not only did they vary from the King James Bible, but also from his own Inspired Translation of the Scriptures (which in 1842 was still a manuscript) as well as the Savior’s quotes from Malachi in the Book of Mormon, and a revelation from God to Joseph dated November 3, 1831. (*Problems in Mormon Text*, by La Mar Petersen, p. 4)

As if this is not confusing enough, Joseph Smith delivered a discourse on Jan. 24, 1844, in which he cited Malachi 4:5 and 6. Although he followed the wording of the King James Version, he claimed that the word “turn” should be translated “bind” or “seal”—a rendering which he does not use in either the Book of Mormon or the Inspired Revision of the Bible (see *History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 183-184). It becomes very difficult to take Joseph Smith’s work seriously when we find that he was so inconsistent.

While it took many scholars, who were authorities in Greek and Hebrew, years to complete the King James Version of the Bible, Joseph Smith began his work without any knowledge of these languages and completed it in three years. Arch S. Reynolds stated:

We know that Joseph Smith was not at that time familiar with either the Greek or Hebrew language; therefore it would be impossible for him to have translated the Bible from the original tongues. Later, however, the need of the knowledge of these languages was seen by him, so he studied those languages and became quite proficient in reading the holy scriptures in those tongues. But in 1830, he was unlearned in those ancient languages. So, technically speaking, he did not translate the scriptures in his Inspired Bible.

Brother John Henry Evans concerning the inspired translation says: “In the hands of an inspired prophet of God, however, the original renderings of passages might easily be restored, for which purpose Joseph undertook the revision.” (“A Study of Joseph Smith’s Bible Revision,” p. 61)

Although some Mormon scholars now hesitate to call Joseph Smith’s Inspired Version a translation, Robert J. Matthews points out that “Every reference to it in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *History of the Church* calls it a translation” (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1968, p. 3).

The anti-Mormon writer R. C. Evans made this comment about Joseph’s Inspired Version:

Those who wish to read this marvellous work, the new Bible translated by Joseph Smith, by direct revelation, will discover that he has not translated a single word, that he had no manuscript of any kind, that he was an ignorant young man, is admitted. There is no evidence that he compared any originals with each other, nor could he have done so if the originals were before him. The claim is that it was all done by direct inspiration from the Almighty, but to call it a **translation** is the height of impudence and nonsense. . . .

Here is the secret of Smith’s power to translate. He read the Bible, thought that such and such a change should be made, either by adding a few verses, or taking away a few verses. If he had the burning sensation in his bosom it was right, and so he cut and slashed away at the Word of God to his heart’s content, and the result is the Mormon Bible. (*Forty Years in the Mormon Church—Why I Left It!* by R. C. Evans, Toronto, Canada, 1920, pp. 111, 112)

## Weak Points

Joseph Smith not only made unnecessary changes in the Bible, but he also failed to see the places where the text of the Bible really needed correction. There is one statement in the King James Version, 1 John 5:7-8, which scholars are certain is an interpolation. In modern versions of the Bible this statement has been removed to conform with the ancient Greek manuscripts. Below is a comparison of the text in the King James Version and that found in the Revised Standard Version:

KING JAMES VERSION—1 John 5:7-8: . . . **there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (*The New Testament in Four Versions*, p. 766)

REVISED STANDARD VERSION—1 John 5:8: There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree. (*The New Testament in Four Versions*, p. 766)

In *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* we find this information:

The text is found in no Greek MSS, except a few of very late date in which it has been inserted from the Latin. It is a purely Latin interpolation of African origin, which, beginning as a gloss, first found its way into the text of Spain, where it appears in the Freising Fragments, and later in the Vulgate codices Cavensis and Toletanus. Thence it spread over Europe as an unequivocal Scripture “proof” of the doctrine of the Trinity. (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, p. 258)

Bruce M. Metzger gives this information:

Among the criticisms levelled at Erasmus one of the most serious appeared to be the charge of Stunica, one of the editors of *Ximenes’ Complutensian Polyglot*, that his text lacked part of the final chapter of 1 John, namely the Trinitarian statement concerning “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth” (1 John v. 7-8, King James version). Erasmus replied that he had not found any Greek manuscript containing these words, though he had in the meanwhile examined several others besides those on which he relied when first preparing his text. In an unguarded moment Erasmus promised that he would insert the Comma Johanneum, as it is called, in future editions if a single Greek manuscript could be found that contained the passage. At length such a copy was found—or was made to order! As it now appears, the Greek manuscript had probably been written in Oxford about 1520 by a Franciscan friar named Froy (or Roy), who took the disputed words from the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus stood by his promise and inserted the passage in his third edition (1522), but he indicates in a lengthy footnote his suspicions that the manuscript had been prepared expressly in order to confute him.

Among the thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament examined since the time of Erasmus, only three others are known to contain this spurious passage. They are Greg. 88, a twelfth-century manuscript which has the Comma written in the margin in a seventeenth-century hand; Tisch. w 110, which is a sixteenth-century manuscript copy of the Complutensian Polyglot Greek text; and Greg. 629, dating from the fifteenth or, as Riggenbach has argued, from the latter half of the sixteenth century. The oldest known citation of the Comma is in a fourth-century Latin treatise entitled *Liber apologeticus* (ch. 4), attributed either to Priscillian or to his follower, Bishop Instantius of Spain. The Comma probably originated as a piece of allegorical exegesis of the three witnesses and may have been written as a marginal gloss in a Latin manuscript of 1 John, whence it was taken into the text of the Old Latin Bible during the fifth century. The passage does not appear in manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate before about A.D. 800. (*The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 101-102)



Even in Joseph Smith's time this portion of 1 John was rejected by many scholars. Adam Clarke stated:

Though a conscientious advocate for the sacred doctrine contained in the disputed text, and which I think expressly enough revealed in several other parts of the sacred writings, I must own the passage in question stands on a most dubious foundation. (*Clarke's Commentary*, vol. 6, 1824, p. 929)

An examination of the writings of Mormon scholars reveals that they also question the authenticity of this verse. Arch S. Reynolds stated:

The extraneous matter added in the Authorized Version is clearly an interpolation, since the above is wanting in every manuscript except one before the fourteenth century, and in all early versions. ("A Study of Joseph Smith's Bible Revision," p. 169)

Richard L. Anderson, of the Brigham Young University, stated:

One of the few major **additions** that seem apparent is 1 John 5:7. The observation is made that in addition to three earthly witnesses, the spirit, water, and blood, there are three heavenly witnesses, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which are one. The text of the fifth century did **not** speak of the heavenly Trinity, and the fact that very few Greek manuscripts add the heavenly Trinity makes it probable that this comment was **not** an original part of John's letter. (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, BYU, 1963, p. 53)

Now, if Joseph Smith was inspired at all in his work on the Scriptures we would expect to find this interpolation removed in his "Inspired Revision." Instead, however, we find that it appears exactly as written in the King James Version:

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one. (Inspired Version, by Joseph Smith, 1 John 5:7-8)

In our book, *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, we present more evidence to show that Joseph Smith relied so heavily upon the King James Version of the Bible that he failed to see some of the real textual problems found in the Bible. While this is certainly a serious defect in Joseph Smith's work, even more objectionable is the fact that he made changes which cannot be supported by any evidence. For instance, John 1:1 in the King James Version reads: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Joseph Smith, however, changed this verse to read: "In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God" (Inspired Revision, John 1:1).

To our knowledge Joseph Smith's rendition of this verse is not supported by any evidence. In fact, on page 384 of this book we show that "Papyrus Bodmer II," dated about 200 A.D., reads exactly like the King James Version.

Actually, Joseph Smith seems to bear witness against himself on the translation of John 1:1, for in a revelation given May 6, 1833, we find a quotation which supports the rendering in the King James Version: "Therefore, in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation—" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 93:8).

The Mormon writer Robert J. Matthews made this statement:

In the main the passages revised by Joseph Smith are **not** supported by the three great parchment manuscripts that now enjoy popularity, nor by the thousands of papyrus manuscripts and fragments, nor by the Dead Sea Scrolls. In some few passages there is a type of similarity but these are the exception rather than the rule. ("Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," by Robert J. Matthews, 1968, typed copy, p. 17)

Dr. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, has made a similar

admission with regard to the text of the Sermon on the Mount found in the Book of Mormon:

The divergent readings of the Nephite text are all interesting and thought-provoking, but **lack** the confirmation of practically **all** ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Nor do the ancient versions lend much support, a fact which might well be expected...

The remainder of 3 Nephi 12 differs in a marked degree from the parallel readings in Matthew 5.... We point out here also that the Greek manuscripts of the Gospels, as well as other ancient versions offer little support to the divergent Nephite readings. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, 1964, pp. 105-106)

The best Dr. Sperry can offer his people is a hope that some day supporting evidence in the Greek manuscripts will be found:

A Latter-day Saint textual critic would be thrilled to find Greek manuscripts of the New Testament with readings like some of those in the Book of Mormon. And who knows but someday some will be found! (*Book of Mormon Institute*, BYU, Dec. 5, 1959, p. 7)

In his Inspired Revision Joseph Smith even indicated that the book of Genesis originally contained a prophecy concerning the Book of Mormon and that his own name was mentioned there. In the King James Version, Genesis 50:24 reads:

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

In his Inspired Revision Joseph Smith added about 800 words to this verse:

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die, and go unto my fathers; and I go down to my grave with joy. The God of my father Jacob be with you, to deliver you out of affliction in the days of your bondage; for the Lord hath visited me, and I have obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of my loins, the Lord God will raise up a righteous branch out of my loins; and unto thee, whom my father Jacob hath named Israel, a prophet; (not the Messiah who is called Shilo;) and this prophet shall deliver my people out of Egypt in the days of thy bondage.

And it shall come to pass that they shall be scattered again; and a branch shall be broken off, and **shall be carried into a far country**; nevertheless they shall be remembered in the covenants of the Lord, when the Messiah cometh; for he shall be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the Spirit of power; and shall bring them out of darkness into light; out of hidden darkness, and out of captivity unto freedom.

A **seer** shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins.

Thus saith the Lord God of my fathers unto me, A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren.

And he shall bring them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers; and he shall do whatsoever work I shall command him.

And I will make him great in mine eyes, for he shall do my work; and he shall be great like unto him whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel, out of the land of Egypt; for a seer will I raise up to deliver my people out of the land of Egypt; and he shall be called Moses. And by this name he shall know that he is of thy house; for he shall be nursed by the king's daughter and shall be called her son.

And again, a **seer** will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and **unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins**; and not to the bringing forth of my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them in the last days;

Wherefore the fruit of thy loins shall write, and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to a knowledge of their fathers in the latter days; and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.

And out of weakness shall he be made strong, in that day when my work shall go forth among all my people,

which shall restore them, who are of the house of Israel, in the last days.

And that seer will I bless, and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise I give unto you; for I will remember you from generation to generation; and **his name shall be called Joseph, and it shall be after the name of his father**; and he shall be like unto you; for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand shall bring my people unto salvation.

And the Lord sware unto Joseph that he would preserve his seed for ever, saying, I will raise up Moses, and a rod shall be in his hand, and he shall gather together my people, and he shall lead them as a flock, and he shall smite the waters of the Red Sea with his rod.

And he shall have judgment, and shall write the word of the Lord. And he shall not speak many words, for I will write unto him my law by the finger of mine own hand. And I will make a spokesman for him, and his name shall be called Aaron.

And it shall be done unto thee in the last days also even as I have sworn. Therefore, Joseph said unto his brethren, God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he sware unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and to Jacob. (Inspired Revision, Genesis 50:24-36)

The reader will notice that the “choice seer” was to be “called Joseph, and it shall be after the name of his father; . . .” Joseph Smith was obviously referring to himself, for his father’s name was Joseph. The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen made this statement concerning the Bible:

. . . for indeed many plain and precious parts must have been removed from it. . . .

One of the most interesting parts of the Old Testament as it should have been, . . . were the predictions pertaining to Joseph Smith, through the writings of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. (*As Translated Correctly*, p. 64)

The Septuagint Version (a Greek version of the Old Testament, said to have been translated from the Hebrew before the time of Christ) offers no support for Joseph Smith’s Inspired Revision of Genesis 50:24, but instead is almost identical with the King James Version:

And Joseph spoke to his brethren, saying, I die, and God will surely visit you, and will bring you out of this land concerning which God sware to our fathers, Abraam, Issac, and Jacob. (*Septuagint Version of the Old Testament*, London, Genesis 50:24)

It is almost impossible to believe that this prophecy could have been dropped from both the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts without being detected. The Mormon writer Merrill Y. Van Wagoner admits the difficulty but suggests that such changes were planned by the “Spirit of Darkness”:

Over twelve long verses . . . are lacking in the King James version. In Egypt the Lord told Joseph . . . of the forthcoming Book of Mormon, and of the Prophet, . . . the removal was so carefully done that the break would pass unnoticed.

To summarize, many changes which were indicated by the Prophet’s inspired corrections are of such great regularity and of such a vital nature that they appear to have been made **deliberately** to keep the truth from man. . . . It is difficult to imagine any one individual, group, or organization having had sufficient power and influence to cause the changes to be made in both the Greek and Hebrew texts as well as in the many versions. We must lay many of those changes which we label **planned** to the workings of the **spirit of darkness**, influencing various individuals in different ages in order to thwart the purpose of the Lord. (*The Inspired Revision of the Bible*, pp. 33-34)

Besides adding his own name to the Bible, Joseph Smith added many of his own views. For instance, his bias against Negroes is apparent in several interpolations he made in the book of Genesis. In the Inspired Revision, Genesis 7:10, 14, and 29 we read:

And there was a blackness came upon all the children of Cainan, that they were despised among all people. . . . Enoch continued to call upon all the people, save it were the people of Cainan, to repent. . . . the seed of Cain were black, and had not place among them.

In the King James version, Genesis 9:26 reads: “And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.” In his Inspired Revision, Joseph Smith changed this to indicate that a “veil of darkness” came upon Canaan: “And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant, **and a veil of darkness shall cover him, that he shall be known among all men**” (Inspired Revision, Genesis 9:30).

Joseph Smith’s rendition of this verse is **not** supported by the Septuagint version. It reads as follows: “And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Sem, and Chanaan shall be his bond-servant” (Septuagint Version, Genesis 9:26).

One of the most unusual things concerning Joseph Smith’s Inspired Revision is that he put New Testament quotations and practices into the Old Testament. For instance, the Inspired Revision indicates that Adam was baptized and received the Holy Ghost:

And he called upon our father Adam, by his own voice, saying, I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh.

And he also said unto him, If thou wilt, turn unto me and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and **be baptized**, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is **Jesus Christ**, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men; and ye shall receive the gift of the **Holy Ghost**, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given you. . . .

And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water; and thus he was **baptized**.

And the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man.

And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying Thou art baptized with fire and with the **Holy Ghost**; this is the record of the Father and the Son, from henceforth and for ever; (Inspired Revision, Genesis 6:52-53, 67-69)

Notice that these verses are filled with quotations from the New Testament. In the next chapter we find this statement:

And he gave unto me a commandment, that I should baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, who is full of grace and truth, and the Holy Ghost which beareth record of the Father and the Son. (Inspired Revision, Genesis 7:13)

Wesley M. Jones made this interesting observation:

These three obscure references to Enoch would within a year, set the Mormon Prophet’s fertile imagination unwinding as we shall see. He would write a new “scripture” to supplement the Book of Mormon. He would put the words of Paul into the mouths of Moses and Enoch. (*Joseph Smith: Scripture-Maker*, Oakland, California, 1966, p. 4)

Joseph Smith makes a large interpolation in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. Some of the material seems to have been taken from the book of Hebrews in the New Testament. Below is a comparison of a few phrases:

KING JAMES VERSION—Hebrews 12:33-34: “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, **wrought righteousness**, obtained promises, **stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire**, . . .

INSPIRED REVISION—Genesis 14:26: Now Melchizedek . . . **wrought righteousness**; and when a child he feared God, and **stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire**.



Many other cases of plagiarism from the New Testament could be cited in Joseph Smith's work on Genesis.

The Mormon leaders have always had a great deal to say about apocryphal books and claim that many books have been taken from the Bible. Since Joseph Smith was supposed to have been "inspired" in his work on the Bible, we would expect to find the missing books restored in his "Inspired Version." While he did make some interpolations in the Bible, he did not restore any of the "lost" books. Robert J. Matthews stated:

Apparently he attempted to make an amended or amplified version rather than a literal translation. Nor did he attempt to restore any of the so-called "lost books" of the Bible. (*Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible*, p. 18)

Dr. Matthews refers us to the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 363. This is a letter written by Joseph Smith and his Counselors, in which was stated:

We have not found the Book of Jasher, nor any other of the lost books mentioned in the Bible as yet; nor will we obtain them at present.

Instead of restoring the "lost books" Joseph Smith actually ended up with one less book than we have in the King James Version. He claimed that "The Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings" and removed this book from his Bible (see "A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," pp. 64-65).

When he came to the books of the Apocrypha Joseph Smith's inspiration seems to have completely failed. The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie gives this information concerning the Apocrypha:

Scholars and Biblical students have grouped certain apparently scriptural Old Testament writings, which they deem to be of doubtful authenticity or of a spurious nature, under the title of the Apocrypha. . . .

These apocryphal writings were never included in the Hebrew Bible, but they were in the Greek Septuagint (the Old Testament used by the early apostles) and in the Latin Vulgate. . . .

The Apocrypha was included in the King James Version of 1611, but by 1629 some English Bibles began to appear without it, and since the early part of the 19th century it has been excluded from almost all protestant Bibles. The American Bible Society, founded in 1816, has never printed the Apocrypha in its Bibles, and the British and Foreign Bible Society has excluded it from all but some pulpit Bibles since 1827.

From these dates it is apparent that controversy was still raging as to the value of the Apocrypha at the time the Prophet began his ministry. (*Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1966, p. 41)

The King James version of the Bible which Joseph Smith used in his work contained the Apocrypha, but he did not attempt to translate it. George Arbaugh stated:

Scarcely knowing what to do with the Apocrypha and wearied of such work Rigdon and Smith had God rule that they need not be translated. Whoever has the Spirit can understand them as they are and who ever does not have the Spirit "cannot be benefited" anyway. (*Revelation in Mormonism*, p. 78)

Joseph Smith's revelation regarding the Apocrypha is found in the *Doctrine and Covenants* as Section 91:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you concerning the Apocrypha—There are many things contained therein that are true, and it is mostly translated correctly;

There are many things contained therein that are not true, which are interpolations by the hands of men.

Verily, I say unto you, that it is not needful that the Apocrypha should be translated.

Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth;

And whoso is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit therefrom;

And whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited. Therefore it is not needful that it should be translated. Amen.

Notice that the revelation states that there are "many things" contained in the Apocrypha that "are true," yet it also states that there are "many things" that are false, "which are interpolations by the hands of men." Why, then, did not Joseph Smith remove the interpolations and restore the original text of these books? Wasn't this supposed to be the purpose of his work on the Bible? The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie states:

. . . the Prophet felt impelled to inquire of the Lord as to the authenticity of the Apocrypha. From the answer it is clear that the books of the Apocrypha were inspired writings in the first instance, but that subsequent interpolations and changes had perverted and twisted their original contexts so as to leave them with doubtful value. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966 ed., pp. 41-42)

If the books of the Apocrypha were originally "inspired writings," as Mr. McConkie maintains, we would expect to find an inspired correction of them in Joseph Smith's Revision. The fact that he did nothing with them is certainly a mark against Joseph Smith's seership. The Mormon Apostle Mark E. Petersen states:

Probably the best of the questionable books of the pre-Christian era were included in the Catholic and some Protestant Bibles and called the Apocrypha. In our Church we do not use these books. (*As Translated Correctly*, 1966, p. 15)

Since Mormon writers have said a great deal about books being lost or suppressed from the Bible, they should consider the fact that Joseph Smith did not restore any of these books in his Inspired Version. The Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham, of course, could not be considered as books lost from the Bible.

Speaking of lost books, it is interesting to note that both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham are incomplete. According to Joseph Smith's own statement he lost part of the Book of Mormon, which was known as "the Book of Lehi" (see page 93 of this book). The missing pages were never found, nor have any of the Mormon leaders since Joseph Smith's time done anything towards restoring this lost book.

The Book of Abraham has only five chapters and is not considered to be a complete translation. The Mormon writer James R. Clark stated:

. . . Joseph Smith did not translate all of the record of the Book of Abraham and he did not publish all he translated. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, Salt Lake City, 1962, p. 113)

The Mormon leaders claim that they cannot print the Inspired Version because it "was never fully completed," but they print the Book of Abraham even though it was never completed. Joseph Smith also claimed to have the Book of Joseph as part of his collection of papyri. This collection was lost and most of it has never been recovered. The portion which has survived has been translated and found to be nothing but common Egyptian funerary texts.

## Beyond the Text

Robert J. Matthews, Director of Academic Research for the Department of Seminaries and Institutes in the Mormon Church, has done a great deal of research on Joseph Smith's Inspired Version. In an article published in a recent issue of *BYU Studies*, Dr. Matthews admits the possibility that Joseph Smith may have added material which was never contained in the original manuscripts of the Bible:

The question might be raised whether the Prophet actually restored the text as Matthew wrote it, or whether, being the seer that he was, he went even **beyond Matthew's text** and recorded an event that actually took place during the delivery of the Sermon, but which Matthew did not include. This cannot be determined with certainty; . . . it is unlikely that he would 'add or take from' unless he did it by the authority of divine revelation. . . . The how of the Prophet's revision of the Sermon on the Mount calls for an expression of inspiration and could represent either a restoration of material that was once in Matthew's account of the Sermon, or could go **beyond**



Matthew and reiterate an event immediately behind the text which took place during the Sermon but which Matthew did **not** record.

Another example of direct discourse found only in the Inspired Version is Matthew 9:18-21, which tells of a confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees and relates an exchange of information about the subject of baptism that is **not** recorded in the King James Version. . . . As with the earlier example the question may again be asked whether this encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees actually took place as recorded in the Inspired Version. It is either historical or it is not. If not historical then it would simply be a literary device used by the Prophet to convey a doctrine; but since the Prophet is not known to use devices of this kind in the other volumes of scripture that he produced, there is considerable reason to believe that the Prophet regarded this passage as a statement of historical fact. It seems reasonable to conclude that the Inspired Version at this point represents either a restoration of Matthew's original record or an addition of an event that took place in the ministry of Jesus which Matthew did **not** record but which is, nevertheless, germane to the discussion in Matthew's account. . . . It is probable that the Inspired Version is many things, and that only portions of it represent restorations while other portions may be **explanations, interpolations, enlargements, clarifications and the like.**

The science of textual criticism offers an objection to the Inspired Version being a restoration of the original text on the basis that the Prophet's work is **not** extensively supported by the many ancient manuscripts and fragments of the Bible that are now in common use by scholars. However, this may possibly be accounted for in two ways. First, no original manuscripts of the Bible are available, and even the earliest available documents are removed from the originals by many decades. Corruption of the texts could have taken place in the intervening years. Second, many of the passages in the Inspired Version may be reiterations of events which were either **not** recorded by the Biblical writers or were lost before the Bible was compiled, in which case even the original Bible manuscripts would not contain the information. . . .

My analysis leads me to conclude that the Inspired Version is many things. There are passages that are strongly persuasive of being restorations of the original text, or even of historical events **beyond the text.** There are other passages that may be inspired **explanations,** but not necessarily restorations. (*BYU Studies*, Winter, 1969, vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 170-174)

The Mormon scholar Dr. Hugh Nibley has recently stated that "Whatever translation comes by the gift and power of God is certainly no translation in the ordinary sense, . . . In every case in which he has produced a translation, Joseph Smith has made it clear that his inspiration is by **no means bound to any ancient text,** but is free to **take wings at any time**" (*BYU Studies*, Autumn 1969, p. 71).

Dr. Nibley and other Mormon scholars would, no doubt, like to prove that Joseph Smith carefully followed the ancient texts which he claimed to translate, but since the evidence is so clearly against such an idea, they are forced to say that Joseph Smith's inspiration went beyond the written texts. We feel that this is a very compromised position and comes very close to rejecting Joseph Smith's entire work. The question comes to mind: Where do you draw the line between "inspiration" and "imagination"?

The Reorganized LDS Church published and promoted Joseph Smith's Inspired Revision, yet their own Church Historian now appears to be on the verge of repudiating it. In his recent book, *Restoration Scriptures*, Richard P. Howard made these statements:

Viewing these subjects as he did from the vantage point of his own Christian background, Joseph Smith quite naturally would have tended to read into the symbolic pre-Christian language of the Old Testament certain uniquely Christian meanings. . . . For example, references to the Holy Ghost and to the Only Begotten—terms arising from the early Christian community—help one to see that even at this early stage of development the text in a sense represents Joseph Smith's

studied theological commentary on the King James Version of the early Genesis chapters of the Bible.

. . . Joseph's heavy reliance on the early seventeenth century Elizabethan English language and style of the King James Version throughout this second document makes this verbal inspiration approach to the language of the early Genesis chapters of his New Translation untenable. (*Restoration Scriptures*, 1969, p. 77)

Whatever the case, the alterations of the King James text in Matthew 24 of the New Translation neither add materially to the content nor elucidate the theological implications of the Matthean text. (*Ibid.*, p. 86)

It is thus unnecessary and could be misleading to appear to claim "direct" revelation in the determination of the entire text of the Inspired Version as the preface written for the 1867 edition apparently implied. (*Ibid.*, p. 151)

### "Drastically Changed"

While the Mormon Church has not printed the Inspired Revision in its entirety, a few chapters are printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, under the title, Book of Moses. Joseph Smith's "inspired" revision of Matthew, chapter 24, is also included in the *Pearl of Great Price*. The Mormon Church accepts the *Pearl of Great Price* as scripture, and it is one of the four standard works of the LDS Church.

When we compare the text of the Book of Moses as it was first printed in 1851 with the way it reads today we find that some serious changes have been made. In the pages that follow we show photographs of two pages of the original 1851 edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*. We have marked all the changes that would have to be made in the text to bring it into conformity with the 1965 edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*.

James R. Harris, who was a student at the Brigham Young University, wrote a thesis entitled, "A Study of the Changes in the Contents of the Book of Moses From the Earliest Available Sources to the Current Edition." In this thesis James R. Harris made these statements:

Orson Pratt was the Editor of the first American edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*. This publication became available to the public about the 21st of June 1878.

The American edition was **more drastically changed than any previous publication** by a member of the Church. ("A Study of the Changes in the Contents of the Book of Moses From the Earliest Available Sources to the Current Edition." M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1958, typed copy, p. 226)

From the standpoint of omissions and additions of words, the American Edition is the most spectacular rendition. On page forty-four of his *Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, Elder Milton R. Hunter makes the following statement:

The first American edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* was published in Salt Lake City in 1878. It agreed in practically every detail with the first edition which was published by Franklin D. Richards in England in 1851.

Brother Hunter was probably not thinking in terms of specific changes in the text or he could **not** have made the above statement. There were 147 words omitted in the American edition, 113 of those omissions are sustained in our current edition. Some of the words added to the American edition had **impressive doctrinal implications.** (*Ibid.*, pp. 224-225)

In his study of the changes in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Melvin Peterson observed that the Latter Day Saints, who lived at the time Joseph Smith received revelations, were not disturbed by changes made in the revelations. Only non-members of the Church were upset because their concept of revelation was not founded upon experience.

AND THE WOMAN SAID UNTO THE SERPENT: WE MAY EAT OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREES OF THE GARDEN; -W.A.

TOUCH T.C.

EYES T.C.

AND THEY SEWED FIG-LEAVES TOGETHER AND MADE THEMSELVES APRONS. -W.A.

AMONGST T.C.

THY T.C.

I -W.A.

HAST THOU T.C.

THOU SHOULDEST T.C.

COMMANDEST T.C.

COMMANDED THEE T.C.

I -W.A.

I T.C.

THY T.C.

GOD -W.A.

W.D.

UNTO ADAM, I, -W.A.

THY T.C.

THEE T.C.

THY T.C.

SHALT THOU T.C.

THY T.C.

THOU SHALT T.C.

WAST T.C.

SHALT THOU T.C.

I, THE LORD GOD T.C.

W.D.

HIS T.C.

I -W.A.

ADAM T.C.

serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which I, the Lord God, had made. And Satan put it into the heart of the serpent, (for he had drawn away many after him,) and he sought also to beguile Eve, for he knew not the mind of God: wherefore he sought to destroy the world. ~~And~~ and he said unto the Woman: yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden, (and he spake by the mouth of the serpent,) but of the fruit of the tree which thou beholdest in the midst of the garden, God hath said ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye ~~take~~ it, lest ye die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the Woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it became pleasant to the ~~eye~~, and a tree to be desired to make her wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and ~~gave also~~ unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they had been naked."

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God, as they were walking in the garden, in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife ~~hid~~ themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where ~~are you going?~~ And he said, I heard ~~your~~ voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I beheld that I was naked, and I hid myself.

And the Lord God said unto Adam, Who told ~~you~~ that you were naked? ~~Have you eaten of the tree whereof I bid you that you should not eat?~~ If so you should surely die! And the man said, The woman ~~whom you gave me,~~ and ~~commanded~~ that she should remain with me, gave me of the fruit of the tree, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this which ~~you~~ have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And ~~again~~ the Lord said unto the woman, I will greatly multiply ~~your~~ sorrow, and ~~your~~ conception. In sorrow you shall bring forth children, and ~~your~~ desire shall be to ~~your~~ husband, and he shall rule over ~~you~~.

W.D.

AND THE SERPENT SAID UNTO THE WOMAN: YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE; -W.A.

ALSO GAVE T.C.

WENT TO HIDE T.C.

I -W.A.

GOEST THOU T.C.

THEE THOU WAST T.C.

THOU SHOULDEST T.C.

THOU GAVEST T.C.

SHE -W.A.

THOU HAST T.C.

THING -W.A.

THY T.C.

I, THE LORD GOD, SAID: -W.A.

THOU HAST T.C.

HAST T.C.

THOU SHALT T.C.

THOU SHALT T.C.

THOU T.C.

THOU SHALT T.C.

THOU T.C.

THAT T.C.

ADAM T.C.

THEM -W.A.

HIS WIFE T.C.

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

W.A. — Words Added

W.D. — Words Deleted

T.C. — Textual Change

Pages 14 and 16 of the *Pearl of Great Price*, 1851 Edition. The pages have been cut to better mark the changes.

SERPENT: BECAUSE THOU HAST DONE THIS THOU SHALT BE CURSED ABOVE ALL CATTLE, AND ABOVE EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD; UPON THY BELLY SHALT THOU GO, AND DUST SHALT THOU EAT ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE; AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN, BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED; AND HE SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL. UNTO THE —W.A.

AND ADAM CALLED HIS WIFE'S NAME EVE, BECAUSE SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF ALL LIVING; FOR THUS HAVE I, THE LORD GOD, CALLED THE FIRST OF ALL WOMEN, WHICH ARE MANY. UNTO ADAM, AND ALSO UNTO HIS WIFE, DID I, THE LORD GOD, MAKE COATS OF SKINS, AND CLOTHED THEM.

AND I, THE LORD GOD, SAID UNTO MINE ONLY BEGOTTEN: BEHOLD, THE MAN IS BECOME AS ONE OF US TO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL; AND NOW LEST HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND AND PARTAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, AND EAT AND LIVE FOREVER, THEREFORE I, THE LORD GOD, WILL SEND HIM FORTH FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN, TO TILL THE GROUND FROM WHENCE HE WAS TAKEN; FOR AS I, THE LORD GOD, LIVETH, EVEN SO MY WORDS CANNOT RETURN VOID, FOR AS THEY GO FORTH OUT OF MY MOUTH THEY MUST BE FULFILLED.

SO I DROVE OUT THE MAN, AND I PLACED AT THE EAST OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, CHERUBIM AND A FLAMING SWORD, WHICH TURNED EVERY WAY TO KEEP THE WAY OF THE TREE OF LIFE.

(AND THESE ARE THE WORDS WHICH I SPAKE UNTO MY SERVANT MOSES, AND THEY ARE TRUE EVEN AS I WILL; AND I HAVE SPOKEN THEM UNTO YOU. SEE THOU SHOW THEM UNTO NO MAN, UNTIL I COMMAND YOU, EXCEPT TO THEM THAT BELIEVE. AMEN.) AND IT CAME TO PASS THAT —W.A.

TO-W.A. and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain, and his offering, he had not respect. Now Satan knew this, and it pleased him. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou angry? Why is your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desires to have you; and except you shall hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver you up, and it shall be unto you according to his desire.

THOU DOEST-T.C.  
LIETH-T.C.  
DOEST-T.C.  
THOU SHALT-T.C.  
THEE-T.C.  
THOU SHALT T.C.

WROTH-T.C.  
ART THOU WROTH-T.C.  
THY-T.C.  
THOU-T.C.  
THEE-T.C.  
DESIRETH T.C.

AND THOU SHALT RULE OVER HIM;  
FOR FROM THIS TIME FORTH THOU SHALT BE THE FATHER OF HIS LIES; THOU SHALT BE CALLED PERDITION; FOR THOU WAST ALSO BEFORE THE WORLD.  
AND IT SHALL BE SAID IN TIME TO COME-- THAT THESE ABOMINATIONS WERE HAD FROM CAIN; FOR HE REJECTED THE GREATER COUNSEL WHICH WAS HAD FROM GOD; AND THIS IS A CURSING WHICH I WILL PUT UPON THEE, EXCEPT THOU REPENT.  
AND CAIN WAS WROTH, AND LISTENED NOT ANY MORE TO THE VOICE OF THE LORD, NEITHER TO ABEL, HIS BROTHER, WHO WALKED IN HOLINESS BEFORE THE LORD.  
AND ADAM AND HIS WIFE MOURNED BEFORE THE LORD, BECAUSE OF CAIN AND HIS BRETHREN.  
AND IT CAME TO PASS THAT CAIN TOOK ONE OF HIS BROTHERS' DAUGHTERS TO WIFE, AND THEY LOVED SATAN MORE THAN GOD.  
AND SATAN SAID UNTO CAIN: SWEAR UNTO ME BY THY THROAT, AND IF THOU TELL IT THOU SHALT DIE; AND SWEAR THY BRETHREN BY THEIR HEADS, AND BY THE LIVING GOD, THAT THEY TELL IT NOT; FOR IF THEY TELL IT, THEY SHALL SURELY DIE; AND THIS THAT THY FATHER MAY NOT KNOW IT; AND THIS DAY I WILL DELIVER THY BROTHER ABEL INTO THINE HANDS.  
AND SATAN SWARE UNTO CAIN THAT HE WOULD DO ACCORDING TO HIS COMMANDS, AND ALL THESE THINGS WERE DONE IN SECRET.  
AND CAIN SAID: TRULY I AM MAHAN, THE MASTER OF THIS GREAT SECRET, THAT I MAY MURDER AND GET GAIN. WHEREFORE CAIN WAS CALLED MASTER MAHAN, AND HE GLORIED IN HIS WICKEDNESS. — W. A.

CAIN-W.A. And Cain went into the field and talked with his brother Abel. And while they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him. And Cain gloried in what he had done, saying, I am free; surely the flocks of my brother will give all into my hands.

THAT WHICH T.C.  
FALLETH-T.C.  
AND-T.C.  
THY-T.C.  
THOU-T.C.  
THOU SHALT-T.C.  
THY-T.C.  
SHALT THOU-T.C.  
W.D.  
WROTH ALSO-T.C.  
W.D.  
THE LORD-T.C.  
FINDETH-T.C.  
THAT HE-T.C.  
SLAYETH THEE T.C.  
I-W.A.

ABEL, HIS BROTHER-T.C.  
IT CAME TO PASS THAT-W.A.  
ABEL, HIS BROTHER-T.C.  
THY-T.C.  
HAST-T.C.  
HATH-T.C.  
THOU TILLEST T.C.  
IT-T.C.  
THY-T.C.  
TREE-T.C.  
THOU DIDST ACCEPT-T.C.  
NOT MINE-T.C.  
THOU HAST-T.C.  
W.D.  
THY-T.C.  
MINE INIQUITIES-T.C.  
WHOSOEVER-T.C.  
W.D.  
I-D.A.

And it came to pass, that Noah and his sons hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed, and they were called the sons of God. And when these men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of men saw that their daughters were fair, they took them wives even as they chose. And the Lord said unto Noah, the daughters of thy sons have sold themselves; for behold mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice. And it came to pass, that Noah prophesied, and taught the things of God, even as it was in the beginning. And the Lord said unto Noah, my Spirit shall not always strive with man, for he shall know that all flesh shall die; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years; and if men do not repent, I will send in my floods upon them.

And in those days there were giants on the earth, and they sought Noah to take away his life; but the Lord was with Noah, and the power of the Lord was upon him.

W.D.  
W.D.  
THESE-T.C.  
AND-W.A.  
THE-T.C.



Can we say the same for the average Latter Day Saint today? Would members of the Church become upset if suddenly confronted with some of the **more drastic changes** made in the American edition as compared with earlier publications? (*Ibid.*, p. 237)

There is little doubt that most members of the Mormon Church today would become very disturbed “if suddenly confronted with some of the more drastic changes,” and, contrary to Melvin Petersen’s statement, the members of the Mormon Church who lived in Joseph Smith’s time were also disturbed by changes that were made in the revelations. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, stated that when it became known that Joseph Smith had changed his revelations, “the result was **that some of the members left the church on account of it**” (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, p. 61). Even though the Mormon leaders had made some “drastic changes” in the 1878 edition, in 1902 they made another revision. James R. Clark, of Brigham Young University, made this statement:

Evidently some time previous to the General Conference of the Church in April, 1902, the First Presidency of the Church had decided that the time had come to make a major revision of *The Pearl of Great Price*. It seems that they must have called Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in and given him the prime responsibility for the revision. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, 1962, pp. 207-208)

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, once tried to explain away the changes that were made in the Book of Mormon by saying that the printer who published the first edition was “unfriendly” and made errors which had to be corrected in later editions. The changes in the *Pearl of Great Price* cannot be explained in this way, for the first edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* was published by Franklin D. Richards, who was an Apostle in the Mormon Church. Certainly, he cannot be accused of being “unfriendly” to the church.

In an article published in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, James R. Harris made these statements:

**Changes** have been made in the wording of **every book** that is included among the standard works of the Church, but misunderstandings regarding the nature, origin, and method of change have disturbed some members of the Church in every generation since the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . Unfortunately there has also been some clouding of the issue by those who have **flatly denied** that there have been changes or those who have not made it clear as to what they mean by “no changes.” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1968, p. 361)

The concepts given to a prophet were and are divine; the words with which he transmitted them are and were human. Latter-day Saints should be able to accept new revelation as it flows from the living prophet, and to accept clarifications of past revelation as they come through the proper channels of authority. . . .

Those, in past generations, who were disgruntled over changes that were made in the earliest renditions of the Book of Moses or in any other scripture were worshipping dead things. Their ears were not inclined toward the living God who speaks to his Church through his living prophets. . . .

A tolerance for **change** has never been more vital. (*Ibid.*, p. 382)

## Revising the Revisions

Although Dr. Harris admits that changes were made in the *Pearl of Great Price*, he feels that Joseph Smith himself made the changes in manuscripts before his death. In other words, he feels that when the Mormon leaders changed the text of the *Pearl of Great Price* in 1878, they were bringing it into conformity with changes Joseph Smith made in the manuscripts during his lifetime.

Richard P. Howard, Church Historian for the Reorganized Church, has recently released new information which gives some support to Dr. Harris’ idea. He shows that there were a number of different manuscripts involved in the production of the Inspired Revision and that Joseph Smith often **revised his own revisions** and left the manuscripts in a very confused state:

Many texts reveal that the process was **not** some kind of automatic verbal or visual revelatory experience on the part of Joseph Smith. He often caused a text to be written in one form and later **reworded** his initial revision. The manuscripts in some cases show a considerable time lapse between such reconsiderations, . . .

A considerable number of places in NT #2 show that initially Joseph Smith considered certain texts in the King James Version to be either correct or in need of slight revision, but that on latter consideration he decided to **amend them further**. Since the manuscript pages were already written and filled to the extent that the later **corrections** could not be included, the problem was solved by writing the text out **on a scrap of paper and pinning or sewing it** to the appropriate manuscript page. (*Restoration Scriptures*, pp. 93, 96)

Therefore OT #3 represents a third draft manuscript of Section 22 and Genesis 1-7, a second draft manuscript of Genesis 8-24:42a, and a first draft manuscript of the remainder of the Old Testament, although **revised considerable by interpolations** written in later years **between the lines and on separate scraps of paper** pinned to the manuscript pages. (*Ibid.*, p. 106)

July 2, 1833, has traditionally been accepted as the conclusion date of Joseph Smith’s revision of the King James Bible. However, in the light of what has been stated earlier, this date should be thought of as the final manuscript entry made by the scribe on that date at the conclusion of the initial consideration of the Old Testament. **Many** of the texts written during that initial period of revision were reconsidered and subjected to further **revision** during the remaining eleven years of Joseph Smith’s life.

When one turns to nearly any page of OT #3 containing substantial initial revision of the King James Version, **different colors of ink appear, showing later revisions**, written between the lines or on separate scraps of paper and pinned to the manuscript pages. These are most likely in the handwriting of Joseph Smith, Jr. The use of darker ink, and the fact that many of them appear to be in the hand of Joseph Smith, Jr., constitute evidence that from time to time Joseph Smith reviewed his earlier work and refined revisions already made and introduced new revisions as he pressed forward toward hoped for publication. (*Ibid.*, pp. 122-123)

. . . the manuscripts indicate rather clearly that Joseph Smith, Jr., by his continued practice of **rerevising his earlier texts** (occasionally as **many as three times**), demonstrated that he did **not** believe that at any of those points of **rerevision** he had dictated a perfectly inerrant text by the power or voice of God. . . . It is thus unnecessary and could be **misleading** to appear to claim “direct” revelation in the determination of the entire text of the Inspired Version as the preface written for the 1867 edition apparently implied. (*Ibid.*, p. 151)

Richard P. Howard’s statement that Joseph Smith **rerevised** his earlier texts “occasionally as many as **three times**” is certainly a serious indictment against Joseph Smith’s work and plainly shows that his Inspired Revision is anything but “inspired.” The fact that he could not make up his mind shows that he was tampering with the Scriptures according to his own understanding rather than receiving revelation from God. The Mormon writer Truman G. Madsen admits that Joseph Smith revised his own revisions:

3. The documents provide indications of the mode of the Prophet’s procedure. He often revised a passage, later added to or amended it, and then, in a **third** attempt, clarified it further. Some of his corrections are inconclusive because the marginal note in the text is not specified as to exact placement. In some such cases we

infer that he saw a problem but had not yet fully resolved it. (*Improvement Era*, March 1970, p. 70).

The reader will remember that Brigham Young condemned the Inspired Version of the Bible printed by the Reorganized Church. James R. Harris, of Brigham Young University, states: “The minutes of the School of the Prophets indicate that President Brigham Young regarded the Revision ‘spurious’ and that he brought Elder Pratt to some level of agreement with his position” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1968, p. 374, n. 23). On the other hand, Brigham Young had “high regard” for the first edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* (see *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, by James R. Clark, p. 205). After Brigham Young’s death the church leaders completely repudiated his ideas concerning the accuracy of these books, for they changed the text of the *Pearl of Great Price* to agree with the Reorganized Church’s printing of the Inspired Revision. James R. Harris said that “every major change in the American edition [of the *Pearl of Great Price*] appears in identical form in the Inspired Revision” (“A Study of the Changes in the Contents of the Book of Moses . . .,” p. 225).

The fact that the Mormon Church leaders changed the text of the *Pearl of Great Price* to agree with the Inspired Version seems to indicate that they felt that the “apostate” Reorganized Church had a more accurate version of the scriptures than they did. In other words, they put more trust in the publication by the Reorganized Church than they did in the word of Brigham Young, the second Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the church.

It is rather interesting to note that Brigham Young died in 1877, and before a year had passed the new altered edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* was published. It is also significant that Orson Pratt, the man who had disagreed with Brigham Young over the accuracy of the Inspired Revision, was the Editor of the 1878 edition.

In his thesis, James R. Harris maintained that Orson Pratt based his revisions in the 1878 edition of the *Pearl of Great Price* upon a copy of the handwritten manuscripts made by John Bernhisel before these manuscripts were obtained by the Reorganized Church:

**We insist** that Orson Pratt used the Bernhisel manuscript as the source for the American edition for two reasons. First, he **would not be willing to trust the product of an apostate church** (Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints). Second, he had access to a primary source in the Bernhisel manuscript. . . .

Joseph Fielding Smith, who recently became President of the Church, assured James R. Harris that the text of the Bernhisel manuscript was “almost identical to the first edition of the Inspired Revision as published by the Reorganized Church,” but he would not allow him to see the manuscript (see our book *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, pp. 51-52).

The Mormon scholar Reed Durham was not content to base his conclusions on Joseph Fielding Smith’s statements. He obtained access to the Bernhisel manuscript, and his research led him to the following conclusions:

In Harris’ attempt to account for the exact similarity between the Book of Moses texts in the 1878 American edition and the Holy Scriptures published in 1867, he assumed that: (1) Orson Pratt had possession of the Bernhisel Copy, (2) that the Bernhisel Copy was completed, and (3) that it was exactly the same as the original manuscript. As **none of these assumptions is correct**, the most correct assumption might be that Orson Pratt, knowing that the source for the Revision as published by the Reorganized Church was the original manuscript and trusting that they accurately preserved that text, corrected his text to harmonize with it. (“A History of Joseph

Smith’s Revision of the Bible,” Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 176)

Since Reed Durham’s dissertation was written, James R. Harris has changed his mind somewhat concerning this matter. He still feels that there “is a strong indication that Pratt used the Bernhisel or possibly some other **unknown** manuscript of equal authority,” but he now admits that “It is possible that Orson Pratt had enough confidence in the Reorganite publication of the Inspired Revision that he accepted that rendition without making any effort to check it against the primary sources available to him” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1968, p. 374).

However this may be, the Mormon leaders also made changes in the text of Joseph Smith’s *History* to bring it into conformity with the changes they had made in the Book of Moses as printed in the *Pearl of Great Price*. James R. Harris stated:

Extracts from the *History* of the Prophet were being published in the *Times and Seasons*. The Editor of the Periodical published the extract just as the prophet had recorded it in his history and before any revision or correction had taken place. The validity of the above statement may be questioned on the grounds that the *History of the Church* records the revelation just as it appears in the current (1902) edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*. An unwary reader might conclude that the Prophet recorded the revelation in his journal as it appears in the published *History*. Such a conclusion is not remotely possible since the published *History* rendition contains **changes** that were not in the text until 1902. . . . No doubt it was within the right of the Editors (with the sanction of the First Presidency) to change the phraseology in those verses of the Book of Moses that were published in the *History* to conform with the standard text, which would be the “completely” revised manuscript of the Inspired Revision. Unfortunately the historical value of this section of the *History of the Church* is **greatly reduced**. (“A Study of the Changes in the Contents of the Book of Moses . . .,” p. 213-214)

Before they were removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the “Lectures on Faith” had to be changed to conform with the text found in the *Pearl of Great Price* (see our book *Mormon Scriptures and the Bible*, pp. 52-53).

## Conclusion

The many changes made in the “inspired” renderings and the suppression of evidence has tended to undermine confidence in Joseph Smith’s work on the Bible. Earlier in this chapter we quoted the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe as saying that the Inspired Revision is “a remarkable evidence of the prophetic power of Joseph Smith.” We cannot accept this statement, for a careful examination of his work reveals unmistakable evidence that it is merely a human production and contains many serious errors.

The Mormon writer Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy, made this fantastic claim concerning Joseph Smith’s works:

The Prophet Joseph Smith produced for the world three new volumes of holy scriptures, namely the Book of Mormon, the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and the *Pearl of Great Price*, and, in addition, he revised the Bible. No prophet who has ever lived has accomplished such a tremendous feat. There are only 177 pages in the Old Testament attributed to Moses, while Joseph Smith either translated through the gift and power of God or received as direct revelation from Jehovah 835. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 18, 1970, p. 14)

While we must agree that Joseph Smith produced a great deal of material which purports to be scripture, we do not feel that this material bears any evidence of divine inspiration.





## The New Mormon Bible

On pages 386-87 of this book, we made this observation:

The Mormon Church is faced with a peculiar dilemma with regard to Joseph Smith's Inspired Revision. They cannot reject it entirely without admitting that he was a deceiver. On the other hand, if they were to print the Revision and fully endorse it, they would be faced with equally unsurmountable problems. The contents of the Inspired Revision actually contradict many of the doctrines that are now taught in the Mormon Church. Therefore, the Mormon Church can neither fully accept nor fully reject the Inspired Version of the Bible. They claim that Joseph Smith was inspired to translate, and then turn right around and use the King James Version. Joseph Fielding Smith stated: "The Church uses the King James Version of the Bible because it is the best version translated by the power of man."

We also pointed out that before he became President of the Church Joseph Fielding Smith wanted the church to publish the Inspired Revision. Smith served as President for over two years, but did nothing towards bringing the Inspired Revision into print. In *The Changing World of Mormonism*, page 385, we gave this information:

On November 20, 1974, the Mormon church obtained microfilm copies of the original manuscripts of the "inspired revision" from the Reorganized Church. We do not feel, however, that any president of the church will allow this book to be printed because it would tend to embarrass the church and to show that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God.

In 1979 it was rumored that the church was about to print the Inspired Version. As it turned out, however, the new Bible is only a printing of the King James text with "Excerpts from the Prophet Joseph Smith's translation . . . Short excerpts are provided in the footnotes; longer excerpts are provided in the Appendix."

Two things should be noted about this Bible: One, the portions taken from Joseph Smith's "translation" have not been canonized. The shorter excerpts are merely footnotes to the King James text and the larger ones are separated from the Bible text by 793 pages of material—i.e., a "Topical Guide" and a "Bible Dictionary." Two, the book only contains "excerpts" from Smith's translation. In other words, the Mormon leaders have included only the portions which they deemed advisable. For instance, Joseph Smith's interpolation that Canaan would be made black (" . . . a veil of darkness shall cover him, that, he shall be known among all men") is included in a footnote to Genesis 9:26 (page 14), but his revision of Matthew 5:40-41 is neither found in the footnotes nor in the longer excerpts. Joseph Smith had tried to destroy Jesus' teaching about going the extra mile in his Inspired Revision, but in doing this he had contradicted the translation he gave in the Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 12:40-41) which reads the same as the King James Version.

In any case, the fact that the Mormon leaders would print only "extracts" from Joseph Smith's translation and still use the King James Version leads a person to believe they lack confidence in the work.

## The Nag Hammadi Texts

Some members of the Mormon Church continue to make extravagant claims concerning new discoveries which are supposed to support Mormon scriptures. One man, for instance, wrote a letter to the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at Brigham Young University in which he stated:

I have been talking about the LDS church with some of its members at the Institute at PSU for the past few weeks, and several times mention has been made of documents having been discovered,

apparently near the Dead Sea, that support some of Mormonism's key doctrines.

On November 16, 1978, Professor Ross T. Christensen was very forthright in his answer:

I know of no such discovery as the one to which you refer. Nor do I know of any manuscript discovery ever made in the vicinity of the Dead Sea Scrolls which throws much light upon key doctrines of the Latter-day Saint faith.

On pages 21-22 of his pamphlet *Jerald and Sandra Tanner's Distorted View of Mormonism*, the anonymous Mormon historian ("Dr. Clandestine") claimed that the LDS temple ceremonies "bear striking resemblances to the format of salvation ordinances described in the Gospel of Philip which was discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt in recent decades: 'For this one is no longer a christian but a Christ. The Lord did everything in a mystery, a baptism and a chrism [anointing with consecrated oil] and a eucharist and a redemption and a bride-chamber.'"

We feel that Dr. Clandestine and other Mormon scholars who use the Nag Hammadi documents to try to show that early Christians had doctrines similar to Mormonism are making a serious mistake. To begin with, the Nag Hammadi texts came from a group known as Gnostics. Charles F. Pfeifer says that "Gnosticism appropriated Christian terminology to express its essentially unChristian philosophy" (*The Biblical World*, p. 410). Philip Schaff makes these comments about Gnosticism:

More important and more widely spread in the second period was the paganizing heresy, known by the name of Gnosticism . . . It is a one-sided intellectualism on a dualistic heathen basis. It rests on an over-valuation of knowledge of gnosis, and a depreciation of faith or pistis. The Gnostics . . . fancied themselves the sole possessors of an esoteric, philosophical religion, which made them genuine, spiritual men, and looked down with contempt upon the mere men of the soul and of the body. . . . They, moreover, **adulterated Christianity** with sundry elements **entirely foreign**, and thus quite obscured the true essence of the gospel. . . .

As to its substance, Gnosticism is chiefly of heathen descent. It is a peculiar translation or transfusion of heathen philosophy and religion into Christianity. . . .

Gnosticism is, therefore, the grandest and most comprehensive form of speculative religious syncretism known to history. It consists of Oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, Alexandrian, Philonic, and Cabbalistic Judaism, and Christian ideas of salvation, not merely mechanically compiled, but, as it were, chemically combined. . . . They gathered from the whole field of ancient mythology, astronomy, physics, and magic, everything which could serve in any way to support their fancies. (*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, pp. 199-202)

Speaking of one of the Nag Hammadi texts known as "On the Origin of the World," Hans-Gebhard Bethge and Orval S. Wintermute claim that "the varieties of Jewish thought, Manichaeic motifs, Christian ideas, Greek or Hellenistic philosophical and mythological concepts, magical and astrological themes, and elements of Egyptian lore together suggest that Alexandria may have been the place where the original Greek text was composed" (*The Nag Hammadi Library*, San Francisco, 1977, p. 161).

The pagan influence in "On the Origin of the World" is evident from the following extracts:

Out of the first blood Eros appeared, being androgynous. His masculine nature is Himeros, because he is fire from the light. His feminine nature which is with him is a blood-Soul, (and) is derived from the substance of Pronoia. He is very handsome in his beauty, having more loveliness than all the creatures of



Chaos. Then when all of the gods and their angels saw Eros, they became enamored of him. (*Ibid.*, p. 168)

Now the birth of the instructor occurred in this way. When Sophia cast a drop <of> light, it floated on the water. Immediately the man appeared, being androgynous. . . . An androgynous man was begotten, one whom the Greeks call “Hermaphrodites.” (*Ibid.*, p. 171)

The same work talks of the “Phoenix,” a mythical bird which was supposed to live five or six hundred years. After death it was supposed to rise and live for another cycle of years. Besides being filled with pagan mythology, some of the Nag Hammadi documents disclose the God of the Old Testament as being evil and stupid. John Dart gives this information about the Nag Hammadi texts:

The Garden of Eden story is radically rewritten in three Nag Hammadi texts. The serpent tends to emerge heroically in the Gnostic rendition of Paradise, and the Creator God is portrayed as the ignorant ruler of a despicable world. (*The Laughing Savior*, New York, 1976, p. 65)

Adam predicted that the wrathful Creator God would seek to destroy Seth’s seed, the men of “gnosis,” with a flood. Noah and his household would be saved to repopulate the earth and serve the evil deity, but angels would rescue the Gnostics by taking them aloft. . . .

Fire, sulphur, and asphalt would be cast down on the Gnostics—allusions to punishment meted out to the biblical Sodom and Gomorrah. (The Gnostic reversal at work again: “Sodom and Gomorrah were really inhabited by the righteous.) The angels... would descend to save them from the fire. . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 82-83)

...in The Second Treatise of the Great Seth . . . the Creator God bellows: “I am God, and there is not other beside me.” The narrator, later identified with Jesus Christ, reacts: “I laughed in joy when I examined his empty glory.” (*Ibid.*, p. 110)

In the Nag Hammadi text “The Second Treatise of the Great Seth,” Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and even God Himself are called laughingstocks:

And then a voice—of the Cosmocrator—came to the angels: “I am God and there is no other beside me.” But I laughed joyfully when I examined his empty glory. But he went on to say, “Who is man?” And the entire host of his angels who had seen Adam and his dwelling were laughing at his smallness. . . .

For Adam was a laughingstock, since he was made a counterfeit . . . And Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were a laughingstock, since they, the counterfeit fathers, were given a name by the Hebdomad, as if he had become a stronger than I . . . the Archon was a laughingstock because he said, “I am God, and there is none greater than I. I alone am the Father, the Lord and there is no other beside me. I am a jealous God, who brings the sins of the fathers upon the children for three and four generations.” As if he had become stronger than I and my brothers! . . . he was in an empty glory. . . . he was vain in an empty glory . . . he was a laughingstock . . . (*The Nag Hammadi Library*, pp. 331, 335-336)

In “The Testimony of Truth,” another Nag Hammadi text, we find the following:

But of what sort is this God? First [he] envied Adam that he should eat from the tree of knowledge. . . . Surely he has shown himself to be a malicious envier. And what kind of God is this? (*Ibid.*, p. 412)

In “The Apocryphon of John,” we read that God “is impious in his madness which is in him . . . he is ignorant of his strength, . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 105). On the following page God is called “the arrogant one.” In the “Hypostasis of the Archons,” the God of Israel is accused of sin and blasphemy:

Their chief is blind; [because of his] Power and his ignorance [and his] arrogance he said, with his [Power], “It is I who am God: there is none [apart from me].”

When he said this he sinned . . . then there was a voice that came forth from Incorruptibility, saying, “You are mistaken, Samael”—which is, “god of the blind.”

His thoughts became blind. And, having expelled his Power—that is, the blasphemy he had spoken—. . . (*Ibid.*, p. 153)

Since the Nag Hammadi texts are filled with pagan mythology and attack the God of Israel, it is hard to understand why Mormon scholars put much stock in them. Though some of the Gnostic writings may have been originally composed in the 2nd century, the copies found near the Egyptian town of Nag Hammadi were probably written in the 4th century.

The Mormon publication *Brigham Young University Today*, March 1976, page 8, claims that the Nag Hammadi documents contain some “authentic traditions and teachings,” but it admits that the texts are of doubtful authorship:

The origins of the texts are difficult and often impossible to determine, and it is doubtful they were written by the men whose names they bear—Adam, Seth, Melchizedek, John, James, Paul and Peter..

The same article says that “Two BYU scriptionists . . . have become intrigued by the 4th Century Gnostic papyri which contain striking parallels with Mormon thought and theology.”

Since the Nag Hammadi documents are undoubtedly forgeries, it is hard to understand why Mormon scholars would be “intrigued” by them. We feel that the parallels between the Nag Hammadi texts and Mormonism only tend to show pagan influences on Mormonism. After all, Greek mythology and philosophy were well known in Joseph Smith’s day, and that they had an influence on Joseph Smith as well as the Gnostics should come as no surprise.

Although the Nag Hammadi documents were discovered in 1945 or 1946, they were not made available in their entirety in English translation until 1977. One of the documents, “The Gospel of Thomas,” was published in 1960. We were able to read this purported gospel at that time, but did not find anything in it that supported Mormonism. *BYU Studies*, Winter 1975, printed a short work entitled, “The Apocalypse of Peter.” Some of the other documents have been printed at various times, but until 1977 the Nag Hammadi texts were not available in their entirety in any modern language. One Mormon scholar took advantage of the unavailability of translations of the texts to make some fantastic claims. Now that translations of the documents have been published in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, we are able to see how utterly ridiculous these claims were. For instance, he maintained that the sacramental prayer in the Book of Mormon was just like one found in the Nag Hammadi texts. While there is a prayer (“On The Eucharist A) found in “A Valentinian Exposition,” it certainly is not identical to that found in the Book of Mormon (see *The Nag Hammadi Library*, p. 442).

Now that the texts are available in English, Mormon apologists will have to be more careful in their claims about the Nag Hammadi documents. Our examination of them leads us to conclude that they furnish no new evidence for Mormonism.



## 25. Blood Atonement

In a manuscript written in 1839, Reed Peck said that the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith claimed that he had a revelation in which the Apostle Peter told him that he had killed Judas: “He [Joseph Smith] talked of dissenters and cited us to the case of Judas, saying that Peter told him in a conversation a few days ago that himself hung Judas for betraying Christ . . .” (*The Reed Peck Manuscript*, p. 13).

Although this doctrine was kept secret at first, when the Mormons were settled in Utah they began to teach it openly. On December 13, 1857, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made this statement in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City:

Judas lost that saving principle, and they took him and killed him. It is said in the Bible that his bowels gushed out; but they actually **kicked him** until his bowels came out.

“I will suffer my bowels to be taken out before I will forfeit the covenant I have made with Him and my brethren.” Do you understand me? Judas was like salt that had lost its saving principles—good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. . . . It is so with you, ye Elders of Israel, when you forfeit your covenants. . . . I know the day is right at hand when men will forfeit their Priesthood and turn against us and against the covenants they have made, and they will be **destroyed** as Judas was. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 125-126)

Joseph Smith’s brother William gave this testimony in court:

I left Nauvoo in 1845 because my life was in danger if I remained there, because of my objections and protests against the doctrine of **blood atonement** and other new doctrines that were brought into the church. (*Temple Lot Case*, page 98)

Although William Smith’s testimony was not given until 1893, he did publish a “Proclamation” in 1845 in which he told that Brigham Young was teaching Blood Atonement—i.e., that a man might be killed to save his soul:

. . . I heard Brigham Young say, on the stand, that he was glad that Alvine Hodge was killed, . . . And he said further that it was far better for Alvine Hodge to die, than to live any longer in sin, for that he might now possibly be redeemed in the eternal world. That his murderers had done even a deed of charity for that such a man deserved to die. (*Warsaw Signal*, October 29, 1845)

At first Brigham Young denied that such a doctrine was taught (see *History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 366-367), but when the Mormons arrived in Utah, the doctrine was openly taught. Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, made these statements in a sermon:

There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to **have their blood spilt** upon the ground, that the smoke

thereof might ascend to heaven as an **offering for their sins**; and the smoking incense would **atone** for their sins, whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

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

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

It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall and those committed by men, yet **men can commit sins which it can never remit**. As it was in ancient days, so it is in our day; and though the principles are taught publicly from this stand, still the people do not understand them; yet the law is precisely the same. There are sins that can be **atoned** for by an offering upon an altar, as in ancient days; and there are sins that the blood of a lamb, of a calf, or of turtle doves, cannot remit, but **they must be atoned for by the blood of the man**. That is the reason why men talk to you as they do from this stand; they understand the **doctrine** and throw out a few words about it. You have been **taught that doctrine**, but you do not understand it. (Sermon by Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 53-54; also published in the *Deseret News*, 1856, p. 235)

A photograph of this sermon as it was published in the *Deseret News* appears on the next page. It should be remembered that the *Deseret News* was the official organ of the Mormon Church. After being published in the *Deseret News* it was reprinted in the *Journal of Discourses*, which was also a Mormon publication. Therefore, there can be no doubt that this was a doctrine of the church.

### Capital Crimes

Dr. Hugh Nibley accuses Kelly and Birney of quoting J. M. Grant, who was a member of the First Presidency, out of context in their book *Holy Murder*:

The prize is another by Grant: “I say there are men and women here that I would advise to go to the President immediately and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their case, and then let a place be selected and let that committee shed their blood.” (KB, 134; JD V. 49). That sounds ghastly, but if we take the passage in its context it becomes immediately apparent that fire-eating Mr. Grant is simply advocating capital punishment for **capital crimes**. In the sentences preceding and following the quotation (they are omitted of course by our researchers) Grant makes it **perfectly clear** that the parties he refers to are those who have committed capital crimes, crimes so great “they cannot be forgiven through baptism.” (*Sounding Brass*, by Hugh Nibley, Salt Lake City, 1963, p. 231)

In making this statement, Dr. Nibley is being very deceitful. Kelly and Birney have not taken this reference



cannot be suffered any longer, a separation must take place; you must part with your sins, or the righteous must be separated from the ungodly. I will now give way, and call upon others of the brethren to speak to you: Amen.

REMARKS

By President J. M. Grant, Bowers, Sunday Morning, Sept. 21, 1856.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

I feel that the remarks which we have heard this morning are true, and they apply directly to you who are now present, and to the inhabitants of this city and of the Territory generally, and we do not excuse any of you.

If the arrows of the Almighty ought to be thrown at you we want to do it, and to make you feel and realize that we mean you. And although we talk of the old clay's being ground in the mill, we do not mean it to apply to some other place, for we have enough here who have been dried ever since their baptism, and many of them are cracked and spotted.

Some have received the priesthood and a knowledge of the things of God, and still they dishonor the cause of truth, commit adultery and every other abomination beneath the heavens, and then meet you here or in the street and deny it.

These are the abominable characters that we have in our midst, and they will seek outwards that peep, and to star-gazers, and soothsayers, because they have no faith in the holy priesthood, and then when they meet us they want to be called saints.

The same characters will get drunk and wallow in the mire and filth, and yet they call themselves saints and seem to glory in their conduct, and they pride themselves in their greatness and in their abominations.

They are the old and aged sinners, and are almost if not altogether—past improvement, and are full of hell, and my prayer is that God's indignation may rest upon them, and that he will erase them from the crown of their heads to the noise of their feet.

I say that there are men and women that I would advise to go to the President immediately, and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their cases, and then let a place be selected, and let that committee send their blood.

We have those amongst us that are full of all manner of abominations, those who need to have their blood shed, for water will not do, their sins are of too deep a dye.

You may think that I am not teaching you Bible doctrine, but what says the apostle Paul? I would ask how many covenant breakers there are in this city and in this kingdom. I believe there are a great many; and if they are covenant-breakers we need a place designated, where we can shed their blood.

Talk about old clay; I would rather have clay from a new bank than some that we have had clogging the wheels for the last nineteen years. They are a perfect nuisance, and I want them cut off, and the sooner it is done the better.

We have men who are incessantly finding fault, who get up little party spirits and criticize the conduct of men of God. They will find fault with this, that, and the other, and nothing is right for them, because they are full of all kinds of ill and wickedness.

And we have women who look like any thing but the celestial law of God; and if they could break asunder the cable of the Church of Christ, there is scarcely a mother in Israel but would do it this day. And they talk it to their husbands, to their daughters, and to their neighbors, and say they have not seen a week's happiness since they became acquainted with that law; or since their husbands took a second wife. They want to break up the church of God, and to break it from their husbands and from their family connections.

Then again there are men that are used as tools by their wives, and they are just a little better in appearance and in their habits than a little black boy. They live in filth and nastiness, they eat it and drink it, and they are filthy all over.

We have Elders and High Priests that are precisely in this predicament; and yet they are wishing for more of the Holy Ghost, they wish to have it in larger doses. They want more revelation, but I tell you that you now have more than you live up to, more than you practice and make use of.

If I hurt your feelings, let them be hurt. And if any of you ask, "do I mean you?" I answer, yes. If any woman asks, "do I mean her?" I answer, yes. And I want you to understand that I am throwing the arrows of God Almighty among Israel; I do not excuse any.

I am speaking to you in the name of Israel's God, and you need to be baptized, and washed clean from your sins, from your backslidings, from your apostasies, from your filthiness, from your lying, from your swearing, from your lusts, and from every thing that is evil before the God of Israel.

We have been trying long enough with this people, who I go in for letting the sword of the Almighty be unsheathed, not only in word but in deed.

I go in for letting the wrath of the Almighty burn up the dross and the filth; and if the people will not glorify the Lord by sanctifying themselves, let the wrath of the Almighty God burn against them, and the wrath of Joseph and of Brigham an heaven.

There is nothing to be humble and doing right foolish, and wicked; just tell you that if an man Great Salt Lake

your present state, he would not consider you worthy of his company.

You have got to cleanse yourselves from corruption, before you are fit for the society of those beings. You may hear of people in other cities being baptized and renewing their covenants, but they are not sinners above all others; and except the inhabitants of G. S. L. City repent and do their first works they shall all likewise perish, and the wrath of God will be upon them and round about them.

You can scarcely find a place in this city that is not full of filth and abominations; and if you would search them out, they would easily be weighed in the balances, and you would then find that they do not serve their God and purify their bodies.

But the course they are taking leads them to corrupt themselves, the soil, the waters, and the mountains, and they defile everything around them.

Brethren and sisters, we want you to repent and forsake your sins. And you who have committed sins that cannot be forgiven through baptism, let your blood be shed, and let the smoke ascend, that the incense thereof may come up before God as an atonement for your sins, and that the sinners in Zion may be afraid.

These are my feelings, and may God fulfill them. And my wishes are that He will grant the desires of my brethren, that Zion may be purified, and the wicked purged out of her, until God shall say I will bless the rest until he shall say I will bless your flocks, your herds, your little ones, your houses, your lands, and all that you possess; and you shall be my people and I will come and take up my abode with you, and I will bless all those that do right; which may he grant, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE

By President Brigham Young, Bowers, Sunday Afternoon, Sept. 21, 1856.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

Before I sit down I shall offer a proposition to the congregation; though I will first say a few words concerning our religion, our circumstances, and the circumstances of the brethren and people generally, that inhabit these valleys, but more especially of those that have the privilege of assembling at this Tabernacle from Sabbath to Sabbath.

If they will rightly consider their situation, they will believe for themselves that they are in a place, in a country, where they can be saints as well as in any other place there is on the face of this earth.

There are but a few complaints from those who lose the spirit of their religion, who turn away from us. They think that this people will suffer here. I will give you my feelings upon the subject.

There is not a hardship, there is not a disappointment, there is not a trial, there is not a hard time, that comes upon this people in this place, but that I am more thankful for than any other full granary.

We have been hunting, during the past twenty six years, for a place where we could raise saints, not merely wheat, nor corn. Comparatively I care but little about the wheat and corn, though a little is very useful.

It is true that this is a good country for fruits of some kind; as good peaches as can be raised on any soil this soil produces, and also grapes, apples, and so on. But what of all that? The man, or the woman, that mainly looks after the fruit, after the luxuries of life, good food, fine apparel, and at the same time professes to be a Latter Day Saint, if he does not get the spirit out of his heart it will obtain a perfect victory over him; whereas he is required to obtain a victory over his lusts and over his unwise feelings; and if he does not get rid of that spirit, the quicker he starts out for the States, or west for California, the better.

If we could not raise any fruit, if we could not raise an ear of corn, I should be quite thankful if we could raise the oats and the peas, and make the oat bread and the pea broth, and live on them from year to year.

I say halibut, this is a first-rate place to raise saints. Let the people complain of hard times, complain of their poverty, their poor fare and their hard labor; that would be better, that we have to go far for it, and have to toil so hard to raise our grain; that we live our stock upon the prairie, that a cow is gone today, and an ox was lost last year; that if we turn out our cattle they will stray off; and we shall see them no more.

How would you feel were you in a country where you could not raise stock, except you provided comfortable shelter and an abundance of fodder for them all?

In the country where I was brought up, could you turn out a calf in the fall and have it live through the winter? There never was such a thing done, to my knowledge; and no man ever thought of such a thing as wintering a calf, unless he had a shelter prepared for it almost as warm as the rooms for the children.

I mention these things for the benefit of those here to-day, if any, who do not really know whether they wish to stay, or whether we are right or wrong, or whether 'Mormonism' is true or false.

I would advise those persons to repent of their sins forthwith, and to try with all their might to get the Spirit of their religion upon

glory, of faith and thanksgiving; this is the case with all who are full of good works.

We need a reformation in the midst of this people; we need a thorough reform, for I know that very many are in a dozy condition with regard to their religion; I know this as well as I should if you were now to doze and go to sleep before my eyes.

You are the spirit of the gospel, is there any cause for it? No, only that which there is in the world. You have the weakness of human nature to contend with, and you suffer that weakness to decoy you away from the truth, to the side of the adversary; but now it is time to awake, before the time of burning.

Whether the time of burning will be this week, or the next, or next year, I do not know that I care; and I do not know that I would ask, if I was sure the Lord would tell me. But I tell you that which I do know, and that is sufficient.

I do know that the trying day will soon come to you and to me; and ere long we will have to lay down these tabernacles and go into the world, and I do know that as we lie down so judgment will find us, and that is scriptural; "as the tree falls so it shall lie," or, in other words, as death leaves us so judgment will find us.

I will explain how judgment will be laid to the line. If we all live to the age of man the day thereof will soon be here, and that will burn enough, without any thing else; and the present is a day of trial, enough for you and me.

We have got to be rightly prepared to go into the spirit world, in order to become kings. That is, so far as the power of satan is concerned, you and I have got to be free from his power, but we cannot be while we are in the flesh.

Here we shall be perplexed and louted by him; but when we go into the spirit world, there we are masters over the power of satan, and he cannot afflict us any more, and this is enough for me to know.

Whether the world is going to be burned up within a year, or within a thousand years, does not matter a great to you and me. We have the words of eternal life, we have the privilege of obtaining glory, immortality, and eternal lives, now will you obtain these blessings?

Will you spend your lives to obtain a seat in the kingdom of God, or will you lie down and sleep, and go down to hell?

I want all the people to say what they will do, and I know that God wishes all his servants, all his faithful sons and daughters, the men and the women that inhabit this city, to repent of their wickedness, or we will cut them off.

I could give you a logical reason for all the transgressions in this world, for all that are committed in this probationary state, and especially for those committed by men. There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins; and the smoking incense would atone for their sins, whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

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

Of all the children of Israel that started to go through the wilderness, none inherited the land which had been promised, except Caleb and Joshua, and what was the reason? It was because of their rebellion and wickedness; and because the Lord had promised Abraham that he would save his seed.

They had to travel to and fro to every point of the compass, and were wasted away, because God was determined to save their spirits. But they could not enter into his rest in the flesh, because of their transgressions, consequently he destroyed them in the wilderness.

I do know that there are sins committed, of such a nature that if the people did understand the doctrine of salvation, they would tremble because they know that God would atone for the sins that there are transgressors, who, if they knew themselves and the only condition upon which they can obtain forgiveness would beg of their brethren to shed their blood, that the smoke thereof might ascend to God as an offering to suppress the wrath that is kindled against them, and that the law might have its course. I will say further; I know that God wishes to me and other of his servants to atone for their sins.

It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall and those committed by men, yet men can commit sins which it can never remit. As it was in ancient days, so it is in our day; and though the principles are taught publicly from this stand, still the people do not understand them, yet the law is almost for an offering upon an altar as in ancient days; and there are sins that the blood of a lamb, of a calf, or of turtle doves, cannot remit, but they must be atoned for by the blood of the man. That is the reason why men talk to you as they do from this stand; they understand the doctrine and throw out a few words about it. You have been taught that doctrine, but you do not understand it.

to be brought with God. What a delight it was to hear br. Joseph talk upon the great principles of eternity; he would bring them down to the capacity of a child, he would unite heaven with earth, and this is the beauty of our religion.

When it was mentioned this morning about seeing God, about what kind of a being he was, and how we could see and measurably understand him, I thought I would tell you what I would see our heavenly Father we should see a being similar to our earthly parent, with this difference, our father in heaven is exalted and glorified. He has received his throne, his principality and powers, and he sits as a governor, as a monarch, and overrules kingdoms, thrones, and dominions that have been bequeathed to him, and such as we anticipate receiving. While he was in the flesh, as we are, he was as we are. But it is now written of him that our God is as a consuming fire, that he dwells in everlasting burnings, and this is why sin cannot be where he is.

These are principles that will endure through all eternity, and no fire can obliterate them from existence. They are those principles that are pure, and fire is a most typical one of it; as the glory and purity of the Gods, and of all perfect beings. God is the Father of our spirit; he begot them and has sent them here to receive tabernacles, and to prove whether we will honor them. If we do, then our tabernacles will be exalted; but if we do not, we shall be destroyed; one of the two—dissolution or life. The second death will decompose all tabernacles ever which it gains the ascendancy; and this is the nature of the second death, the tabernacles go back to their native element.

We are of the earth, earthly; and our Father is heavenly and pure. But we will be glorified and purified, if we obey our brethren and the teachings which are given.

When you see celestial beings you will see men and women, but you will see those beings clothed upon with robes of celestial purity. We cannot bear the presence of our Father now; and we are placed at a distance to prove whether we will honor these tabernacles, whether we will be obedient and prepare ourselves to live in the glory of the light, privileges and blessings of celestial beings. We could not have the glory and the light without first knowing the contrast. Do you comprehend that we could have no exaltation, without first learning by contrast?

When you are prepared to see our Father, you will see a being with whom you have long been acquainted, and he will receive you into his arms, and you will be ready to fall into his embrace and kiss him, as you would your fathers and friends that have been dead for a score of years, you will be so glad and joyful, you would not rejoice? When you are qualified to be purified, so that you can endure the glory of eternity, so that you can see your Father and your friends who have gone behind the veil, you will fall upon their necks and kiss them, as we do an earthly friend that has been long absent from us, and that we have been anxiously desiring to see. This is the people that are and will be permitted to enjoy the society of those happy and exalted spirits.

Now for my proposition; it is more particularly for my sisters, as it is frequently happening that women say that they are unhappy. Men will say, "My wife, though a most excellent woman, has not seen a happy day since I took my second wife;" "No, not a happy day for a happy day," says one; and another has not seen a happy day for five years; and it is said that women are tied down and abused; that they are unloved and have not the liberty they ought to have; that many of them are wading through a perfect flood of tears, because of the conduct of some men, together with their own folly.

I wish my own women to understand that what I am going to say is for them as well as others, and I want those who are to tell their sisters, yes, all the women of this community, and then write it back to the States, and do as you please with it. I am going to give you from this time to the 6th day of October next, for reflection, that you may determine whether you wish to stay with your husbands or not, and then I am going to set every woman at liberty and say to them, Now go your way, my women, with the Lord, go your way; as if my wives have got to do us of two things; either round up their shoulders to endure the afflictions of this world and live their religion, or they may leave, for I will not have them about me. I will go into heaven alone, rather than have scolding and fighting around me. I will set all at liberty. "What, first wife too?" Yes, I will liberate you all.

I know what my women will say; they will say, "You can have as many women as you please, Brigham." But I want to go somewhere and do something to get rid of the whippers; I do not want them to receive a part of the truth and spurn the rest out of doors.

I wish my women, and br. Kimball's and br. Grant's to leave, and every woman in this Territory, or else say in their hearts that they will embrace the gospel—the whole of it. Tell the gentiles that I will free every woman in this Territory at our next conference. "What, the first wife too?" Yes, there shall not be one held in bondage, all shall be set free. And then let the father be the head of the family, the master of his own household; and let him treat them as an angel would treat them; and let the wives and the children say amen to what he says, and be subject to his dictation, instead of their dictating the man, instead of their trying to govern him.

No doubt some are thinking, "I wish br. Brigham would say what would become of the children?" I will tell you what my feelings are; I will let my wives take the children, and I have problem, and I have a good fortune, and I

A photograph of the Deseret News, October 1, 1856, page 235. Brigham Young and J. M. Grant preach the doctrine of blood atonement.



out of context. Dr. Nibley states that the sentences preceding and following this quotation will show that J. M. Grant was referring only to capital crimes. Actually, the sentences before and after show that Grant was referring to those who are “covenant breakers,” those who “commit adultery,” and those who commit other sins which we do not usually think of as deserving the death penalty. The following is taken from Mr. Grant’s sermon and shows that he was not quoted out of context:

Some have received the Priesthood and a knowledge of the things of God, and still they dishonor the cause of truth, **commit adultery**, and every other abomination beneath the heavens, and then meet you here or in the street, and deny it.

These are the abominable characters that we have in our midst, and they will seek unto wizards that peep, and to star-gazers and soothsayers, because they have no faith in the holy Priesthood, and then when they meet us, they want to be called Saints.

The same characters will **get drunk** and wallow in the mire and filth, and yet they call themselves Saints, and seem to glory in their conduct, and they pride themselves in their greatness and in their abominations.

They are the old hardened sinners, and are almost—if not altogether—past improvement, and are full of hell, and my prayer is that God’s indignation may rest upon them from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet.

I say, that there are men and women that I would advise to go to the President immediately, and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their case; and then let a place be selected, **and let that committee shed their blood.**

We have those amongst us that are full of all manner of abominations, those **who need to have their blood shed**, for water will not do, their sins are of too deep a dye.

You may think that I am not teaching you Bible doctrine, but what says the apostle Paul? I would ask how many **covenant breakers** there are in this city and in this kingdom. I believe that there are a great many; and if they are **covenant breakers** we need a place designated, **where we can shed their blood.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 49-50)

Thus it can be seen that Dr. Nibley’s charge that Kelly and Birney quoted J. M. Grant out of context is without foundation.

When we look into the early Mormon publications we find that there were many crimes that the Mormon Church leaders taught there were worthy of death. The following is a list of these crimes:

1. MURDER. The Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith stated:

In debate, George A. Smith said imprisonment was better than hanging.

I replied, I was opposed to hanging, even if a man kill another, **I will shoot him, or cut off his head, spill his blood** on the ground, and let the smoke thereof ascend up to God; and if ever I have the privilege of making a law on that subject, I will have it so. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 5, p. 296)

The Mormon people apparently took Joseph Smith very serious when he talked of beheading for they incorporated this into their laws in Utah:

In accordance with the law of Utah, the doomed man was given his choice of three methods of execution—hanging, shooting or **beheading.** (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, Introduction, p. xix)

In footnote number 143 on page 129 of the same book, we find this statement:

Even the law of territorial Utah, as we have explained in the Introduction, allowed John D. Lee, or any other man condemned to death, to elect to be **beheaded** as a means of saving his immortal soul by the shedding of his blood.

Although we do not hear of murderers having their heads cut off in Utah today, the law still allows the murderer to be shot so that his blood can flow and atone for his sin. Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, stated:

... the founders of Utah incorporated in the laws of the Territory provisions for the capital punishment of those who wilfully shed the blood of their fellow men. This law, which is now the law of the State, granted unto the condemned murderer the privilege of choosing for himself whether he die by hanging, or whether he **be shot, and thus have his blood shed in harmony with the law of God; and thus atone**, so far as it is in his power to atone, for the death of his victim. Almost without exception the condemned party chooses the latter death. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, vol. 1, p. 136)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, stated:

As a mode of capital punishment, hanging or execution on a gallows does not comply with the law of blood atonement, for the blood is not shed. (*Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1958 ed., p. 314)

In the *Salt Lake Tribune* for January 28, 1968, we find the following:

Japanese District and Family Court Judge Hiroshige Takasawa, after more than a year of research studies of Utah’s “unique” form of capital punishment, has found “evidence that present laws stem from **early Mormon philosophy of blood atonement.**”

Judge Takasawa, a visiting Fulbright research scholar in criminology at the University of Utah, sits on the bench of the Nagoya District Court and Family Court at Toyohashi, Japan.

The judge said that through extensive study of the first days of the Mormon pioneers he has found “a possible relationship” between current death sentences and “early days of violence vs. violence.”

Beginning with the premise, “There must be a background to Utah’s unique form of capital punishment—a system which affords a convicted person a choice of death by hanging or shooting,” Judge Takasawa sought information and materials from state law enforcement agencies and penal officials. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 28, 1968, p. 4C)

As long as the Mormon Church teaches the doctrine of “blood atonement” there is probably little chance of Utah using a gas chamber or electric chair for the condemned murderer.

2. ADULTERY AND IMMORALITY. Bruce R. McConkie stated:

Modern governments **do not take the life of the adulterer**, and some of them have done away with the supreme penalty where murder is involved—all of which is further evidence of the direful apostasy that prevails among the peoples who call themselves Christians. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1958 ed., p. 104)

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

Let me suppose a case. Suppose you found your brother in bed with your wife, and **put a javelin through both of them, you would be justified, and they would atone for their sins, and be received into the kingdom of God.** I would at once do so in such a case; and under such circumstances, I have no wife whom I love so well that I would not put a javelin through her heart, and I would **do it with clean hands** . . .

There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, **your own blood must atone for it;** . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 247)

Orson Pratt, who was one of the Twelve Apostles in the Mormon Church, stated:

The people of Utah are the only ones in this nation who have taken effectual measures . . . to prevent adulteries and

criminal connections between the sexes. The punishment in that territory, for these crimes is **death to both male and female**. (*The Seer*, Washington City, D.C., 1854, p. 223)

... the citizens of that Territory think more of their virtue than they do of their lives. They **know**, that if they have any connections out of the marriage covenant, they not only **forfeit their lives** by the **law of God**, but they forfeit their salvation also. (*Ibid.*, p. 42)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

These are my views, and the Lord knows that I believe in the principles of sanctification; and when I am guilty of seducing any man's wife, or any woman in God's world, I say, **sever my head from my body**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 20)

But they cannot whore it here; for, gentlemen, if there is anything of that kind, we will **slay both men and women**. We will do it, as the Lord liveth—we will **slay such characters**. Now, which would be the most worthy to be slain—the woman that had had her endowments and made certain covenants before God, or the man that knew nothing about it? The woman, of course. (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 38)

... our females ... are not unclean, for **we wipe all unclean ones from our midst**: we not only wipe them from our streets, but **we wipe them out of existence**...so help me God, while I live, I will lend my hand to **wipe such persons out**: and I know this people will. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, p. 739; also printed in the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 19)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith made the following statement:

The principle, the only one that beats and throbs through the heart of the entire inhabitants of this Territory, is simply this: The man who seduces his neighbors wife **must die**, and her nearest relative **must kill him!** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 97)

On May 22, 1859, Brigham Young stated:

It is not so much polygamy that they are opposed to, but they hate this people because they strive to be pure, and will not believe in whoredom and adultery, but declare **death to the man who is found guilty of those crimes**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 146)

The following is found in footnote 135 on page 128 of *A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, vol. 1: "Adultery was both a major sin and a **capital offense** in Mormon eyes." In footnote 101 on pages 332-333 of the same volume the following statement appears:

Lee's solemn warning related to the **doctrine of blood atonement**. Many early Mormons believed that the sin of **adultery** was so grievous that only the shedding of the sinner's blood could atone for it. There are many references to the seriousness of this offense. Esias Edwards, for example, tells in his diary how his son-in-law, Frank Sadler, was forced to flee to save his life after a second transgression.

**3. STEALING.** The following statement concerning Joseph Smith appeared in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons*:

President Joseph Smith said, I think it best to continue this subject. I want the elders to make honorable proclamation abroad concerning what the feelings of the first presidency is, for stealing has never been tolerated by them. **I despise a thief above ground**. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, pp. 183-184)

Brigham Young taught that thieves should have their throats cut:

President Young then spoke against thieving, ... said he, I should be perfectly willing to see thieves have their **throats cut**; some of you may say, if that is your feelings Brigham, we'll lay you aside sometime, well, do it if you can; I would rather die by the hands of the meanest of all men, false brethren, than to live among thieves. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 597)

If you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, I say **kill him on the spot**, and never suffer him to commit another iniquity. ... if I caught a man stealing on my premises I should be very apt to send him straight home, and that is what I wish every man to do, to put a stop to that abominable practice in the midst of this people.

I know this appears hard, and throws a cold chill over our revered traditions received by early education. I had a great many such feelings to contend with myself, and was as much of a sectarian in my notions as any other man, and as mild, perhaps, in my natural disposition, but I have trained myself to measure things by the line of justice, to estimate them by the rule of equity and truth, and not by the false traditions of the fathers, or the sympathies of the natural mind. If you will cause all those whom you know to be **thieves**, to be placed in a line before the mouth of one of our largest **cannon**, well loaded with chain shot, **I will prove by my works whether I can mete out justice** to such persons, or not. **I would consider it just as much my duty to do that, as to baptize a man** for the remission of his sins. That is a short discourse on thieves, I acknowledge, but I tell you the **truth** as it is in my heart. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 108-109)

The Apostle Orson Hyde said:

It would have a tendency to place a terror on those who leave these parts, that may prove their salvation when they see **the heads of thieves taken off**, or shot down before the public ... I believe it to be pleasing in the sight of heaven to sanctify ourselves and put these things from our midst. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 73)

**4. USING THE NAME OF THE LORD IN VAIN.** In the journal of Hosea Stout, Brigham Young is recorded as saying:

... I tell you the time is coming when that man uses the name of the Lord is used the penalty will be affixed and immediately **be executed on the spot** ... (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 76)

**5. FOR NOT RECEIVING THE GOSPEL.** Brigham Young stated:

The time is coming when justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; when we shall ask, "Are you for God?" and if you are not heartily on the Lord's side, **you will be hewn down**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 226)

**6. FOR MARRIAGE TO AN AFRICAN.** Brigham Young said:

Shall I tell you the **law of God** in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the **penalty**, under the **law of God is death on the spot**. This will **always be so**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110)

**7. FOR COVENANT BREAKING.** Jedediah M. Grant, who was the second counselor to Brigham Young, stated:

I say, that there are men and women that I would advise to go to the President immediately, and ask him to appoint a committee to attend to their case; and then let a place be selected, and let that committee **shed their blood**.

We have those amongst us that are full of all manner of abominations, those who need to **have their blood shed**, for water will not do, their sins are of too deep a dye. ... I would ask how many covenant breakers there are in this city and in this kingdom. I believe that there are a great many; and if they are covenant breakers **we need a place designated, where we can shed their blood**. ...

We have been trying long enough with this people, and I go in for letting the sword of the Almighty be unsheathed, not only in word, **but in deed**. ...

Brethren and sisters, we want you to repent and forsake your sins. And you who have committed sins that cannot be forgiven through baptism, **let your blood be shed**, and let the smoke ascend, that the incense thereof may come up before God as an atonement for

your sins, and that the sinners in Zion may be afraid. (*Deseret News*, vol. 6, p. 235, reprinted in the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 49-51)

On another occasion Jedediah M. Grant made these comments:

What disposition ought the people of God to make of covenant breakers . . . What does the Apostle say? He says they are **worthy of death**. . . .

What! do you believe that people would do right, and keep the law of God, by actually **putting to death** the transgressors? Putting **to death transgressors** would exhibit the law of God, no difference by whom it was done; that is my opinion.

You talk of the doings of different governments, the United States if you please. . . . Do traitors to that government forfeit their lives? . . . But people will look into books of theology, and argue that the people of God have a right to try people for fellowship, but they have no right to try them on property or **life**. **That makes the devil laugh**, saying, I have got them on a hook now; . . .

But if the Government of God on earth, and Eternal Priesthood, with the sanction of High Heaven, in the midst of all his people, has passed sentence on certain sins when they appear in a person, has not the people of God a right to carry out that part of his law as well as any other portion of it? Is it their right to baptize a sinner to save him, and it is also their right to **kill a sinner to save him**, when he commits those crimes that can only be atoned for by **shedding his blood**. If the Lord God forgives sins by baptism, and . . . certain sins cannot be atoned for . . . but by the shedding of the blood of the sinner, query, whether the people of God be overreaching the mark, if they should execute the law . . . We would not kill a man, of course, unless we killed him to save him. . . .

. . . If you shall thus advance, and then turn and trample the holy commandments of God under your feet, and break your sacred and solemn covenants, and become traitors to the people of God, would you not be **worthy of death? I think you would**.

Do you think it would be any sin to **kill me** if I were to break my covenants? . . . Do you believe you would kill me if I broke the covenants of God, and you had the Spirit of God? **Yes**; and the more Spirit of God I had, the more I should strive to **save your soul by spilling your blood**, when you had committed sin that could not be remitted by baptism. (*Deseret News*, July 27, 1854)

Heber C. Kimball, who was the first counselor to Brigham Young, stated: “. . . for if men turn traitors to God and His servants, **their blood will surely be shed**, or else they will be damned, and that too according to their covenants” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 375).

#### 8. FOR APOSTASY. Brigham Young said:

I say, rather than that **apostates** should flourish here, I **will unsheath my bowie knife**. (Great commotion in the congregation, and a simultaneous burst of feeling, assenting to the declaration.) Now, you nasty apostates, clear out, or judgment will be put to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. (Voices, generally, “go it, go it.”) If you say it is right, raise your hands. (All hands up.) Let us call upon the Lord to assist us in this, and every good work. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 83)

On another occasion Brigham Young said:

Now take a person in this congregation who has knowledge with regard to being saved in the kingdom of our God and Father and being exalted, the beauty and excellency of the eternities before him compared with the vain and foolish things of the world, and suppose that he is overtaken in a gross fault, that he has committed a sin that he knows will deprive him of that exaltation which he desires, and that he cannot attain to it without the **shedding of his blood**, and also knows that by having his blood **shed** he will **atone for that sin**, and be **saved and exalted** with the Gods, is there a man or woman in this house but what would say, “**Shed my blood** that I may be **saved and exalted** with the Gods?”

All mankind love themselves, and let these principles be known by an individual, and he would be **glad** to have **his blood shed**. That would be loving themselves, even unto an eternal exaltation. Will you **love** your brothers or sisters likewise, when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the **shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? . . . I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins**. I have seen scores and hundreds of people for whom there would have been a chance (in the last resurrection there will be) if their lives **had been taken and their blood spilled** on the ground as a smoking incense to the Almighty, but who are now angels to the devil . . . I have known a great many men who **left this church** for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation, but if their **blood had been spilled, it would have been better for them**, the wickedness and **ignorance** of the nations forbids this principle’s being in **full force**, but **the time will come when the law of God will be in full force**.

**This is loving our neighbor as ourselves**; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is **necessary to spill his blood** on the earth in order that he may be saved, **spill it**. Any of you who understand the principles of eternity, if you have sinned a sin **requiring the shedding of blood**, except the sin unto death, would not be satisfied nor rest until your blood **should be spilled**, that you might gain that salvation you desire. That is the way to love mankind. (Sermon by Brigham Young, delivered in the Mormon Tabernacle, February 8, 1857, printed in the *Deseret News*, February 18, 1857; also reprinted in the *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 219-220)

Heber C. Kimball stated:

God designs we should be pure men, holding the oracles of God in holy and pure vessels; but when it is necessary that blood should be shed, we should be as ready to do that as to eat an apple . . . we will let you know that the earth can swallow you up, as it did Korah with his host; and as brother Taylor says, **You may dig your graves, and we will slay you, and you may crawl into them**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 34-35)

Mrs. Brooks states that John D. Lee “had seen many cases, among them that of Nephi Stewart, wherein a man was ruined financially and his life endangered by a public announcement that he had been cut off the Church” (*John D. Lee*, p. 293).

#### 9. FOR LYING. Brigham Young made this statement in 1846:

I preached on the condition of the Camp of Israel—. . . and warned those who lied and stole and followed Israel that they would have **their heads cut off**, for that was the **law of God and it should be executed**. (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” December 20, 1846, typed copy)

#### 10. FOR COUNTERFEITING. On February 24, 1847, Brigham Young stated:

We investigated several orders purporting to be drawn by J. Allen, Lieut. Col., signed by James Pollick; which I requested should be burned. I swore by the Eternal Gods that if men in our midst would not stop this cursed work of stealing and counterfeiting **their throats should be cut**. (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” February 24, 1847, typed copy)

#### 11. FOR CONDEMNING JOSEPH SMITH OR CONSENTING TO HIS DEATH. Norton Jacob quoted Brigham Young as saying:

A man may live here with us and worship what God he pleases or none at all, but he must not blaspheme the God of Israel or damn old Joe Smith or his religion, for we **will salt him down in the lake**. (*Quest for Empire*, p. 127)



Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, admitted that he was about to stab a man with his pocket knife if he even expressed approval of the murder of Joseph Smith. The Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal under the date of December 6, 1889:

About 4:30 p.m. this meeting adjourned and was followed by a meeting of Presidents Woodruff, Cannon and **Smith** and Bros. Lyman and Grant. . . . Bro. **Joseph F. Smith** was traveling some years ago near Carthage when he met a man who said he had just arrived five minutes too late to see the Smiths killed. Instantly a dark cloud seemed to overshadow Bro. Smith and he asked how this man looked upon the deed. Bro. S. was oppressed by a most horrible feeling as he waited for a reply. After a brief pause the man answered, "Just as I have always looked upon it—that it was a d—d cold-blooded murder." The cloud immediately lifted from Bro. Smith and he found that he had his **open pocket knife grasped in his hand** in his pocket, and he believes that had this man given his approval to that murder of the prophets he would have immediately struck him to the heart. ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," December 6, 1889, pp. 205-206)

Below is an actual photograph from the "Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon."

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*minutes too late to see the Smiths killed. Instantly a dark cloud seemed to overshadow Bro. Smith and he asked how this man looked upon the deed. Bro. S. was oppressed by a most horrible feeling as he waited for a reply. After a brief pause the man answered, "just as I have always looked upon it—that it was a d—d cold-blooded murder." The cloud immediately lifted from Bro. Smith and he found that he had his open pocket knife grasped in his hand in his pocket, and he believes that had this man given his approval to that murder of the prophets he would have immediately struck him to the heart. — In the evening I was at a party in the 14th Ward for a few minutes, but only danced once. Thereafter I went to the farm with Mina.*

*Saturday, Decr 7th:— Very stormy and dismal day. — I was at the office all day where I was engaged in answer*

The journals of Abraham H. Cannon only recently came to light. The original journals are now located in the Special Collections Dept. of the Brigham Young University Library, and photographs are on file at the Utah State Historical Society and the University of Utah Library.

### Was It Actually Practiced?

Although the doctrine of Blood Atonement was openly proclaimed and put into practice in the 1850's, so many Gentiles came to Utah that the church leaders found it impossible to continue the practice. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen stated:

In 1888, apostle Charles W. Penrose observed that "Because of the laws of the land and the prejudices of the nation, and the ignorance of the world, this law can not be carried out, but when the time comes that the law of God shall be in full force upon the earth, then this penalty will be inflicted for those crimes committed by persons under covenant not to commit them." However, shortly after the Mormons established the government of God in Utah on what they believed to

be a permanent basis, they attempted to enforce the doctrine. Brigham Young insisted that there were "plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain in order to atone for their sins." (*Quest for Empire*, by Klaus J. Hansen, Michigan State Univ. Press, 1967, p. 70)

Today the Mormon leaders are somewhat divided over the doctrine of Blood Atonement. Morris L. Reynolds wrote to several prominent Mormons asking them about Blood Atonement. Hugh B. Brown, a Mormon Apostle and a member of the First Presidency under Pres. McKay, made this reply in a letter dated May 13, 1966:

There is no doctrine of the Church requiring the shedding of blood for the salvation where certain sins have been committed. We have been accused of such doctrine, but it is not true. (Letter from Hugh B. Brown)

Although Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, claims that Blood Atonement was not actually practiced he feels that it is a true principle:

. . . under certain circumstances there are some serious sins for which the cleansing of Christ **does not operate**, and the **law of God** is that men must have **their own blood shed to atone for their sins** . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1958 ed., p. 87)

B. H. Roberts, who was the Assistant Church Historian, described the doctrine of Blood Atonement as follows:

. . . what is needful for the **salvation** of the soul where one's sins place him **beyond** the reach of vicarious means of salvation—then it is the **shedding of the sinners own blood** that must here be referred to. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, 1965 ed., vol. 4, p. 129)

Hyrum L. Andrus, of the Brigham Young University, made this statement concerning Blood Atonement:

The concept here voiced, known more popularly as the doctrine of blood atonement, laid the foundation for the establishment of capital punishment in Utah for murder. Its basis is **theological**, asserting that there are certain crimes which the atonement of Christ will not cover, . . . the **individual himself must pay the debt** either here or hereafter. Hence, in some cases it was deemed proper **to take the life of such persons through the shedding of their blood**, that mercy might have claim upon them in the day of redemption. (*Joseph Smith and World Government*, by Hyrum L. Andrus, Salt Lake City, 1963, p. 107)

As we have already shown, Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth president of the Mormon Church, was such a firm believer in the doctrine of Blood Atonement that he almost killed a man at Carthage. His son Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President, still believes in the doctrine, although he cannot face the fact that it was actually practiced in early Utah. In his book *Doctrines of Salvation* he states:

**TRUE DOCTRINE OF BLOOD ATONEMENT.** Just a word or two now, on the subject of blood atonement. What is that doctrine? Unadulterated, if you please, laying aside the pernicious insinuations and lying charges that have so often been made, it is simply this: Through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

But man may commit certain grievous sins—according to his light and knowledge—that will place him beyond the reach of the atoning blood of Christ. If then he would be saved **he must make sacrifice of his own life to atone**—so far as in his power lies—for that sin, for the blood of Christ **alone** under certain circumstances will not avail. . . .

**ATONEMENT AND SINS UNTO DEATH.** Joseph Smith taught that there were certain sins so grievous that man may commit, that they will place the transgressors beyond the power of the atonement of Christ. If these offenses are committed, then the blood of Christ will not cleanse them from their sins even though they **repent**.

**Therefore their only hope is to have their own blood shed to atone,** as far as possible, in their behalf. . . . And men for certain crimes **have had to atone** as far as they could for their sins wherein they have placed themselves beyond the redeeming power of the blood of Christ. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City, 1954, vol. 1, pp. 133-136)

After expressing a belief in the doctrine of “Blood Atonement,” however, Joseph Fielding Smith turns right around and says that it was never actually practiced by the Mormon Church:

But that the Church practices “Blood Atonement” on apostates or any others, which is preached by ministers of the “Reorganization” is a damnable falsehood . . .

Did you not know that not a single individual was ever “blood atoned,” as you are pleased to call it, for apostasy or any other cause? . . . Do you know of anyone whose blood was ever shed by the command of the Church, or members thereof, to “save his soul?” . . .

Never in the history of this people can the time be pointed to when the Church ever attempted to pass judgment on, or execute an apostate as per your statement. (*Ibid.*, pp. 136-137)

This statement by Joseph Fielding Smith is certainly far from the truth. In our book, *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, we have documented the fact that many people in early Utah lost their lives because of the doctrine of Blood Atonement. One example is found in the *Confessions of John D. Lee*:

. . . the sinful member was to be slain for the remission of his sins, it being taught by the leaders and believed by the people that the right thing to do with a sinner who did not repent and obey the Council, was to take the life of the offending party, and thus save his everlasting soul. This was called “Blood Atonement.” . . .

The most deadly sin among the people was adultery, and **many men were killed in Utah for that crime.**

Rosmos Anderson was a Danish man . . . He had married a widow lady somewhat older than himself, and she had a daughter that was fully grown at the time of the reformation. The girl was very anxious to be sealed to her stepfather, and Anderson was equally anxious to take her for a second wife, but as she was a fine-looking girl, Klingensmith desired her to marry him, and she refused. At one of the meetings during the reformation Anderson and his step-daughter confessed that they had committed adultery, believing when they did so that Brigham Young would allow them to marry when he learned the facts. Their confession being full, they were rebaptized and received into full membership. They were then placed under covenant that if they again committed adultery, Anderson should **suffer death**. Soon after this a charge was laid against Anderson before the Council, accusing him of adultery with his step-daughter. This Council was composed of Klingensmith and his two counselors; it was **the bishop’s council**. Without giving Anderson any chance to defend himself or make a statement, the Council voted that Anderson must **die** for violating his covenants. Klingensmith went to Anderson and notified him that the orders were that he must die by **having his throat cut, so that the running of his blood would atone for his sins**. Anderson, being a firm believer in the doctrine and teachings of the Mormon Church, made no objections, but asked for half a day to prepare for death. His request was granted. His wife was ordered to prepare a suit of clean clothing, in which to have her husband buried, and was informed that he was to be killed for his sins, she being directed to tell those who should enquire after her husband that he had gone to California.

Klingensmith, James Haslem, Daniel McFarland and John M. Higbee **dug a grave** in the field near Cedar City, and that night, about 12 o’clock, went to Anderson’s house and ordered him to make ready to obey the Council. Anderson got up, dressed himself, bid his family good-bye, and without a word of remonstrance accompanied those that he believed were carrying out the will of the “Almighty God.” They went to the place **where the grave was prepared; Anderson knelt down upon the side of the grave and prayed. Klingensmith and his company then cut Anderson’s throat from ear to ear and held him so that his blood ran into the grave.**

As soon as he was **dead** they dressed him in his clean clothes, threw him into the grave and buried him. They then carried his bloody clothing back to his family, and gave them to his wife to wash, when she was again instructed to say that her husband was in California. She obeyed their orders.

No move of that kind was made in Cedar City, unless it was done by order of the “Council” or of the “High Council.” I was at once informed of Anderson’s death, . . . The killing of Anderson was then considered **a religious duty** and a **just act**. It was justified by all the people, for they were bound by the same covenants, and the least word of objection to thus treating the man who had broken his covenant would have brought the same fate upon the person who was so foolish as to raise his voice against any act committed by order of the Church authorities. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photomechanical reprint of 1880 ed., pp. 282-283)

Gustive O. Larson, Professor of Church History at the Brigham Young University, admits that blood atonement was actually practiced:

To whatever extent the preaching on **blood atonement** may have influenced action, it would have been in relation to Mormon disciplinary action among its own members. In point would be a verbally reported case of a Mr. Johnson in Cedar City who was found guilty of adultery with his step-daughter by a **bishop’s court** and **sentenced to death for atonement of his sin**. According to the report of reputable **eyewitnesses**, judgment was executed with consent of the offender who went to his **unconsecrated grave in full confidence of salvation through the shedding of his blood**. Such a case, however primitive, is understandable within the meaning of the doctrine and the emotional extremes of the Reformation. (*Utah Historical Quarterly*, January 1958, p. 62, n. 39)

On February 15, 1851, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his journal: “They bring news that M. D. Hambleton on last Sunday killed Dr. J. M. Vaughan for similar conduct with Mrs. H. as took place with Dr & Foots wife last summer” (*On The Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, vol. 2, p. 393). This was probably the same case of “Blood Atonement” that Sarah S. Leavitt told of in her record book:

The first person I spoke to after I entered Salt Lake was Dr. Vaun. . . . He said, “Well, Mrs. Leavitt, I have joined the church.” Of course, I was glad and was in hopes he had repented of his sins and would forsake them. But in this I was disappointed, for he sought the women’s company and with the help of love powders succeeded in gratifying his hellish desires. He was called up before the authorities more than once and confessed his sins and asked forgiveness. He was forgiven and he said if he was ever found guilty again his life should be the penalty. He knew the **law of God** required it. He was guilty again and was **shot and killed**. Oh, the weakness and depravity of man, to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, or in other words, sell their souls’ salvation for a few moments of carnal pleasure. (*Sarah S. Leavitt Journal*, p. 41)

According to Stout, Brigham Young defended the murderer and he was released (see *On The Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 396).

Although many Mormons continue to believe in Blood Atonement as a doctrine, it is not practised in Utah today—with the exception that murderers may still choose to be shot. Nevertheless, it was taught in early Utah and was responsible for the death of many people. In the chapters that follow we will document many cases of Blood Atonement and show how it was used to help establish the Mormon Kingdom.



## Death for Marriage to an African

On page 401 of this book, we quoted President Brigham Young as saying that “the law of God is death on the spot” for a white man of the chosen seed to mix “his blood with the seed of Cain” (see *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110). Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President of the Church, recorded in his journal an address delivered by President Young in 1852. In this address we find the following:

And if any man mingle his seed with the seed of Cane [sic] the ownly [sic] way he could get rid of it or have salvation would be to come forward and have his head cut off & spill his Blood upon the ground it would also take the life of his children . . . (“Wilford Woodruff’s Journal,” January 16, 1852, typed copy; original located in LDS Church Archives).

Mormon writer Lester E. Bush, Jr., admits that in this address Brigham Young taught that “miscegenation required blood atonement (offspring included) for salvation . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1973, p. 26).

According to the “Excerpts From the Weekly Council Meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,” this doctrine was still being taught in 1897. In the report for December 15, 1897, we read:

President Cannon said he had understood President Taylor to say that a man who had the priesthood who would marry a woman of the accursed seed, that if the law of the Lord were administered upon him, he would be killed, and his offspring, for the reason that the Lord had determined that the seed of Cain should not receive the priesthood in the flesh . . . (“Excerpts From the Weekly Council Meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Dealing with the Rights of Negroes in the Church, 1849-1940,” typed copy)

On August 22, 1895, in this same source, George Q. Cannon claimed that Joseph Smith also taught Blood Atonement for this “sin”:

President Cannon remarked that the Prophet Joseph taught this doctrine: That the seed of Cain could not receive the Priesthood...and that any white man who mingled his seed with that of Cain should be killed, and thus prevent any of the seed of Cain’s coming into possession of the priesthood.

## Abolishment of Hanging in Utah Leaves Shedding of Blood as the Only Way For Execution

We have previously quoted Joseph Smith as saying that he was “opposed to hanging” and that if a man killed another he would “shoot him, or cut off his head, spill his blood on the ground, . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 296). The original source for this quotation appears to be Joseph Smith’s diary, although in the diary account Smith talks of cutting the murderer’s throat rather than complete decapitation. The effect, of course, would be the same, as the blood would be spilled on the ground. In any case, we have shown that the laws of Utah gave murderers the choice between hanging and being shot. In the 1958 printing of his book, *Mormon Doctrine*, page 314, Bruce R. McConkie, who is now an Apostle in the Mormon Church, indicated that “As a mode of capital punishment, hanging or execution on a gallows does not comply with the law of blood atonement, for the blood is not shed.” In recent years the doctrine of “Blood Atonement,” has been played down by Mormon leaders, and Apostle McConkie’s article on hanging has been removed from recent printings of *Mormon Doctrine*.

As we have already shown, Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Mormon Church, had a great deal to say about the doctrine of “Blood Atonement.” Some time after printing *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* we obtained a copy of a letter which Joseph Fielding Smith wrote in answer to an inquiry dated October 18, 1962. In this letter, Smith expressed his objections to hanging: “It is wrong to hang any one who has committed murder, or to kill him by gas. The Lord said his blood should be shed.” Almost eighteen years after Joseph Fielding Smith made this comment, the Utah Legislature banned the practice of hanging so that all those who are executed in the future will be shot:

Although there is little public awareness, Utah takes a historic step this summer when it discontinues hanging as an option for capital punishment. . . .

At least since statehood in 1896 the law has read that for capital crimes “the punishment of death must be inflicted by hanging the defendant by the neck until he is dead, or by shooting him, at his election.”. . .

The new code flatly states: “The warden shall see that the judgment of death is executed by shooting the defendant at the state prison.”. . .

Justice J. Allan Crockett, current high court chief justice, served as chairman of a study committee. He said discussions on the execution change centered on a desire to achieve the most efficient, most humane way of execution. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, March 8, 1980)





father, who died in Quincy, Illinois, after we were driven from Missouri. My recollection is better with regard to my earthly father than it is in regard to my heavenly Father; but as to knowing of what species he is and how he is organized, and with regard to his existence, I understand it in part, as well as I understand the organization and existence of my earthly father. That is my opinion about it, and my opinion to me is just as good as yours is to you; and if you are of the same opinion you will be satisfied, as I am.

I know my heavenly Father and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, and this is eternal life. And now as we have been told this morning, if you will enter into the Spirit of your calling, if you will the principle of securing to yourselves eternal life, eternal existence, eternal exaltation, it will be well with you. But if, after being put into a carriage and placed upon the road, after having everything prepared for the journey that infinite wisdom could devise, this people stroll into the swamp, get into the woods among the brambles and briars, and wander around until night overtakes them, I say shame on such a people.

I am ashamed to talk about a reformation, for if you have entered into the Spirit of your religion you will know whether those things are so, or not. If you have the Spirit of your religion and have confidence in you, walk along and continue to do so, and secure to yourselves the life before you, and never let it be said, from this time henceforth, that you have awakened out of your sleep, from the fact that you are always awake.

We talk about the reformation, but recollect that you have only just commenced to walk in the way of life and salvation. You have just commenced in the career to obtain eternal life, which is that which you desire, therefore you have no time to spend only in that path. It is straight and narrow, simple and easy, and is an Almightly path, if you will keep in it. If you wander out into swamps, or into brambles, and get into darkness, you will find it hard to get back.

Br. Cummings told you the truth, this morning, with regard to the sins of the people. And I will say that the time will come, and is now high at hand, when those who profess our faith, if they are guilty of what some of this people are guilty of, will find the ax laid at the root of the tree, and they will be hewn down. What has been said is true. The time has been in Israel under the law of God, the celestial law, and that which pertains to the celestial law, for it is one of the laws of that kingdom where our Father dwells, that if a man was found guilty of adultery he must have his blood shed, and that is near at hand. But now I say, the name of the Lord is upon this people, and no more, but faithfully live their religion, their sins will be forgiven them without taking life.

You are aware that when Br. Cummings came to the point of loving our neighbors as ourselves, he could say yes or no, as the case might be; that is true. But I want to connect it with the doctrine you read in the Bible. When we love our neighbor as ourselves, in the time of Jesus said that no man hatches his own flesh. It is admitted by all that every person loves himself. Now if we do not love ourselves, we want to be saved and continue to exist, we want to go into the kingdom where we can enjoy eternity and see no more sorrow nor death. This is the desire of every person who believes in God. Now take a person in this congregation who has knowledge with regard to being saved in the kingdom of our God and our Father, and being exalted, one who knows and understands the principles of eternal life and sees the beauty and excellency of the eternities before him compared with the vain and foolish things of the world, and suppose that he is overthrown in a gross fault, that he has committed a sin that he knows will deprive him of that exaltation which he desires, and that he cannot attain to it without the shedding of his blood, and he knows that by having his blood shed he will atone for that sin and be saved and exalted with the Gods, is there a man or woman in this house but what would say, "shed my blood, that I may be saved and exalted with the Gods?"

All mankind love themselves, and let these principles be shown by an individual, and he would be glad to have his blood shed. That would be loving themselves, even unto an eternal exaltation. Will you love your brothers or sisters likewise, when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? That is what Jesus Christ meant. He never told a man or woman to love their enemies in their wickedness, never. He never intended any such thing; his language is left as it is for those to read who have the Spirit to discern between truth and error; it was so left for those who can discern the things of God. Jesus Christ never meant that we should love a wicked man in his wickedness.

Now take the wicked, and I can refer to where the Lord had to slay every soul of the families that went out of Egypt, except Caleb and Joshua. He slew them by the hand of their enemies, by the plague, and by the sword, why? Because he loved them, and promised Abraham that he would save them. And he loved Abraham because he was a friend to his God and would stick to him in the hour of darkness, hence he promised Abraham that he would save his seed. And he could save them upon no other principle, for they had forfeited their right to the land of Canaan by transgressing the law of God, and they could not have atoned for the sin if they had lived. But if they were slain the Lord could bring them up in the resurrection and give them the land of Canaan, and he could not do it on any other principle.

I could refer to you plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins. I have seen scores and hundreds of people for whom there would have been a

chance in the last resurrection there will be, if their lives had been taken and their blood spilled on the ground as a smoking incense to the Almighty, but who are now angels to the devil until our elder brother, Jesus Christ, sees them up—conquers death, hell and the grave. I have known a great many men who have left this church for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation, but if their blood had been spilled it would have been better for them. The wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid the principle's being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force.

This is loving our neighbor as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it. Any of you who understand the principles of eternity, if you have sinned a sin requiring the shedding of blood, except the sin unto death, would not be satisfied until your blood should be spilled, that you might gain that salvation you desire. That is the way to live mankind.

Christ and Balaam have not become friends; they have never shaken hands; they never have agreed to be business and to be on good terms no, never; and they never will, because they are diametrically opposed to each other. If one conquers, the other is destroyed. One or the other of them must triumph and utterly destroy and cast down the opponent. Light and darkness cannot dwell together, and so it is with the kingdom of God.

Now, brothers and sisters, will you live your religion? How many hundreds of times have I asked you that question? Will the Latter Day Saints live their religion? I am ashamed to say anything about a reformation among Saints, but I am happy to think that the people called Latter Day Saints are striving now to obtain the Spirit of their calling and religion. They are just coming into the path, just waking up out of their slumber. It seems as though they are nearly all like babies; we are but children, in one sense. Now let us begin, like children, and walk in the straight and narrow path, live our religion and honor our God.

With these remarks, I pray the God of Israel to bless you forever and ever, for you are the best people on earth. I can say that I am happy that you are doing so well as you are. Continue to proceed in the grace of God's Spirit until the day of his coming, which desire with all my heart, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE DESERET NEWS.



ALBERT CARRINGTON, EDITOR.  
 GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18.

REYNOLD'S MISCELLANY AND THE ATHENAEUM—Reviewing some Anti-Mormon Publications.

To all lovers of truth it has often appeared strange that the world's publications should have so constantly teemed with wildly FALSE or blithely IGNORANT statements concerning Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and the Latter Day Saints as a body of people. But so accustomed have we become to such a course on their part, that we were completely surprised to see the Miscellany and Athenaeum pick up and plainly expose the fallacies of three anti-Mormon works, whose absurd contents are generally allowed by so many pious and professed Christians. But however plain it appears in those reviews that the spirit of man can discern the things of man, it also appears equally, or more, plain that the things of God are alone discerned by the Spirit of God. For after most effectually showing up the folly of those anti-Mormon writers through the testimony of their own books, the editors display the most pitiable ignorance in regard to the faith, laws, views, customs, habits, and objects of the Latter Day Saints. Such ignorance on their part concerning anything pertaining to time and sense—to this world and its worldly men and affairs—to worldly wealth, fame, pleasure, power, and advancement—would be a source of deep chagrin to their feelings; but when discovered towards the restoration in our day of the everlasting priesthood and gospel, the raising up of Prophets and Apostles, the organization of the true church in accordance with the pattern instituted by Christ himself while on the earth, it is so far from being a source of chagrin that it almost, if not quite, appears to be a matter of self-gratulation.

The 'Miscellany' asks, "Now, shall we of the Old World ever receive a report of the doings at Salt Lake City in which it will be reasonable to put our trust?" What a question to be asked by professedly knowing editors in professedly enlightened England in this boasted

to who those persons were, in which it would be reasonable to put their trust," while at the same time Jesus and his Apostles were constantly proclaiming their true character and mission.

On the 6th of April, 1857, it will be twenty-seven years since the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and in that time the Book of Mormon has been printed and widely circulated in the English, French, German, Welsh, Danish, Italian and Hawaiian languages; thousands of Elders without purse or scrip have traversed rivers, seas, and many lands in the dissemination of our faith and doctrines; hundreds of thousands of letters, papers, pamphlets and other publications have been printed and scattered broadcast by the Saints, to the utmost of their means and opportunities; and yet a would-be-repented-wise editor in far famed England asks, "Now, shall we of the Old World ever receive a report of the doings at Salt Lake City in which it will be reasonable to put our trust?" Dear Sir, it will be altogether your own fault if you do not, for in your own island there are many Elders from Great Salt Lake City who are able and more than willing to authentically furnish the required information, among whom are Orson Pratt, in Liverpool, and Ezra T. Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. And in addition to those living teachers and thousands of others in your midst, you will find the Millennial Star and numerous 'Mormon' publications for sale at 42 Islington, Liverpool, and at 35 Jewin street, City, London; at which places you will also be able to procure the Deseret News, in which are printed the history of Joseph Smith, the public teachings of Pres. Brigham Young and his Counselors, of the Twelve and others, and such items as are deemed useful and interesting in Utah. You can then sit in your easy chair and scan the most bellied population in far off Utah, having a report thereof in which it will be reasonable to put your trust.

Mr. 'Miscellany' were such an accessible and vast array of correct information at your command upon worldly topics, and were you with all these attainable advantages to write about the Queen of England and Prince Albert, about the leaders in parliament, the men and affairs of the city of London, trade, politics, &c., with so little apparent knowledge as you have about the 'Mormons' and 'Mormon life'—how long think you could you sustain position as an intelligent journalist? Whom taught you that "These extraordinary people have made for themselves a new scheme of life, based on new ideas?" Our scheme of life is at least as old as the days of Adam, is the one revealed by the Almighty for the observance of all his children who desire to attain celestial glory, and is based upon eternal principles as understood in the councils of heaven and made known to man for his guidance.

It may be urged that this is interested testimony; no also is that of Moses in his five books in King James' translation of the Bible, and so is that of all the Prophets and Apostles as printed in that translation. They were all interested in the accounts which they gave centuries and thousands of years ago, which accounts have come to our hands through a very questionable channel. But in our time the Lord has again revealed and is revealing his will, and our testimony is corroborated by hosts of living witnesses, thus proving that the God whom we are striving to worship is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; that his arm is not shortened, that his ear is not deaf, and that he is no respecter of persons." But how prone are mankind to garnish the sepulchres of the Prophets, while at the same time they oppress, vilify, persecute, and kill those whom the Lord is sending to teach them. The way of eternal truth! This invariable practice demonstrates how much easier it is, while reading the Bible, to venerate ancient worthies and fancy our obedience had we lived in their days, than it is to actually receive the testimony and teachings of the servants of God living in our midst and follow their counsels and example.

With the light they restrict themselves to, the Miscellany and Athenaeum have handed three scurrilous anti-Mormon works very candidly and truthfully, much more so than is usual; and the Miscellany has gone so far as to "want to know how this system works," and the Athenaeum positively declares that "ill-

priesthood, for the gift of the Holy Ghost? And without faithfully walking in this channel, how can any one expect to possess saving knowledge of the plan of salvation? The Lord and his servants say, "this is the way, walk ye in it," while the arch apostate is leading his votaries in numerous by and devious paths, it mattering but little with him how slightly they vary from the true. The truth is extensively printed, the truth is widely proclaimed among the nations by faithful Elders, and yet how few are found who will hear and persistently cleave to it. The very fact that Joseph the Prophet was in his youth poor as to this world's goods and unlearned in worldly science, though in literal fulfillment of prophecy, is wrested by the devil into an argument against his divine mission and authority, and is to this day a stumbling block to the world who think they know so much and are so learned, when they are in reality blind and poor and naked and ignorant."

When reflecting upon the thick veil that is over the earth, the dark fables and the vanities that wholly engage the minds of the vast majority of accountable beings, the disregard of correct testimony, teaching and example, we are tempted at times, in human weakness, to leave each one to unassisted and unaidedly pursue his own course. But this will never answer, since, aside from obvious duty, there are many good, honorable, law-abiding, truth-seeking people scattered abroad upon the earth, and unto whom the principles of life must be taught. Were it not so the Athenaeum would not have made the following statement, "Such leaders (Joseph Smith and Brigham Young) and such a people require to be grappled with in a different spirit to what is brought to bear upon them in all the books we have yet seen about them—the compendious terms 'dupes and imposters' do not cover the facts." Truly they do not, and glad are we to see here and there even a few waking up to the facts couched in the great issue now being joined on this earth, for this issue as it proceeds will try the integrity of men to the utmost and will end in utterly sweeping away not only the refuge of lion and abominations, but all who take shelter in that refuge.

SANDWICH ISLANDS.—Pres. Elias Smith writes from Honolulu, under date Dec. 6, that he had lately visited all the branches on the island of Maui, and found them in a better condition than he had anticipated. The Elders were generally in the enjoyment of good health, and were entering in their efforts for the salvation of the people.

Drouth still continued severe, and in some places many were suffering through lack of food.

The volcano on Hawaii had ceased its eruptions.

THE WESTERN STANDARD.—Persons wishing to subscribe for Vol. 2 of the "Western Standard" should make early application to S. W. RICHARDS, Agent for this City. Subscribers for Vol. 1 will be furnished with Vol. 2, unless they give immediate notice to discontinue at the close of the year.

THE ELECTION.—A more warmly contested city election has never been known in New York than that of the fourth of November, 1856. Without doubt it will be remembered as having been attended with more bribery, fraud, corruption, and illegality in every form than was known at any previous time. Riot run loose—the police were inefficient, apparently disorganized. Crowds of shoulder hitters, bullies, and prize fighters surrounded ballot boxes, preventing any from approaching but those of the "right sort," those in whom they could see a want of all moral principle.

Boxes for the distribution of tickets were knocked down and the tickets destroyed—the police standing by inactive. In some of the districts thousands of respectable citizens desirous of voting were by force prevented. Others, who succeeded in spite of danger to life and limb, returned from the ballot boxes with their money and garments taltered. When the elective franchise was thus secured to us, and party victory is achieved by such means, who can doubt corruption will be found in high places, and men better fitted for ignoble, ignominious positions, will be raised to offices of trust and power? When will the good time come?—[Life Illustrated.]

How different is the conduct at elections in Utah, where they invariably pass off peacefully and with harmonious unanimity. In the matter of elections, at least, all must admit that the 'barbarians of Utah' are far in advance of the abominations practiced by the enlightened and refined Christians of the United States.—[Ed.]

A photograph of the Deseret News for February 18, 1857. A sermon by Brigham Young on blood atonement.

EVERYTHING.—The liar is the next greatest fool to the wise. A prudent reticence is the wisdom. Silence is a much more most gifted eloquence.



## 26. The Word of Wisdom

On February 27, 1833, Joseph Smith gave the revelation known as the “Word of Wisdom.” This revelation appears as Section 89 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Below is a photograph of this revelation.



Notice that the Word of Wisdom forbids the use of hot drinks, strong drinks and tobacco. The Mormon Church today interprets hot drinks to mean tea and coffee. It would appear, however, that in the early history of the church all hot drinks were forbidden. On April 7, 1868, the Mormon Apostle George Q. Cannon stated that chocolate drinks and hot soups were forbidden:

We are told, and very plainly too, that hot drinks—tea, coffee, **chocolate, cocoa** and all drinks of this kind are not good for man. . . . we must feed our children properly. . . . We must **not permit** them to drink liquor or **hot drinks**, or **hot soups** or to use tobacco or other articles that are injurious. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, pp. 221, 223)

Even though the revelation uses only the words “hot drinks” the Mormon Church today interprets this to mean drinks that contain caffeine. In other words, the emphasis is no longer on whether the drink is hot or cold, but rather how much caffeine it contains. For example, an article in the church’s *Improvement Era* condemns the drinking of cola drinks. It stated that a large bottle of cola drink contained approximately the same amount of caffeine as a cup of coffee.

Chocolate drinks, on the other hand, even though they are hot and contain a small amount of caffeine, are no longer forbidden. The following appeared on the Editorial Page of the Church Section in the *Deseret News*:

One of the latest efforts to justify drinking coffee is the current propaganda that drinking cocoa or chocolate is against the Word of Wisdom and that cocoa is supposed to contain even more caffeine than does coffee.

It is difficult to understand why some individuals seem to enjoy shocking people with extreme statements, or why they enjoy being the center of attraction so much that they are willing to set forth untruths as though they were facts. . . . **The facts** then completely dispel any notion that cocoa or chocolate is as harmful as coffee. Persons who say that those drinking hot chocolate are breaking the Word of Wisdom as **effectively as if they drank coffee do not state the truth**. . . .

When interviewing for temple recommends, for instance, or for advancement in the priesthood, or for baptism, or for any other purpose, bishops never inquire as to whether a person drinks cocoa or eats chocolate candy. If the use of cocoa and chocolate were against the doctrine of the Church such inquiry would be made, but it is not. (*Deseret News*, editorial page in the Church News, May 5, 1962)

Although some portions of Joseph Smith’s Word of Wisdom are stressed by the Mormon leaders, other portions are almost ignored. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states: “The admonition to eat little meat is **largely ignored**, as are some **other points** of the revelation” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 1966, p. 90).

### Origin of Revelation

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made the following statements concerning the conditions that led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom:

I think I am as well acquainted with the circumstances which led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom as any man in the Church, although I was not present at the time to witness them. The first school of the prophets was held in a small room situated over the Prophet Joseph’s kitchen. . . . When they assembled together in this room after breakfast, the first they did was **to light their pipes**, and, while smoking, talk about the great things of the kingdom, and **spit** all over the room, and as soon as the pipe was out of their mouths a large **chew of tobacco** would then

be taken. Often when the Prophet entered the room to give the school instructions he would find himself in a cloud of tobacco smoke. This, and the complaints of his wife at having to clean so filthy a floor, made the Prophet think upon the matter, and he inquired of the Lord relating to the conduct of the Elders in using tobacco, and the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom was the result of his inquiry. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 158)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave a similar explanation for the origin of the Word of Wisdom. The following appeared in an interview with David Whitmer which was published in the *Des Moines Daily News*:

... quite a little party of the brethren and sisters being assembled in Smith's house. Some of the men were excessive chewers of the filthy weed, and their disgusting slobbering and spitting caused Mrs. Smith (who, Mr. Whitmer insists, was a lady of predisposed refinement) to make the ironical remark that "It would be a good thing if a revelation could be had declaring the use of tobacco a sin, and commanding its suppression." The matter was taken up and joked about, one of the brethren suggesting that the revelation should also provide for a total abstinence from tea and coffee drinking, intending this as a counter "dig" at the sisters. Sure enough the subject was afterward taken up in dead earnest, and the "Word of Wisdom" was the result. (*The Des Moines Daily News*, Saturday, October 16, 1886)

It has been suggested that the temperance movement led to Joseph Smith's "Word of Wisdom." The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington gives this interesting information:

In recent years a number of scholars have contended that the revelation is an outgrowth of the temperance movement of the early nineteenth century. According to Dean D. McBrien, who first expressed this theory, the Word of Wisdom was a remarkable distillation of the prevailing thought of frontier America in the early 1830's. Each provision in the revelation, he claimed, pertained to an item which had formed the basis of widespread popular agitation in the early 1830's:

A survey of the situation existing at Kirtland when the revelation came forth is a sufficient explanation for it. The temperance wave had for some time been engulfing the West. Just a few years before, Robert Owen had abolished the use of ardent spirits in his community at New Harmony. In 1826 Marcus Morton had founded the American Temperance Society, called at first the Cold Water Society by way of contempt. In June, 1830, the *Millennial Harbinger* quoted in full, and with the hearty personal endorsement of Alexander Campbell, an article from the Philadelphia "Journal of Health," which in turn was quoting a widely circulated book. "The Simplicity of Health," which article most strongly **condemned the use of alcohol, tobacco, the eating intemperately of meats** . . . Temperance Societies were organized in great numbers during the early thirties, six thousand being formed in one year. . . . On October 6, 1830, the Kirtland Temperance Society was organized with two hundred thirty nine members. . . . This society at Kirtland was a most active one . . . it revolutionized the social customs of the neighborhood.

McBrien then goes ahead to point out that the Temperance Society succeeded in eliminating a distillery in Kirtland on February 1, 1833, just twenty-seven days before the Latter-day Saint revelation counseling abstinence was announced, and that the distillery at Mentor, near Kirtland, was also closed at the same time. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pp. 39-40)

Whitney R. Cross gives this information:

The temperance movement was larger in every dimension than Burned-over District ultraism. It began much earlier and has not yet ended. During the 1830's it attained national scope. . . . Further, if **alcohol** was evil because it frustrated the Lord's design for the human body, other drugs like **tea, coffee, and tobacco**, must be equally wrong. . . . Josiah Bissell, the Pioneer Line ultraist, had even before the 1831 revival "got beyond Temperance to the Cold Water Society—**no tea, coffee** or any other slops." (*The Burned-Over District*, New York, 1965, pp. 211-212)

## Joseph's Example

The Word of Wisdom is considered to be one of the most important revelations in the Mormon Church. A Mormon who continues to break the Word of Wisdom is considered to be weak in the faith. Breaking the Word of Wisdom is considered a sin which can bar a person from the Temple. In order to get a temple recommend a person is required to answer this question: "4. Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?" (*Temple Recommend Book*).

Joseph Fielding Smith, tenth President of the Mormon Church, claims that the habit of drinking tea can "bar" a person from the "celestial kingdom of God":

SALVATION AND A CUP OF TEA . . . my brethren, if you drink coffee or tea, or take tobacco, are you letting a cup of tea or a little tobacco stand in the road and bar you from the celestial kingdom of God, where you might otherwise have received a fulness of glory? . . . There is not anything that is little in this world in the aggregate. One cup of tea, then it is another cup of tea and another cup of tea, and when you get them all together, they are not so little. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 16)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart claims that the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith carefully observed the Word of Wisdom:

. . . no one can hold high office in the Church, on even the stake or ward level, nor participate in temple work, who is a known user of tea, coffee, liquor or tobacco. . . .

The **prophet himself carefully observed the word of wisdom**, and insisted upon its observance by other men in high Church positions, . . . (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 90)

Although most members of the church feel that Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, "carefully observed the Word of Wisdom," research reveals just the opposite. In fact, Joseph Smith, the man who introduced the temple ceremony into the Mormon Church, would not be able to go through the temple if he were living today because of his frequent use of alcoholic beverages.

On page 72 of his book, *Sounding Brass*, Dr. Hugh Nibley asks where the evidence is that Joseph Smith drank. We would answer Dr. Nibley by saying that this evidence is found throughout Joseph Smith's own *History of the Church*. In the *History of the Church*, vol. 2, page 26, we find the following:

The council proceeded to investigate certain charges presented by Elder Rigdon against Martin Harris; one was, that he told A. C. Russell, Esq., that **Joseph drank too much liquor** when he was translating the Book of Mormon . . .

Brother Harris did not tell Esq., Russell that Brother Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the Book of Mormon, **but this thing occurred previous to the translating of the book** . . .

The reader will remember that Martin Harris was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. The statement by Harris should be compared with a statement found in an affidavit made by Barton Stafford. Stafford, who knew Joseph Smith before he left Palmyra, stated that Smith "was very much addicted to intemperance" (Affidavit of Barton Stafford, dated November 3, 1833, as reprinted in *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*).

It might be argued that this was prior to the time when the Word of Wisdom was given and that Joseph Smith changed his habits after 1833. Evidence, however, plainly shows that Joseph Smith continued to use alcoholic beverages after the Word of Wisdom was given. Under the date of May 2, 1843, the following statement is recorded in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*:

Wednesday, 3.—Called at the office and **drank a glass of wine** with Sister Jenetta Richards, made by her mother in England, and reviewed a portion of the conference minutes. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 380)



Benjamin F. Johnson, a personal friend of Joseph Smith, wrote the following about Smith: “He was partial to a well supplied table and he **did not always refuse the wine that ‘maketh the heart glad’**” (A letter by Benjamin F. Johnson to Elder George S. Gibbs, 1903, as printed in *The Testimony of Joseph Smith’s Best Friend*, p. 4). The following references appear in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* for January, 1836:

We then partook of some refreshments, and **our hearts were made glad with the fruits of the vine.** (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 369)

Elders Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, and Warren Parrish, then presided the Presidency with three servers of glasses filled with **wine** to bless. And it fell to my lot to attend to this duty, which I cheerfully discharged. It was then passed round in order, then the cake in the same order; and suffice it to say, **our hearts were made glad** while partaking of the bounty of earth which was presented, until we had taken our fill; . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 378)

Joseph Smith continued to disobey the Word of Wisdom until the day of his death. The *History of the Church* contains this information concerning an incident in Carthage jail:

Before the jailor came in, his boy brought in some water, and said the guard wanted some **wine**. **Joseph** gave Dr. Richards two dollars to give the guard; but the guard said one was enough, and would take no more.

The guard immediately sent **for a bottle of wine**, pipes, and two small papers of tobacco; and one of the guards brought them into the jail soon after the jailor went out. Dr. Richards uncorked the bottle, **and presented a glass to Joseph, who tasted, as Brother Taylor and the doctor**, and the bottle was then given to the guard, who turned to go out. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 616)

We do not know how often Joseph Smith used tobacco, but as the reader will remember (see page 6 of this book), at one time “he rode through the streets of Nauvoo **smoking a cigar**” (“Joseph Smith As An Administrator,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1969, p. 161).

The Mormon leaders have made three important changes concerning the Word of Wisdom in Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* (for details see page 6 of this book). In one instance, Joseph Smith asked “Brother Markam” to get “a pipe and some tobacco” for the Apostle Willard Richards. These words have been replaced with the word “medicine” in recent editions of the *History of the Church*. At another time Joseph Smith related that he gave some of the “brethren” a “couple of dollars, with directions to replenish” their supply of “whisky.” In modern editions of the *History of the Church*, twenty-three words have been deleted from this reference to cover up the fact that Joseph Smith encouraged the “brethren” to disobey the Word of Wisdom. In the third instance, Joseph Smith frankly admitted that he had “drank a glass of beer at Moessers.” These words have been omitted in recent editions of the *History of the Church*.

In her attack on Fawn Brodie’s book, *No Man Knows My History*, the Mormon writer F. L. Stewart makes these statements:

49. NM [*No Man Knows My History*] states that a revelation known as the “Word of Wisdom” states that Mormons should “use wine only at communion.” Therefore, says NM, when Joseph drank wine at weddings, he was breaching this revelation.

The “Word of Wisdom” actually states that wine should be taken “only in assembling yourselves together, to offer up your sacraments before Him.” The correct word is “sacraments,” not “communion.” Since both weddings and baptisms were considered to be sacraments, Joseph was **not** breaching this revelation when he drank wine at weddings. . . . (*Exploding The Myth About Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 1967, p. 55)

In a footnote on the same page, F. L. Stewart states:

. . . Joseph drank wine as a sacrament at his wife’s baptism in 1830. This custom is no longer practiced at baptism and weddings, and water is now used in the place of wine for the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

F. L. Stewart’s attempt to explain away Joseph Smith’s disregard for the Word of Wisdom cannot be taken seriously. Joseph Smith’s “glass of wine” with Jenetta Richards had nothing to do with a “sacrament,” nor can his “beer at Moessers” be explained in this manner. When Joseph Smith and his friends drank wine in the jail at Carthage, it was certainly not taken as a sacrament. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made this point very clear in the *History of the Church*:

Sometime after dinner we sent for some **wine**. It has been reported by some that this was taken as a sacrament. It was **no such thing**; our spirits were generally dull and heavy, and it was sent for to revive us. . . . I believe we all drank of the **wine**, and gave some to one or two of the prison guards. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 101)

It is interesting to note that the Apostle John Taylor continued to use alcoholic beverages after Joseph Smith’s death. Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary on June 3, 1847:

While I was explaining this Prests **O. Hyde, P. P. Pratt and John Taylor** also came in so I stoped saying I had been caught twice Elder Taylor replied to go on and not stop for them. I told him it was nothing but a police meeting and not interesting to them.

“Never mind says he we are police men too.”

Says I. “I hope you will all conform to the rules of the police then.”

“Certainly” says Taylor “Bring on the **jug**” says I at which they were presented with a large jug of **whiskey**.

This was such an unexpected turn that it was only answered by a peal of laughter & they all paid **due respect to the jug** . . .

After drinking says Parley “I have traveled these streets all times of the night & never before have I saw a police man but now I know where to find them hereafter” alluding to the **jug**.

“Parley” says I “do you not know that some things in this kingdom are only spiritually discerned & so with the police.” (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, vol. 1, p. 259)

All of the early Mormon Apostles seem to have used alcoholic beverages after the Word of Wisdom was given. Joseph Smith made the following statement concerning an incident that happened in 1840: “April 17.—This day **the Twelve** blessed and **drank a bottle of wine** at Penworthan, made by Mother Moon **forty years before**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 120). Under the date of April 12, 1845, Hosea Stout recorded in his diary that he attended “a feast of **beer** and cakes prepared by the old police. The Old police and wives and some of the **Twelve** were present We had a joyful time as much cakes & **beer** as we could eat and drink . . .” (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 34). On July 1, 1845, Hosea Stout recorded: “This day there was a grand concert . . . we had also the 12 and other authorities with us, and was also provided with as much **beer, wine**, cakes &c as we could eat and drink” (*Ibid.*, p. 50). While Joseph Smith and other authorities in the Mormon Church did not observe the Word of Wisdom, others felt that it should be a strict rule for the church. In the minutes of a conference held at Far West in 1837 the following statement is found: “The congregation, after a few remarks from Sidney Rigdon, unanimously voted not to support stores and shops selling spirituous liquors, tea, coffee, or tobacco” (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 524). It is interesting to note that when Joseph Smith opened his store in Nauvoo, it was supplied “with sugar, molasses, glass, salt, **tea, coffee** &c., purchased in St. Louis” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 483). In spite of the vote taken at Far West, not to patronize any

store selling these items, Joseph Smith seems to have had a thriving business. It appears that Joseph Smith's own home was supplied with tea and coffee. George A. Smith related the following:

... a certain family, ... arrived in Kirtland, and the Prophet asked them to stop with him ... Sister Emma, in the mean time, asked the old lady if she would have a cup of **tea** ... or a cup of **coffee**. This whole family apostatized because they were invited to take a cup of tea or coffee, after the Word of Wisdom was given. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 214)

Because of the fact that Joseph Smith did not keep the Word of Wisdom, Almon W. Babbitt felt that he had a right to break it. On the 19th of August, 1835, Almon W. Babbitt was brought to trial:

On the 19th, a charge was preferred before a council of the Presidency, against Elder Almon W. Babbitt, ...

Elder J. B. Smith testified that Elder Babbitt had assumed the prerogative of dictating to him in his preaching; and that he was not keeping the Word of Wisdom.

Elder Babbitt said that he had taken the liberty to break the Word of Wisdom, from the example of **President Joseph Smith Jun.**, and others, but acknowledged that it was wrong; ... (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 252)

## Joseph's Bar

In Nauvoo Joseph Smith sold liquor; the following ordinance was passed in 1843 (the reader must remember that Joseph Smith was Mayor of Nauvoo at the time):

Ordinance on the Personal Sale of Liquors.

Section 1. Be it ordained by the City Council of Nauvoo, that the mayor of the city be and is hereby authorized to sell or give spirits of any quantity as he in his wisdom shall judge to be for the health and comfort or convenience of such travelers or other persons as shall visit his house from time to time.

Passed December 12, 1843.

**Joseph Smith, Mayor.**

Willard Richards, Recorder. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 111)

Joseph Smith's own son related the following:

About 1842, a new and larger house was built for us. ... Father proceeded to build an extensive addition running out from the south wing toward the east. ...

At any rate, it seemed spacious then, and a sign was put out giving it the dignified name of "The Nauvoo Mansion," ... Mother was to be installed as landlady, and soon made a trip to Saint Louis..

When she returned Mother found installed in the keeping-room of the hotel—that is to say, the main room where the guests assembled and where they were received upon arrival—a **bar**, with counter, shelves, bottles, glasses, and other paraphernalia customary for a **fully-equipped tavern bar**, and Porter Rockwell in charge as tender.

She was very much surprised and disturbed over this arrangement, but said nothing for a while ... she asked me where Father was. I told her he was in the front room ... Then she told me to go and tell him she wished to see him. I obeyed, and returned with him to the hall where Mother awaited him. "Joseph," she asked, "What is the meaning of **that bar in this house**?" ... "How does it look," she asked, "for the spiritual head of a religious body to be keeping a hotel in which is a room fitted out as a **liquor-selling establishment**?"

He reminded her that all taverns had their **bars** at which liquor was sold or dispensed..

Mother's reply came emphatically clear, though uttered quietly:

"Well, Joseph, ... I will take my children and go across to the old house and stay there, for I will not have them raised up under such conditions as this arrangement imposes upon us, nor have them mingle with the kind of men who frequent such a place. You are at liberty to make your choice; **either that bar goes out of the house or we will.**"

It did not take Father long to make the choice, for he replied immediately, "Very well, Emma; I will have it removed at once"—and he did. (*The Saints' Herald*, January 22, 1935, p. 110)

Joseph Smith even tried to justify drunkenness because of the example of Noah. The following appears in Joseph Smith's *History of the Church*:

Sunday, 7.—Elder William O. Clark preached about two hours, reproved the Saints for a lack of sanctity, and a want of holy living, enjoining sanctity, solemnity and temperance in the extreme, in the rigid sectarian style.

I reproved him as Pharisaical and hypocritical. ... "What many call **sin is not sin**; I do many things to break down superstition, and I will break it down;" I referred to the **curse** of Ham for laughing at Noah, while in his **wine, but doing no harm**. Noah was a righteous man, and yet he drank wine and became intoxicated; the Lord did not forsake him in consequence thereof, for he retained all the power of his priesthood, and when he was accused by Canaan, he cursed him by the priesthood which he held, and the Lord had respect to his word, and the priesthood which he held, notwithstanding **he was drunk**, and the curse remains upon the posterity of Canaan until this day. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 445-446)

Oliver Boardman Huntington related the following incident in his journal:

Robert Thompson was a faithful just clerk for Joseph Smith the Prophet in Nauvoo and had been in his office steady near or quite 2 years. **Joseph** said to brother Thompson one day. "Robert I want you to go and get on a buss [bust?] **go and get drunk and have a good spree**. If you don't you will die."

Robert did not do it. He was very pious exemplary man and never guilty of such an impropriety as he thought that to be. In less than 2 weeks he was dead and buried. (Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, typed copy at the Utah State Historical Society, vol. 2, p. 166)

Juanita Brooks shows that there was even drinking in the unfinished Nauvoo Temple:

... others were still putting in their time on the temple. On April 23, Samuel Richards told how the carpenters swept up their shavings "after which it was voted that Bro. Angel go and inform the Trustees that the hands were ready to drink the **barrel of wine** which had been reserved for them." The painters continued their work until the evening of April 29, when a group of the workers and their wives met in the attic and "had a feast of cakes, pies, **wine**, &c, where we enjoyed ourselves with prayer, preaching, administering for healing, blessing children, and music and **dancing** until near Midnight. The other hands completed the painting in the lower room." (*John D. Lee*, pp. 86-87)

On the way to Utah, Brigham Young counseled the Mormons to "make beer as a drink" (*John D. Lee*, p. 116). "Two lbs. **tea**, 5 lbs. **coffee**" were listed as part of the "requirements of each family of five for the journey across the plains" (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 454). On October 9, 1865, Brigham Young stated that "it is very rarely indeed that I taste tea or coffee; ..." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 140). However this may be, in 1854 Nunes Carvalho traveled with Brigham Young and reported that Young drank coffee on a regular basis:

This was an imposing travelling party, ... taking the word of command from the leading wagon, in which rode Gov. Brigham Young. One of his wives, an accomplished and beautiful lady, ... made **her husband's coffee**, and cooked his meals ... I ... frequently had my seat at their primitive table, ... a moveable table was arranged in the wagon. Venison, beef, **coffee**, eggs, pies, etc., were served at **every** meal. (*Among the Mormons*, edited by William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, p. 267)

According to Hosea Stout's diary, Brigham Young made this statement on September 27, 1845: "... I am and ever intend to be the Master of my passions ... some may say I am in the **habits of taking snuff and tea** yet I am no slave to these passions and can leave these off if they make my brother affronted ... " (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 75). On April 7, 1867, Brigham Young acknowledged



in the Tabernacle that he had **chewed tobacco for many years**. His excuse was that he used it for a toothache:

... it is not my privilege to drink liquor, neither is it my privilege to eat tobacco. Well, bro. Brigham, have you not done it? **Yes, for many years**, but I ceased its **habitual practice**. I used it for toothache; now I am free from that pain, and my mouth is never stained with tobacco. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 404)

Brigham Young's son, Brigham Young, Jun., did not try to excuse his use of tobacco as his father did. He stated:

I remember once, when a boy, Jedediah M. Grant saw me chewing tobacco, and said he, "You chew tobacco, do you?" "Yes, sir." "Well, I never had any taste for it; it is no virtue in me that I do not use it, I tried hard enough, but it made me sick." The virtue, brethren, is in putting away or overcoming habits which you know would impede your progress in the kingdom of God. It was not virtue in Bro. Grant that he did not chew tobacco, he tried to learn how, but could not do it. **I tried, and succeeded.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 15, pp. 141-142)

### Young's Distillery

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

"Boothill cemeteries," in which were buried men killed in unholy orgies, mostly in saloons, are not found in Utah. Saloons came there with non-Mormons. (*Gospel Interpretations*, Salt Lake City, 1947, p. 250)

This statement by the Apostle Widtsoe is certainly untrue. Actually, Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church owned the "first bar-room" in Salt Lake City. The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft gives this information:

As to the manufacture of **whiskey**, President Taylor states that alcohol was first made **by the Saints** for bathing, pickling, and medicinal purposes, and was little used for drinking. Stills were afterward obtained from emigrants, and the manufacture and sale of alcohol were later controlled by the city councils. The **first bar-room** in S. L. City, and the only one for years, was in the Salt Lake House, owned by **President Young** and Feramorz Little. It was opened for the accommodation of travellers, whose requirements would be supplied by some one, and it was thought by the brethren that they had better control the trade than have outsiders do so. (*History of Utah*, p. 540, n. 44)

Stanley P. Hirshon states:

In Nauvoo the Mormons drank heavily. . . . in December 1843 the Mormon-controlled City Council authorized Joseph Smith to sell liquor in his hotel.

In Utah the church dominated the liquor trade. In 1856 Caleb Green freighted six tons of tobacco, rum, whiskey, brandy, tea, and coffee across the plains for Young, and two years later *The New York Times* reported that the "principal drinking-saloon and gambling-room are in Salt Lake House, a building under the control of the Church and the immediate superintendency of Heber C. Kimball." . . .

Young tried his best to rid himself of rival brewers. (*The Lion of the Lord*, Knopf, 1969, p. 285)

On June 7, 1863, Brigham Young acknowledged to the congregation assembled in the Bowery, that he **had built a distillery**:

When there was no **whisky to be had** here, and we needed it for rational purposes, I **built a house to make it in**. When the **distillery** was almost completed and in good working order, an army was heard of in our vicinity and I shut up the works; I did not make a gallon of whisky at my works, because it came here in great quantities, more than was needed. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 206)

Hubert Howe Bancroft gives this information: "Peter K. Dotson, . . . came to Salt Lake City in 1851, and was first employed by **Brigham** as manager of a **distillery**, afterwards becoming express and mail agent" (*History of Utah*, p. 573, n. 2). Josiah

F. Gibbs gives this interesting information concerning Brigham Young's distillery:

During forty years the Mormon prophets absolutely controlled the city council and police force of Salt Lake. And whatever vice and crime arose from the sale and consumption of intoxicants during the period under discussion, is justly chargeable to the Mormon leaders.

Instead, however, of bringing their unappealable dictum to bear on the side of temperance and decent morals, the Prophet Brigham became a **distiller of whiskey and other intoxicants**, and high priests were the wholesale and retail distributors.

The evidence in support of the foregoing allegations is clipped from data compiled from the city records by gentlemen living in Salt Lake City, . . .

On July 2, 1861, the special committee, to whom was referred the subject of the manufacture and sale of liquor, presented a report reading as follows:

To the Honorable Mayor of Salt Lake City: —

Your committee, to whom was referred the subject of the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquor, would report that they visited several distilleries in and near the city and would respectfully recommend that the City Council purchase or rent the **distillery erected by Brigham Young** near the Mouth of Parley's canyon, and put the same in immediate operation, employing such persons as shall be deemed necessary to manufacture a sufficient quantity to answer the public demand; controlling the sale of the same, and that the profits accruing therefrom be paid into the City Treasury.

(Signed) Alderman Clinton,  
Alderman Sheets,  
Councilman Felt.

(*Lights and Shadows of Mormonism*, by Josiah F. Gibbs, Salt Lake City, 1909, pp. 248-249)

Orlando W. Powers, who served as associate justice of the supreme court of Utah, gave this testimony in the "Reed Smoot Case":

After the Liberal Party had secured control of the city of Salt Lake, I procured an investigation to be made of the city records, which had been written up by the Mormon city recorders from the earliest time, . . .

The city of Salt Lake at that time ran a saloon—a city saloon. It had a city billiard hall. It had a city bathing establishment. It ran a **distillery**. Its recorder kept an account with the trustee in trust for the **Mormon Church**, which trustee was credited with tithing—and the tithing, by the way, is the 10 per cent that good Mormons are supposed to pay into the church—due from the various church officials, and they were charged with **liquor**, and for bathing, and for things of that kind. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 804-805)

On July 26, 1890, Judge Powers gave a speech in which he stated:

It will please you to know that notwithstanding the fact that the city had gone into the whisky business on its own hook, on August 19, 1862, it granted to Brigham Young a **license to distill peaches into brandy**. August 11, 1865, Mr. Young and George Q. Cannon addressed the Council on the liquor question. Mr. Young said:

"This community needs vinegar and will require spirituous liquor for washing and for health, and it will be right and proper for the city to continue its sale as it has done and make a profit."

. . . Brigham Young kept an open account on the city books, and this account shows that from 1862 to 1872 there were 235 different charges for **liquor** purchased by him amounting in the aggregate to \$9316.66, or an average of \$846.97 per year, . . .

An examination of the official records of the United States shows that from 1862, when the tax on distilled spirits was first levied, until the coming of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869, which was the beginning of the Gentile era in Utah, thirty-seven distilleries existed in this Territory. . . . These facts, taken from public records, dispose of the charge that the Gentiles invaded a



temperance community. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 14, 1908)

According to John D. Lee, Brigham Young kept a large supply of liquor. Under the date of May, 14 [15th], 1867, Lee recorded the following in his journal:

About 5 P.M. Prest. B. Young & suite arrived in the city from his southern visit among the Sai[n]ts. . . . On the following day I went to see him in his Mansion where I spent near 1/2 day—very agreeable indeed. He had a **decanter of sp[ic]endid wine** brought in of his own make & said, I want to treat Bro. Lee to as Good an article, I think, as can be bought in Dixie. The **wine** indeed was a Superior article. He said that he had some **300 gallons** & treated about **2000\$ worth of liquers** yearly & continued that we [he] wish[e]d that some one would take **his wine at 5\$ per gallon & sell it**, where upon **Pres. D. H. Wells said that he would take 200 gal.** at 6\$ a gallon &c. (*A Mormon Chronicle, The Diaries of John D. Lee*, vol. 2, pp. 71-72)

In 1867, Brigham Young stated that most of the Bishops did not observe the Word of Wisdom:

You go through the wards in the city, and then through the wards in the country, and ask the Bishops—“Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?” The reply will be “**Yes; No, not exactly.**” “Do you drink tea?” “No.” “Coffee?” “No.” “Do you drink whisky?” “No.” “Well, then, why do you not observe the Word of Wisdom?” “Well, this **tobacco, I cannot give it up.**” And in this he sets an example to every man, and to every boy over ten years of age, in his ward, to nibble at and chew tobacco. You go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not chew tobacco, nor drink tea nor coffee, but once in a while he takes a **little spirits**, and keeps **whiskey** in his house, in which he will occasionally **indulge**—Go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not drink whisky nor chew tobacco, but he “**cannot give up his tea and coffee.**” And so it goes through the whole church. Not every Bishop indulges in one or more of these habits, but **most of them do**. I recollect being at a trial not long since where quite a number of Bishops had been called in as witnesses, but I could not learn that there **was one who did not drink whiskey**, and I **think that most of them drank tea and coffee**. I think that we have **some bishops** in this city who do not chew tobacco, nor drink liquor nor tea nor coffee **to excess**. . . . If a person is weary, worn out, cast down, fainting, or dying, a **brandy sling**, a little **wine**, or a cup of **tea** is good to revive them. **Do not throw these things away, and say they must never be used**; they are good to be used with judgment, prudence, and discretion. Ask our **bishops if they drink tea every day, and in most cases they will tell you they do if they can get it.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, pp. 402-403)

The same year that Brigham Young made the statements cited above, the Apostle Wilford Woodruff stated: “Very few of us have kept the Word of Wisdom; but I have no doubt that if the council of President Young were carried out it would save the people of this Territory a **million of dollars annually**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 370). In a sermon delivered March 10, 1860, Brigham Young stated:

Many of the brethren chew tobacco, and I have advised them to be modest about it. Do not take out a **whole plug of tobacco in meeting before the eyes of the congregation, and cut off a long slice and put it in your mouth**, to the annoyance of everybody around. Do not glory in this disgraceful practice. If you must use tobacco, put a small portion in your mouth when no person sees you, and be careful that no one sees you chew it. I do not charge you with sin. You have the “Word of Wisdom.” Read it. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 361)

Tobacco chewing became a serious problem in the Tabernacle, for in 1870 Brigham Young stated:

There is another subject I wish to refer to. Last Sabbath this front gallery, . . . was very full. After meeting was dismissed I took a walk through it, and to see the floor that had been occupied by those professing to be gentlemen, and I do not know but brethren, you might have supposed that cattle had been there rolling and standing around, for here and there were **great quids of tobacco, and places one or two feet square smeared with tobacco juice**. I want to say to the doorkeepers that when you see gentlemen who cannot omit chewing and **spitting while in this house**, request them to leave; and if such persons refuse to leave, and continue their spitting, just take them and lead them out carefully and kindly. We do not want to have the house thus defiled. It is an imposition for gentlemen to **spit tobacco juice** around, or to leave their **quids of tobacco** on the floor; they dirty the house, and if a lady happen to besmear the bottom of her dress, which can hardly be avoided, it is highly offensive. We therefore request **all gentlemen attending conference to omit tobacco chewing while here.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 344)

The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington makes these interesting observations concerning the “Word of Wisdom”:

The strong and increased emphasis on the Word of Wisdom which characterized the official Mormon attitude throughout the remainder of the century appears to have begun in 1867. . . .

The explanation for these rules and the widespread resolves to obey the Word of Wisdom seems to lie in the conditions of the Mormon economy . . . was necessary for the Latter-day Saints to develop and maintain a self-sufficient economy in their Rocky Mountain retreat. Economic independence was a necessary goal of the group and every program of the church tended toward that end . . . There must be no waste of liquid assets on imported consumers’ goods. . . . Saints who used their cash to purchase imported Bull Durham, Battle-Axe plugs, tea, coffee, and similar “wasteful” (because not productive) products were taking an action which was opposed to the economic interests of the territory. In view of this situation, President Young came to be unalterably opposed to the expenditure of money by the Saints on imported tea, coffee, and tobacco. It was consistent with the economics of the time that he should have had no great objection to tobacco chewing if the tobacco was grown locally. It was also consistent that he should have successfully developed a locally-produced “Mormon” tea to take the place of the imported article. . . . In a letter of instructions to all the settlements south of Great Salt Lake City, President Young wrote:

This community has not yet concluded to entirely dispense with the use of tobacco, and great quantities have been imported . . . I know of no better climate and soil than are here for the successful culture of tobacco. Instead of buying it in a foreign market and importing it over a thousand miles, **why not raise it in our country or do without it?** . . . **Tea is in great demand in Utah, and anything under that name sells readily at an extravagant price.** Tea can be produced in this Territory in sufficient quantities for home consumption, and **if we raise it ourselves we know that we have the pure article.** If we do not raise it, I would suggest that we do without it.

(*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pp. 43-45)

In his sermons Brigham Young made these statements concerning tea, coffee, tobacco and whiskey:

You know that we all profess to believe the “Word of Wisdom.” There has been a great deal said about it, more in former than in latter years. We as Latter-day Saints, care but little about tobacco; **but as “Mormons” we use a great deal.** . . . The traders and passing emigration have sold **tons of tobacco**, besides what is sold here regularly. I say that \$60,000 annually is the smallest figure I can estimate the sales at. Tobacco can be raised here as well as it can be raised in any other place.

It wants attention and care. If we use it, let us raise it here. I **recommend for some man to go to raising tobacco**. One man, who came here last fall, is going to do so; and if he is diligent, he will raise quite a quantity. I want to see some man **go to and make a business of raising tobacco and stop sending money out of the territory for that article**.

Some of the brethren are very strenuous upon the “Word of Wisdom,” and would like to have me preach upon it, and urge it upon the brethren, and make it a test of fellowship. I do **not** think that I shall do so. I have never done so. We annually expend only \$60,000 to break the “Word of Wisdom,” and we can save the money and **still break it, if we will break it**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 35)

What I am now about to say is on the subject of tobacco. **Let us raise our own tobacco, or quit using it**. In the years '49, '50, '51, '52, and '53, and so long as I kept myself posted . . . we spent upwards of \$100,000 dollars a year for tobacco alone! **We now spend considerable more than we did then**. Let us save this ready means in our country by abstaining from the use of this narcotic, or **raise it ourselves**. (*Ibid.*, vol. 11, p. 140)

It is true that we do not raise our own tobacco: we might raise it if we would. We do not raise our tea; but we might raise it if we would, for tea-raising, this is as good a country as China; and the coffee bean can be raised a short distance south of us. . . . We can sustain ourselves; and as for such so-called luxuries as **tea, coffee, tobacco and whiskey**, we can produce them or do without them. (*Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 113-114)

Brigham Young also recommend that the Mormons make wine. Angus M. Woodbury stated:

A circular was sent out to the various orders of the stake by Brigham Young and George A. Smith suggesting policies of operation. In brief, it suggested that fruit be canned or dried fit for any market; **that wine be made at few places under expert direction for exportation**; . . . (*The Mormon United Order in Utah*, p. 9)

Leonard J. Arrington informs us that Brigham Young wanted most of the wine to be sold to the gentiles:

The attempts of the latter-day Saints in southern Utah and elsewhere to **make wine** are all illustrative of the dominating philosophy of economic self-sufficiency. One function of these enterprises, of course, was to provide wine for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. . . . Wine was used in the sacrament of the church as late as 1897. A more important function of wine-making, however, was to provide much-needed income for the poverty-stricken pioneers in Utah's Dixie. The intention was to sell most of the wine in mining communities in southern Utah and Nevada. Brigham Young instructed as follows: “First, by lightly pressing, make a white wine. Then give a heavier pressing and make a colored wine. Then barrel up this wine, and if my counsel is taken, this wine will not be drunk here, but will be exported, and thus increase the fund.” More of the **Dixie wine was consumed in the Mormon settlements than church officials had hoped**, however, and the enterprise was discontinued before 1900. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, pp. 46-47)

In footnote 29 on page 251 of *A Mormon Chronicle*, vol. 2, this interesting information is given: “At Brigham Young's suggestion, Neagle went east . . . In 1865 he was called upon to take charge of the **wine-making industry at Toquerville**. Here he raised many varieties of grapes, imported a wine press from California, and soon became the largest wine producer in the intermountain area. His large stone house with the wine-cellar basement still stands in Toquerville.” In his book, *Desert Saints*, Nels Anderson gives this information:

Wine-making was another Mormon enterprise that came to the same end as the cotton, iron, and silk missions. The St. George Tithing Office reported on March, 1887, a supply of **6,610 gallons of wine**, valued at 50 cents per gallon. . . .

The making of wine and some whiskey and brandy went ahead without organized direction for more than a decade. On March 26, 1874, when Brigham Young spoke to the women . . . He favored making wine for sale to outsiders. . . . The tithing office at St. George received wine of many grades. It met the problem by setting up standards. The tithing clerk issued these instructions on September 20, 1879:

In order to obtain a more uniform grade of wine than we are able to obtain by mixing together **the tithes** of small pressings in the hands of sundry individuals; it is suggested that those having but small quantities of grapes to make up into wine, deliver their **tithes in grapes** at this office. This may be arranged under the direction of the bishop so that economy may be preserved in the hauling, for which, of course, credit will be given on the tithing account.

Thus the church found itself the **chief** single producer of wine in the Dixie area . . . Because the tithing offices held the largest amount of wine for the market at any time, it was in a position to name the price. Church interest is evidenced in a letter sent by the St. George Tithing Office August 12, 1880. This letter was a bill sent to the managers in charge of building the Manti Temple, to whom had been sent a quantity of wine—4 barrels, or 158 gallons. It was not sold, but tithing credit was asked as follows: \$187.50 for the wine; \$20.00 for the barrels; for hauling the wine to Manti, \$16.00; total \$233.50. This was given in pay to the builders of the temple.

In 1889 Edward H. Snow, clerk of the St. George Tithing Office, wrote the presiding bishop at Salt Lake City regarding wine: “Our sales during the year do not amount to half of what we are obliged to make up from the grapes that are brought in. . . . We have made at this office alone over 600 gallons this year. We cannot refuse the grapes or the wine, and I see no way to get rid of it.” Snow wanted the presiding bishop to take the surplus. Later the tithing office sent men with loads of wine to the northern settlements, where they traded Dixie's liquid wealth for wheat and flour or took it to the mining camps, . . .

Dixie brethren did not follow Brother Brigham's counsel. They drank so much of the wine that by 1890 drunkenness was a worry to the church leaders. The tithing office discontinued accepting wine for tithes and abandoned its own presses. (*Desert Saints*, by Nels Anderson, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 373-374)

The Mormon wine business proved the entering wedge for a kind of fraternalism between Mormons and Gentiles which was very disturbing to local church leaders. Mormons who drank wine with the Gentiles became friendly with them. Besides breaking down the social barriers, wine-drinking became a vice to some of the brethren. . . .

The High Council complained that some wine-drinkers did not pay their tithing, that others neglected their families, and that still other wine-drinkers were degenerating into loafers. . . . The bishops were required to take offenders to task; but this was not easy, since in some wards most of the brethren made wine for sale and most of the brethren had become wine-drinkers to some degree. . . .

Since the St. George Tithing Office, as a practical measure, had originally joined with the farmers in making wine, the church authorities were much embarrassed in pushing their drive against wine-drinkers. About 1887 the tithing office discontinued making wine. The passing of Silver Reef as a market left the producers with quantities of wine on hand. The tithing office managed, as well as it could, to get rid of the more than **six thousand gallons on hand**.

From the moral angle, church leaders were forced to recognize that their people could not be makers of liquor without being drinkers of it, too. There were too



many drinkers of wine and too few moderate drinkers among them. (*Desert Saints*, 1966, pp. 435-436)

## Wine and Visions

One anti-Mormon writer claimed that the witnesses to the Book of Mormon were drunk at the time they received their vision concerning the plates. We have been unable to find any evidence to support this accusation. There is, however, evidence to show that wine was used to excess in the Kirtland Temple at the very time the Mormons were claiming to receive visions.

The reader will remember that we quoted William Harris as saying:

In the evening, they met for the endowment. The **fast** was then broken by eating light wheat bread, and **drinking as much wine** as they saw proper. Smith knew well how to infuse the spirit which they expected to receive; so he encouraged the brethren to **drink freely**, telling them that the wine was consecrated, and would not make them drunk. . . . they began to prophecy, pronouncing blessings upon their friends, and **curse**s upon their enemies. If I should be so unhappy as to go to the regions of the damned, I never expect to hear language more awful, or more becoming the infernal pit, than was uttered that night. (*Mormonism Portrayed*, pp. 31-32)

Charles L. Walker, a faithful Mormon, recorded the following in his diary:

Sun., Nov. 21, 1880. . . . Bro. Milo Andress . . . Spoke of blessings and power of God manifested in the Kirtland Temple. Said he once asked the Prophet who [why?] he (Milo) did not feel that power that was spoken of as the power which was felt on the day of Pentecost? . . . when we had **fasted for 24 hours** and partaken of the Lord's supper, namely a piece of bread as big as your double fist and **half a pint of wine** in the temple, I was there and saw the Holy Ghost descend upon the heads of those present like cloven tongues of fire. ("Diary of Charles L. Walker," 1855-1902, excerpts typed, 1969, p. 35)

The statement by the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith would also lead a person to believe that wine was used to excess:

. . . after the people had **fasted all day**, they sent out and got wine and bread, . . . they ate and drank, . . . some of the High Counsel of Missouri stepped into the stand, and, as righteous Noah did when he awoke from his wine, commenced to **curse their enemies**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 216)

In a statement dated February 27, 1885, Mrs. Alfred Morley made this comment:

I have heard many Mormons who attended the dedication, or endowment of the Temple, say that very many became drunk. . . . The Mormon leaders would stand up to prophesy and were so drunk they said they could not get it out, and would call for another drink. Over a barrel of liquor was used at the service. (*Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Oakland, California, April, 1888, p. 2)

Isaac Aldrich stated: "My brother, Hazen Aldrich, who was president of the Seventies, told me when the Temple was dedicated a barrel of wine was used and they had a drunken 'pow-wow'" (*Ibid.*, p. 3).

Stephen H. Hart gave this information:

Mr. McWhitney, who was a Mormon . . . said he attended a service which lasted from 10 A.M. until 4 P.M., and there was another service in the evening. The Lord's Supper was celebrated and they **passed the wine in pails several times** to the audience, and each person drank as much as he chose from a cup. He said it was mixed liquor, and he believed the Mormon leaders intended to get the audience under the influence of the mixed liquor, so they would believe it was the Lord's doings. . . . When the liquor was repassed, Mr. McWhitney told them he had endowment enough, and said he wanted to get out of the Temple, which was densely crowded. (*Ibid.*, p. 3)

The reader will remember that David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, called the endowment "a trumped up yarn" and said that "there was no visitation" (*The Des*

*Moines Daily News*, October, 16, 1886). The fact that the Mormons fasted for some time and then drank an excessive amount of wine probably led many of them to curse their enemies and to believe that they had seen visions.

LaMar Petersen has gathered a great deal of information on this subject which he has compiled in a manuscript entitled "Hearts Made Glad." When this manuscript is published it will throw important light on this subject.

## Hypocrisy

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt once stated:

I do not wonder that the world say that the Latter-day Saints do not believe their own revelations. Why? Because we do not practice them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, p. 104)

We have shown that Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, did not keep the Word of Wisdom, yet, according to Joseph Fielding Smith, Joseph Smith taught that a member of the church could not hold an office unless he observed the Word of Wisdom:

One question considered was as follows: "Whether disobedience to the word of wisdom was a transgression sufficient to deprive an official member from holding office in the Church, after having it sufficiently taught him?" After a free and full discussion **Joseph Smith**, who presided, gave his decision as follows: "No official member in this Church is worthy to hold an office after having the word of wisdom properly taught him; and he, the official member, neglecting to comply with or obey it." This decision was confirmed by unanimous vote. (*Essentials in Church History*, p. 169)

It is certainly strange that Joseph Smith could break the Word of Wisdom and yet retain his position as President of the Church. The thing that makes this especially strange is that when a member of the church did not observe the Word of Wisdom, this was sometimes used against him if he was tried for his fellowship. Leonard J. Arrington stated: "Moreover, when a council at Far West tried a high church official (David Whitmer) for his fellowship, the first of the five charges against him was that he did not observe the Word of Wisdom" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1959, p. 40). As we have already shown, when Almon W. Babbitt was charged with not observing the Word of Wisdom, his only defence was that he "had taken the liberty to break the Word of Wisdom, from the example of President Joseph Smith, Jun., and others." We have also shown that after Joseph Smith's death, Brigham Young and other church leaders did not observe the Word of Wisdom.

It is a well known fact that Ann Eliza Webb, who was married to Brigham Young, later left Young and wrote a book against the Mormon Church. Dr. Hugh Nibley tried to discredit her book by stating that she was never a good Mormon: "She may have detested the man, but if she **really** believed in his religion, as she perpetually protests, her behavior would have been totally different: at the **very least** she would have gone to prayers, **kept the Word of Wisdom**, and paid tithing—none of which she did" (*Sounding Brass*, p. 152). Using the same argument, we would ask Dr. Nibley why Joseph Smith and Brigham Young did not keep the Word of Wisdom?

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, once stated that "virtuous Saints, . . . **will not sell whiskey**, and stick up groceries, and **establish distilleries**, . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 161). This statement seems very strange when we learn that Joseph Smith sold whiskey in Nauvoo, and that Brigham Young built a distillery and sold alcoholic beverages in Utah. Even the Mormon-owned Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution (now known as ZCMI) sold the items forbidden by the Word of Wisdom. On October 7, 1873, George A. Smith, a member of the First Presidency, made this statement: "We are **doing a great business in tea, coffee, and tobacco** in the Cooperative Store" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, p. 238).

In 1908 the *Salt Lake Tribune* accused the Mormon leaders of trying to monopolize the liquor business in Utah:



... the Mormon priesthood...resisted to the utmost the establishment of liquor houses by Gentiles here for a good while, not because they were liquor houses, but because the Gentiles were getting the trade. . . . This fierce effort to retain the liquor traffic here as a monopoly of the church was quite in accord with the present status of affairs here where the church is running **the biggest liquor business in the state, through its Z.C.M.I. drug store** and also through the big liquor business done by Apostle Smoot in his drug store at Provo. . . . By means of auxiliary companies like the Z.C.M.I. drug company they maintain a huge liquor trade for the benefit of the church hierarchs, and the trustee-in-trust for the church, and at the same time claim to be special advocates of the temperance cause; and while taking the tremendous profits of that trade, throw up their hands in horror at the idea of people spending so much money for liquor. . . . denying all responsibility for it, while at the same time pocketing the profits and getting away with the rewards. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, July 14, 1908)

It would appear that even some of the Mormons were shocked by the fact that the church-owned Z.C.M.I. sold items which were forbidden in the Word of Wisdom. Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Church, tried to justify the sale of these items in the church store:

Some of our pretended pious people, a few years ago, were shocked and horrified by seeing the symbol of the All-Seeing Eye and the words “Holiness to the Lord” in gilt letters over the front of Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institution. Especially was this the case with some of our brethren when they found these letters over the drug department of Z.C.M.I. Why was it? Why some of these pious (?) Mormons found that Z.C.M.I. **under the symbol of the All-Seeing Eye and the sacred words, “Holiness to the Lord,” sold tea and coffee, and tobacco**, and other things possibly that Latter-day Saints ought not to use; and at the drug store, Z.C.M.I. **kept liquors** of various kinds for medicinal purposes. It was terribly shocking to some of the Latter-day Saints that **under these holy words liquor should be kept for sale**. Has it injured me, in any sense of the word, because Z.C.M.I. drug store kept **liquor** for sale? Has it made me a drunkard? Have I been under the necessity of guzzling liquid poison? Have I made myself a sot because liquor was **kept for sale by Z.C.M.I.**? I am not the worse for it, thank the Lord. And who else is? No one, except those pious Mormons (?) who in open day or under the cover of night would go into the drug store and buy liquor to drink. . . . Those who were the most horrified at seeing the All-Seeing Eye and “Holiness to the Lord” over the front door of Z.C.M.I., I will guarantee are the **ones that have bought the most tea and coffee, tobacco and whiskey there**. . . . It does not matter to me how much tea and coffee Z.C.M.I. sells, so long as I do not buy it. If I do not drink it am I not all right? And if the poor creature that wants it can get it there, that ought to satisfy him. **If he could not get it there, he would not patronize Z.C.M.I. at all, but would go some where else to deal.** (*Conference Report*, April 1898, p. 11)

It is interesting to note that Joseph F. Smith served as President of Z.C.M.I.—as well as President of the Mormon Church—at the time liquor was sold there. In the *Reed Smoot Case* we find the following testimony:

Mr. CARLISLE. You are traffic manager of the Zion Cooperative Mercantile Institution, I believe?  
 Mr. LOVE. Yes, sir.  
 Mr. CARLISLE. Does it not deal in liquors?  
 Mr. LOVE. **It does.**  
 Mr. CARLISLE. Who is the President of that concern?  
 Mr. LOVE. **Joseph F. Smith.** (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 318-319)

Although the Word of Wisdom contains some good precepts, it is obviously a product of the thinking of Joseph Smith’s times. Alcoholic beverages were condemned by the temperance movement years before Joseph Smith gave his “revelation.” Although Smith

was correct in stating that tobacco is harmful, we do not feel that this proves that his “revelation” is divinely inspired. The *Wayne Sentinel*—a newspaper printed in the neighborhood where Joseph Smith grew up—published these statements concerning tobacco three years before Joseph Smith gave the “Word of Wisdom”:

It is really surprising that a single individual could be found, who, after experiencing the distressing sensations almost invariably produced by the first use of tobacco, would be willing to risk their recurrence a second time: . . . **tobacco is, in fact, an absolute poison.**

... We have ourselves known individuals, in whom very severe and dangerous affections of the stomach—tremors of the limbs, and great emaciation, were referable to excessive smoking and chewing, and which were removed only after these habits were entirely relinquished. (*Wayne Sentinel*, November 6, 1829)

As we mentioned earlier, LaMar Petersen has prepared a manuscript entitled “Hearts Made Glad.” When this manuscript is published it will throw a great deal of light on the Word of Wisdom and Joseph Smith’s attitude towards it.



## 27. The Mormon Kingdom

On May 12, 1844, the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith made this statement: “I calculate to be one of the instruments of setting up the kingdom of Daniel by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will **revolutionize the whole world**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 365).

The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde once stated:

What the world calls “Mormonism” will **rule every nation**. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young will be the head. God has decreed it, and his own right arm will accomplish it. This will make the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 53)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, made this statement in 1865:

We do believe it, and honestly acknowledge that this is that kingdom which the Lord has commenced to establish upon the earth, and that it will not only govern **all people** in a religious capacity, but also in a **political capacity**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 53)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement in 1859:

And so the Nations **will bow to this kingdom**, sooner or later, and all hell cannot help it. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 170)

It was in Nauvoo, Illinois, that Joseph Smith did the most toward planning the kingdom which he hoped would eventually rule every nation. In the Preface to his book *Quest For Empire, The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History*, Klaus J. Hansen says that “the idea of a political kingdom of God, promulgated by a **secret** ‘Council of Fifty,’ is by far the most important key to an understanding of the Mormon past.” On page 24 of the same book, we find the following statement: “Certain non-Mormons, curiously enough, seem to have known more about the political ambitions of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young than most faithful Latter-day Saints.”

As early as 1838 Thomas B. Marsh, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, left the church and made an affidavit in which he stated:

The plan of said Smith, the Prophet, is to take this State, and he professes to his people to intend taking the United States and ultimately the **whole world**. (Affidavit of Thomas B. Marsh, as printed in *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, by Leland Gentry, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 414)

### Council of Fifty

Not long before his death, Joseph Smith formed a secret organization known as the “Council of Fifty.” The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states:

The Prophet established a confidential Council of Fifty or “Ytfif,” comprised of both Mormons and non-Mormons, to help attend to temporal matters, including the eventual development of a **one-world government**, in harmony with preparatory plans for the second advent of the Saviour. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, by John J. Stewart, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 204)

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen gives us this information:

The Council of Fifty, according to charter member Benjamin F. Johnson, consisted of “a select circle of the prophet’s most trusted friends, including the twelve [apostles] but not all constituted authorities of the Church.” . . . Joseph Smith established the precedent that the president of the church should also be the president of the Council of Fifty, a custom followed both by Brigham Young and John Taylor. . . .

What Smith taught in these meetings is largely a matter of conjecture, because the deliberations and actions of the Council of Fifty were then and still remain for the most part shrouded in secrecy. . . . Secrecy at times went so far that papers accumulated during a meeting were burned at the close of the session. . . . Ultimately, therefore, the whole world would be aware of the existence of the Council of Fifty. In fact, it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise, since world government was to be one of the Council’s primary missions. . . . the temporal laws of the kingdom of God were to be based on a modified version of the Constitution of the United States. . . . The Council of Fifty was the “highest court on earth.” As such, it considered itself **superior** to any codifications of the law, even that of a constitution. (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 61-68)

On pages 4-5 of the same book, Klaus Hansen states:

Even among the Mormons, few were themselves aware of the revolutionary implications inherent in the concept of the political kingdom of God as taught by their prophet Joseph Smith to a small group of faithful followers, after he had initiated them into a secret Council of Fifty in the spring of 1844. . . . Indeed, if few Mormons, in 1844, knew what kind of kingdom their prophet had organized that year, fewer know today.

The Mormon writer J. D. Williams made this statement:

And in the case of the Grand Council of the Kingdom, the Church obviously contemplated far more than “giving advice.” Believed to have been organized in March, 1844, the Grand Council (or “Council of Fifty”) was to be the government of the Kingdom of God (which Kingdom was not the Church but the ultimate governing body for **all mankind**). The Council was composed of two non-Mormons and forty-eight to fifty Mormon high priests. . . .

The picture is one of a **secret government**, responsible not to the governed but to **ecclesiastical authority**, which will provide benign rule for all people, **without election**. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1966, pp. 46-47)

Klaus J. Hansen informs us that the “Council of Fifty” wore special robes, had secret signs, and bore some resemblance to Freemasonry:

Bennett’s secret order bore some remarkable similarities to certain masonic rituals and practices. This was also true of Smith’s Council of Fifty. . . . John C. Bennett was able to convince Smith that a masonic lodge in Nauvoo might be a considerable asset . . . Smith himself was initiated as a master mason . . .

Whether or not there existed any direct connection between the government of the kingdom of God and Freemasonry cannot be determined. But it is significant that

the Nauvoo Lodge was installed three weeks before Smith received his revelation about the political kingdom of God. The oaths of secrecy administered in the Lodge in 1842 could serve as a means of preparation and of testing to determine to whom the prophet could entrust the more important and potentially more dangerous secrets revealed to the Council of Fifty in 1844. It is, therefore, to be expected that many charter members of the Council of Fifty in 1844 belonged to the Nauvoo Lodge. . . . members of the Council of Fifty, like the Freemasons, donned special robes in their private ceremonies, and “offered up” secret signs. (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 55-56)

William Clayton recorded the following in his diary concerning a meeting of the “Council of Fifty” held after Joseph Smith’s death:

. . . all the members of the council of the K. of G. in the camp except brother Thomas Bullock, went unto the bluffs . . . out of sight, we clothed ourselves in the priestly garments . . . Albert Carrington and Porter Rockwell . . . having no clothing with them, stood guard at a little distance from us to prevent interruption. (Diary of William Clayton, as quoted in *Quest For Empire*, p. 111)

Klaus J. Hansen says that the records of the Council of Fifty have been suppressed: “The official records of the Council of Fifty, with one small significant exception, are not available for research at the present time, although their existence cannot be doubted” (*Quest For Empire*, p. 214). Richard D. Poll, Professor of History at Brigham Young University, says that “The Council of Fifty is likely to remain a tantalizingly mysterious body until its records become available for study. . . .” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1967, p. 135).

On page 161 of his book, *Quest For Empire*, Klaus Hansen gives us this information: “In a writ issued for the arrest of prominent citizens of Nauvoo for ‘treasonable designs against the state,’ mention was made of a private council of which the accused supposedly were members. Whoever originated the complaint must have had some information regarding the Council, for six of the seven persons named in the complaint belonged to the Council of Fifty.” On pages 56-57 of the same book, we find the following: “The secret meetings and activities of the Council of Fifty, especially if misinterpreted by the Gentiles, might well have made Smith vulnerable to the charge of treason.”

### Joseph Made King

Thomas Ford, the Governor of Illinois, made this statement a few months after Joseph Smith’s death:

It was asserted that Joseph Smith, the founder and head of the Mormon Church, had caused himself to be **crowned and anointed King** of the Mormons: . . . (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 1, 1845)

In 1853 William Marks, who had been a member of the secret “Council of Fifty,” admitted that Joseph Smith had been ordained to be a king before his death:

I was also witness of the introduction (secretly,) of a kingly form of government, in which **Joseph suffered himself to be ordained a king**, to reign over the house of Israel forever; which I could not conceive to be in accordance with the laws of the church, but I did not oppose this move, thinking it none of my business. (*Zion’s Harbinger and Baneemy’s Organ*, St. Louis, July, 1853, p. 53)

According to Dan Jones, Wilson Law heard Joseph Smith say that “the kingdom referred to was already set up, and that **he was the king over it** (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 568-569).

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen, who wrote his master’s thesis on the “Political Kingdom of God” at the Brigham Young University, made this statement:

The scriptures indicated that Christ would rule as king over the kingdom of God. Smith took this idea quite literally and thought it only logical that he, as predecessor of the Saviour, should enjoy certain prerogatives of royalty. Consequently, shortly before his death, the prophet apparently had himself ordained as “**king on earth**.” . . .

The title of king may have been a metaphor, but the power deriving from the office was not. In this respect it is especially important to recall that Smith held his political office by divine right and not by sovereignty. However metaphorical these royal pretensions may have been, Smith apparently knew that they were so potentially dangerous as to be entrusted only to the initiated. (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 66-67)

In his master’s thesis, Klaus J. Hansen tells that George Miller, who had been a member of the “Council of Fifty,” admitted that Joseph Smith was ordained to be a king:

Rumors implying that the Prophet assumed royal pretensions are somewhat substantiated by George Miller who stated on one occasion that “In this council **we ordained Joseph Smith as king on earth**.” (“The Theory and Practice of the Political Kingdom of God in Mormon History, 1829-1890,” Master’s Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1959, typed copy, p. 114)

In *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, page 104, Mr. Hansen frankly admits that “Joseph Smith **did** start a political kingdom of God and a Council of Fifty; he **was** made **king** over that organization; . . .” On page 103 of the same article Mr. Hansen states:

William Marks, president of the Nauvoo Stake, joined the Council of Fifty—a secret political organization . . . only because of his strong ties of fealty to Joseph Smith. He witnessed Joseph’s installation as **king** over that organization with the greatest distaste. Others, less loyal to Joseph, openly broke with him over such doctrines while he was still alive. In fact, this break precipitated the events leading to the murder of the Mormon prophet.

George Miller, who claimed that Joseph Smith was ordained king, referred to the members of the “Council of Fifty” as “princes”:

“. . . Brigham Young having sent an express to me to meet them in council at winter quarters, and bring James Emmet with me (as he had also in Joseph Smith’s life-time been organized into the council of the **fifty princes of the kingdom**), . . .” (Statement by George Miller, as quoted in *Joseph Smith and World Government*, by Hyrum L. Andrus, Salt Lake City, 1963, p. 83)

The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt made this statement:

This Priesthood, including that of the Aaronic, holds the keys of revelation of the oracles of God to man upon the earth; the power and right to give laws and commandments to individuals, churches, rulers, nations and the world; to appoint, ordain, and establish constitutions and kingdoms; to appoint **kings**, presidents, governors or judges, and to ordain **or anoint** them to their several holy callings, also to instruct, warn, or reprove them by the word of the Lord. (*Key to the Science of Theology*, 1855, p. 66)

In his book *History of Illinois*, Governor Thomas Ford made this statement:

“It seems, from the best information that could be got from the best men who had seceded from the Mormon Church, that Joe Smith about this time conceived the idea of making himself a temporal **prince** as well as spiritual leader of his people. He instituted a new and select order of the priesthood, the members of which were to be priests and kings temporally and spiritually. These were to be his nobility, who were to be the upholders of his **throne**. He caused himself to be crowned and anointed **king** and priest, far above the rest; and he prescribed the form of an oath of allegiance to himself, which he administered to his principal followers. . . . The Mormons openly denounced the government of the United States as utterly corrupt, and as being about to pass away, and to be replaced by the government of God, to be administered by his servant Joseph.” (*History of Illinois*, as quoted in *Quest for Empire*, p. 155)

G. T. M. Davis made this statement concerning Joseph Smith being ordained king:

“The great aim of Joseph Smith was evidently to clothe himself with the most unlimited power, civil, military



and ecclesiastical, over all who became members of his society. . . . The first step taken by him, was to satisfy his people that he had received a revelation from God. . . . and gave the following as the substance of his revelation. . . . That he (Joseph) was a descendant from Joseph of old through the blood of Ephraim. And that God had appointed and ordained that he, with his descendants, should rule over all Israel, . . . and ultimately the Jews and Gentiles. That the authority with which God had clothed him, . . . extended over all mankind, . . . Joe further stated that God had revealed to him, that the Indians and Latter Day Saints, under Joe as their **king**, and **ruler**, were to conquer the Gentiles, and that their subjection to this authority was to be obtained by the **sword**! From this revelation, he enforced upon them that it was necessary he should be crowned **king**, and they, believing in the gross imposition, yielded to his edict. Joe was accordingly crowned **king**, under God, over the immediate house of Israel. This ceremony was performed in 1842, by a council of fifty in number, denominated the “**ancient of days**.” . . . The peculiar attributes of his power, Joe insisted, were—that he could direct the actions of the entire House of Israel; . . . and that finally the whole earth was to become under subjection to him.—He further impressed upon the council crowning him, that God’s desire was, as revealed to him, (Joe,) that, for the time being, this was to remain a perfect **secret** until God should reveal to the contrary. And accordingly Joe swore them all to present **secrecy, under the penalty of death!** . . . (Article in the *St. Clair Banner*, September 17, 1844, p. 2)

When Fawn Brodie stated that Joseph Smith was anointed king, Dr. Nibley claimed that there was not enough evidence to support this accusation. Since that time a great deal of new evidence has come to light, and now many Mormon writers are willing to concede that Joseph Smith was made **king**. For instance, Kenneth W. Godfrey, Director of the LDS Institute at Stanford University, stated: “Antagonism toward the Mormon Prophet was further incited when it was **correctly** rumored, that he had been ordained “King over the Immediate House of Israel” by the Council of Fifty” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pp. 212-213). Among other things, Dr. Godfrey’s footnote refers us to the “Diary of George A. Smith, May 9, 1844.” This diary is in the “Library of the Church Historian.”

Richard D. Poll, Professor of History and Political Science at Brigham Young University, also seems willing to concede that Smith was ordained king:

That neither the Prophet nor the Council was totally preoccupied with the political race is clear from the investigations of Texas and other possible new homes for the Saints which were in progress, and also from the intriguing and rather convincingly documented report that the Prophet was ordained “King on Earth” in the Council during this period. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 19, n. 11)

From the evidence presented above it would appear that Joseph Smith wanted to establish an independent government. Klaus J. Hansen makes this comment: “. . . the political kingdom of God required of its citizens a separate loyalty that was difficult to harmonize with loyalty to the United States” (*Quest for Empire*, p. 119).

## Joseph For President

In 1844 the “Council of Fifty” decided to run Joseph Smith for the presidency of the United States. Klaus J. Hansen stated:

. . . the Council of Fifty, while seriously contemplating the possibility of emigration, also considered a rather spectacular alternative, namely, to run its leader for the presidency of the United States in the campaign of 1844. . . . Smith and the Council of Fifty seems to have taken the election quite seriously, much more so, indeed, than both Mormons and anti-Mormons have heretofore suspected. (*Quest For Empire*, p. 74)

Just a short time before this, Joseph Smith had stated that he did not wish to participate in politics:

. . . but as my feelings revolt at the idea of having anything to do with politics, I have declined, in every instance, having anything to do on the subject. I think it would be well for politicians to regulate their own affairs. I wish to be let alone, that I may attend strictly to the spiritual welfare of the Church. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, vol. 5, p. 259)

Even though Joseph Smith made this statement in 1843, in 1844 he announced that he was a candidate for the presidency of the United States. The Elders of the church were actually called to electioneer for Joseph Smith. At a special meeting of the Elders held April 9, 1844, Brigham Young made this statement: “It is now time to have a President of the United States. Elders will be sent to preach the Gospel and **electioneer**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 322). At the same meeting Heber C. Kimball made this statement: “. . . we design to send Elders to all the different States to get up meetings and protracted meetings, and **electioneer for Joseph** to be the next **president**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 325). The Mormon writer John J. Stewart refers to those who were sent to campaign as “political missionaries”:

Immediately following the conference, several dozen men were assigned by the Quorum of Twelve to carry the Prophet’s political manifesto to the various cities and states of the Union, and campaign for his election to the presidency. The apostles themselves would soon travel forth to head this vast force of **political missionaries**. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, by John J. Stewart, Salt Lake City, 1966, p. 209)

Robert Bruce Flanders gives this interesting information:

The second strategic move to “establish dominion of the Kingdom” as Miller put it was to run Joseph Smith for President in 1844. . . . the Mormons were serious about Smith’s candidacy. . . . George Miller said that the campaign was planned by the Council of Fifty. Elders were to go on campaigning missions to every state in the Union, . . . The campaign was to be “the entire united effort of all the official members of the Church,” said Miller. “At no period had there been half so many elders in the vineyard in proportion to the number of members in the Church.” (*Nauvoo: Kingdom of the Mississippi*, University of Illinois, 1975, pp. 299, 301, 302)

Willard Richards wrote the following in a letter dated June 20, 1844:

. . . Your views about the nomination of General Smith for the Presidency are correct. We will gain popularity and external influence. But this is not all: we mean to elect him, and nothing shall be wanting on our part to accomplish it; . . . (Letter by Willard Richards, as quoted in *Intimate Disciple*, Claire Noall, 1957, p. 418)

At first the Mormons wanted James Arlington Bennett to be Joseph Smith’s running mate. Even the Mormon writer John J. Stewart has to admit that this man was “above all else a rank opportunist. . . . Although he never had a serious interest in the LDS religion, he allowed Brigham Young to baptize him, in the Atlantic ocean near his mansion on Long Island, later referring to the event as ‘a frolic in the Atlantic’” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 166). John J. Stewart’s opinion of James Arlington Bennett was probably correct, for in a letter to Joseph Smith, dated October 24, 1843, Bennett stated: “I may yet run for a high office in your state, when you would be sure of my best services in your behalf; therefore, a known connection with you would be against our mutual interest. . . . In short, I expect to be yet, through your influence, governor of the State of Illinois” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 72-73). On June 24, 1845, Brigham Young said he “Received a letter from James Arlington Bennett of New York, in which he applies to be consecrated a general of the Nauvoo Legion, that he may ‘fight Napoleon’s battles over again, either in Nauvoo or elsewhere.’ This wild spirit of ambition has repeatedly manifested itself to us by many communications received from various sources, suggesting schemes of blood and empire, as if the work of the Lord was intended for personal aggrandisement” (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 429).

Even though the Mormons seem to have been aware of the fact that James Arlington Bennett was a “rank opportunist,” they wanted him to be Joseph Smith’s running mate. On March 4, 1844, Joseph Smith instructed Willard Richards to write to Bennett. In this letter we find the following:

Your friends here consider your letter about the Governorship of Illinois just like every man in your quarter, mere sport, child’s sport; for who would stoop to the play of a single State, when the whole nation was on the board?—a cheaper game!

General Smith says, if he must be President, Arlington Bennett must be Vice-President. . . . your name will appear in our next paper as our candidate for Vice President of the United States. . . .

Dear General, if glory, honor, force, and power in righteous principles are desired by you, now is your time. You are safe in following the counsel of that man who holds communion with heaven; and I assure you, if you act well your part, victory’s the prize. . . .

On the 6th of April is our special conference at Nauvoo. I wish you could be here on that occasion, but the time is too short. From that period our Elders will go forth by hundreds or thousands and search the land, preaching religion and politics; and if God goes with them, who can withstand their influence? (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 231- 232)

On March 8, 1844, Joseph Smith learned that James A. Bennett “was a native of Ireland, and therefore was not constitutionally eligible to be Vice-President” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 244). Since Bennett was not eligible, Sidney Rigdon was chosen as Joseph Smith’s running mate.

Some Mormons have claimed that Joseph Smith was not serious in his attempt to become President. Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Church, made this statement: “There was no thought on the part of President Joseph Smith or the Saints that he would be elected, but it gave to them an opportunity to express their feelings, and to sustain a candidate who would advocate their rights against oppression” (*Essentials in Church History*, p. 356). It is certainly true that Joseph Smith did not have much chance of winning; in fact, the Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey says that “It is highly probable that in spite of the determined efforts of ‘ordained’ political campaigners, the Mormon leader would not have received a single electoral vote” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 212). Nevertheless, at the time the Mormon leaders took Joseph Smith’s candidacy very serious, Claire Noall, a Mormon writer, stated: “I discovered a great deal of evidence to support an earnest campaign for Joseph Smith as a candidate for the national presidency” (*Intimate Disciple*, p. 616). Klaus J. Hansen makes it clear that the Mormon leaders were very serious about the matter:

As a result, the Council of Fifty decided to send all available elders on missions to campaign for Joseph Smith and to preach Mormonism at the same time. . . . In the privacy of the Council of Fifty, Smith clearly viewed his candidacy more seriously than in public. This discrepancy suggests, as do the denials of polygamy, that the prophet’s public statements must be taken with caution. Smith’s own care in keeping the true purposes of his candidacy secret indicates that he knew that the public at large would treat him as demoted if it learned of his actual hopes; but this realization also reveals that he at least knew what he was doing. . . .

If Smith had not believed his election in 1844 to be a possibility, why did he enlist the entire man-power of the church in a quixotic venture? (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 78-79)

Joseph Smith himself made this statement on January 29, 1844: “If you attempt to accomplish this, you must send every man in the city who is able to speak in public throughout the land to electioneer . . . There is oratory enough in the Church to carry me into the presidential chair the first slide” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 188). On March 7, 1844, Joseph Smith stated: “When I get hold of the Eastern papers, and see how popular I am, I am afraid myself that I shall be elected; . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 243).

The fact that Joseph Smith would allow himself to be crowned king shows that he was obsessed with the idea of gaining power. It is possible that Joseph seriously believed that he would become President, and that he would rule over the people of the United States.

The attempt by Joseph Smith to become President seems to have been a treasonous plot to bring the United States Government under the rule of the Priesthood. Klaus J. Hansen stated:

But what if, through a bold stroke, he could **capture the United States for the kingdom**? The Council of Fifty thought there might be a chance and nominated the Mormon prophet for the Presidency of the United States. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 67)

George Miller, who had been a member of the Council of Fifty, made this statement in a letter dated June 28, 1855:

It was further determined in Council that all the elders should set out on missions to all the States to get up an electoral ticket, and do everything in our power to have Joseph elected president. If we succeeded in making a majority of the voters converts to our faith, and elected Joseph **president**, in such an event **the dominion of the kingdom would be forever established in the United States**; and if not successful, we could fall back on Texas, and **be a kingdom** notwithstanding. (Letter by George Miller, dated June 28, 1855, as quoted in *Joseph Smith and World Government*, by Hyrum Andrus, Salt Lake City, 1963, p. 54)

Instead of going to Texas the Mormons settled in the Great Salt Lake valley. Hyrum Andrus admits that Smith had even “considered the alternative of establishing the Saints in the capacity of an **independent nation**, should all other alternatives fail” (*Ibid.*, p. 60).

Before the election Joseph Smith was assassinated. Thus he was unable to establish the kingdom he had planned.

It is certainly strange that Joseph Smith would establish a secret “Council of Fifty,” for in the Book of Mormon all secret societies, bands, oaths and covenants are condemned. In Helaman 6:22 we read: “And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, . . .” In verse 26 we read that these oaths and covenants came from the Devil:

Now behold, **those secret oaths and covenants** . . . were put into the heart of Gadianton by that **same being** who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit—

In the 8th chapter of Ether, verses 18 and 19, we read:

And it came to pass that they formed a secret combination, even as they of old; which combination is most abominable and wicked above all, in the sight of God;

**For the Lord worketh not in secret combinations. . . .**

The Book of Mormon not only condemns secret societies, but it also states that there will be “no kings” in America:

And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be **no kings** upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles. . . . he that raiseth up a **king** against me shall **perish**, for I, the Lord, the king of heaven, will be their king, . . . (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 10:11, 14)

It is almost unbelievable that Joseph Smith would allow himself to be ordained **king** after publishing the Book of Mormon which contains a warning against this very thing.

### Brigham Young As King

The practice of ordaining the President of the Mormon Church as “**king on earth**” did not cease with the death of Joseph Smith. It is reported that Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, was ordained king, and the Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon states



that there was a discussion in the Council of Fifty as to whether John Taylor, the third President of the Church, should be ordained king:

Father [George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency] said Moses Thatcher's drawing away from his brethren commenced as far as his knowledge concerning it went, at a time when the **Council of Fifty** met in the old City Hall, and Moses opposed the proposition to **anoint John Taylor** as Prophet, Priest and **King**, and Moses' opposition prevailed at that time. Moses has constantly opposed the increase of power in the hands of the President of the Church. ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," December 2, 1895, p. 198; original at Brigham Young University Library)

With regard to John Taylor being anointed king, our attention has been called to a typed copy of an entry from the journal of Franklin D. Richards—the original journal is in the Church Historian's Office. Richards was a member of the Council of Fifty, and under the date of February 4, 1885, he recorded this statement in his journal:

Feb. 4, 1885 At 8 p.m. Attended council at Endowment House where we had prayers consecrated oil and Prest. Jno Taylor was anointed K.P.R. of C.Z. & K.??

This reference seems to show that John Taylor was anointed king on February 4, 1885.

It would appear, then, that at least three of the Mormon leaders were ordained as kings. Whether the practice continued after Taylor's death is not known. Of the three men known to have been ordained kings only Brigham Young was able to reign over the Mormon people for any length of time. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen seems to feel that Brigham Young was ordained king shortly after the Mormons came to Utah: ". . . the prophet [Joseph Smith] apparently had himself ordained as '**king on earth**.' Brigham Young, upon his arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, likewise reportedly had this ceremony performed in the Council of Fifty" (*Quest For Empire*, p. 66). On page 200, footnote 74, of the same book, Hansen gives this information:

Former Bishop Andrew Cahoon, whose father Reynolds Cahoon had been a member of the Council of Fifty, testified in 1889: "The King of that Kingdom that was set up on the earth was the head of the Church. Brigham Young proclaimed himself king here in Salt Lake Valley before there was a house built, in 1847."

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, may have been referring to Brigham Young's ordination to be "king" when he made these statements in 1856:

The Church and kingdom to which we belong will become the kingdom of our God and his Christ, and brother Brigham Young **will become President of the United States**.

(Voices responded, "Amen.")

And I tell you he **will be something more**; but we do not now **want to give him the name: but he is called and ordained to a far greater station than that**, and he is foreordained to take that station, and he has got it; and **I am Vice-President**, and brother Wells is the **Secretary of the Interior**—yes, and of all the armies in the flesh.

You don't believe that; but I can tell you it is one of the smallest things that I can think of. You may think that I am joking; but I am perfectly willing that brother Long should write every word of it; for I can see it as naturally as I see the earth and the productions thereof. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 219)

On another occasion Heber C. Kimball stated:

. . . the President of the United States **will bow to us** and come to

**consult that authorities of this church** to know what he had best do for his people.

You don't believe this. **Wait and see:** . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 93)

The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft made this statement concerning an incident that happened on July 24, 1857:

All eyes turned at once to Brigham. . . . Gathering the people around him, he repeated the words uttered ten years before, prophesying even now that at no distant day he would **himself become President of the United States, or dictate who should be President**. (*History of Utah*, photomechanical reprint of 1889 edition, p. 505)

Brigham Young even referred to himself as a "dictator." The following quotations are taken from some of his sermons:

As formerly, I presented myself before you . . . acknowledged and sustained by you as **the dictator**, counsellor, and adviser of the people of God. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 267)

You may say it is hard that I should **dictate** you in your temporal affairs. **Is it not my privilege to dictate you?** (*Ibid.*, vol. 12, p. 59)

I sometimes say to my brethren, "I have been **your dictator** for twenty-seven years—over a quarter of a century I have **dictated** this people; that ought to be some evidence that my course is onward and upward." (*Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 205)

Now ask the Father in the name of Jesus whether I am telling you the truth about temporal things or not, and the same Spirit that bore witness to you that baptism by immersion is the correct way according to the Scriptures, will bear witness that the man whom God calls to **dictate affairs** in the building up of his Zion has the **right to dictate about everything** connected with the building up of Zion, **yes even to the ribbons the women wear; and any person who denies it is ignorant**. (*Ibid.*, vol. 11, p. 298)

Speaking of early Utah, the Mormon writer William E. Berrett made this statement: "The Church did, however, exercise a definite control over the economic and social life of its people" (*The Restored Church*, p. 477).

Brigham Young went so far as to tell the people they could not trade with those who didn't belong to the Mormon Church:

And you, sisters, **cease trading with any man** or being in this city or country **who does not belong to the church**. If you **do not**, we are going to **cut you off from the church**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 315)

We have talked to the brethren and sisters a great deal with regard to sustaining ourselves and ceasing this **outside trade**. . . . My feelings are that every man and woman **who will not obey this counsel shall be severed from the Church**, and let all who feel as I do lift up the right hand. (The vote was unanimous.) (*Ibid.*, p. 301)

Thomas G. Alexander states:

During the late 1860's and early 1870's, Utah was no place for a Gentile. What one historian has called a "full-blown boycott" had developed against non-Mormon businesses by the end of 1868. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 85)

The Mormons built their own schools, and Brigham Young was very opposed to free schools. According to Brigham Young it was the "bishops" who appointed the school teachers (see *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, pp. 17-19). On page 20 of the same sermon Brigham Young stated:

I understand that the other night there was a school meeting in one of the wards of this city, and a party there—a poor miserable **apostate**—said, "We want a **free school**, and we want to have the name of establishing the **first free school in Utah**." To call a person a poor miserable apostate may seem like a harsh word; but what





an election for the legislature has so far been found. Indeed, it is quite likely that no election occurred. Hosea Stout recorded in his diary that he was mystified by what procedure he had received his mandate. In view of the circumstances, the most likely explanation is that the Council of Fifty simply hand-picked the assembly. The executive and judicial branches of the new government were filled entirely by members of the Council of Fifty. . . . a combination of facts seems to indicate that the probate courts acted as the extended arm of the Council, administering the laws of the kingdom of God on a local level. . . . Since the Council of Fifty controlled both the executive and legislative branches of government, the leaders of the political kingdom of God, through the probate courts, could influence the administration of the counties. . . .

When Brigham Young and the Council of Fifty initiated steps to gain either territorial status or become a state of the Union they did so not because they loved the United States, but because they had no choice. Failure to initiate the move undoubtedly would have aroused the suspicion of Washington. . . . The Council of Fifty, through its actions, revealed that it hoped to maintain as much control as possible while giving the appearance of fully cooperating with the government of the United States. . . . Had Deseret achieved statehood, the political control of the Council of Fifty quite likely would have continued with little outside interference. . . . Frank Cannon's assertion that the Mormons attempted to gain admission to the Union in order to escape its authority, as paradoxical as this may sound, is thus basically correct. (*Quest For Empire*, pp. 123, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135)

These are very revealing statements to be coming from a Mormon writer who did a great deal of his research at Brigham Young University.

The evidence that we have presented clearly shows that Brigham Young considered himself King and that early Utah was controlled by Young and his "council of the Fifty Princes of the Kingdom." The anti-Mormon writer J. H. Beadle made this observation:

Thus it is the union of Church and State, or rather the absolute subservience of the State to the Church, the latter merely using the outside organization to carry into effect decrees already concluded in secret council, that makes Mormonism our enemy. . . . In short, it is not the social, immoral, or polygamic features that so chiefly concern us, but the hostile the treasonable and the mutinous. (*Life in Utah; or, The Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, 1870, pp. 400-401)

## No Democratic Elections

In early Utah the Mormon people were taught to vote one way. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

In political matters we are pretty well united. At our elections we **generally vote as a unit**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 355)

Some people say, "You folks always vote together," we would **be poor coots if we did not, and just as bad as the rest of you**. Some folks here, a short time ago, got up a little political operation, and tried how it would answer to run one against another; but it did not work well and they had to quit. (*Ibid.*, vol. 15, p. 219)

Brigham Young was very opposed to democratic elections. The following statements are taken from his discourses:

This is the plant or tree from which schism springs; and every government lays the foundation of its own downfall when it permits what are called **democratic elections**. If a party spirit is developed, the formation of one party will be speedily followed by another; and furthermore, the very moment that we admit this, we admit the existence of error and corruption somewhere. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, p. 93)

This is one objection which outsiders have to the Latter-day Saints:

they all go and vote one way. **Is it not right to do so?** Let us think about it. Suppose that we do all actually vote one way, or for one man for our delegate to Congress, and have no opposing candidate, and get the best there is, is that **not better** than having opposition? What does opposition bring? It certainly brings anger and strife; and of what use are they? They serve no good purpose. Then let us **all vote one way**, and think and act one way, and keep the commandments of God. . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 219)

When we see a religion, and one which is claimed to be the religion of Christ, and it will **not govern men in their politics, it is a very poor religion**, it is very feeble, very faint in its effects, hardly perceptible in the life of a person. (*Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 159)

Stanley S. Ivins gives this interesting information:

Under this divinely directed system, there could be little need for such democratic procedures as political parties and competing elections. . . .

For the first twenty years, political activity in Utah was based upon theocratic philosophy. Elections were held, but they did not mean much. A single list of properly selected candidates would be submitted to the people, who would go through the motions of voting for them. There was no law against voting for someone else, but the balloting was **not secret**, so that anyone not voting right could be easily identified and branded an apostate. And since apostasy was just about the greatest of sins, very few wanted to be charged with it. . . . The church publication, "The Millennial Star," explaining how such things were handled in Utah, said that if there was disagreement at a meeting for making nominations, "the Prophet of God, who stands at the head of the Church, decides. He nominates, the convention endorses, and the people accept the nomination." It added that there was free speech in the Territorial Legislature, "but any measure that cannot be unanimously decided on, is submitted to the President of the Church, who, by 'the wisdom of God,' decides the matter, and all the Councilors and Legislators sanction the decision." (*M.S.*, vol. 29, p. 746)

A check of the official returns from 18 annual elections in Utah, beginning in 1852, showed that there was little dissatisfaction with the approved candidates. The 1867 election was the only one which was unanimous, but there was only one dissenting vote in 1857, four in 1853, six in 1864, twelve in 1852, and fourteen in 1860. The largest opposition vote was 702 in 1869, with 622 of them coming from the Gentile city of Corinne. . . . Next largest was 619 in 1866. . . . Of the 96,107 votes cast, over this eighteen year period, 96 per cent went to the regular candidates. And if the known Gentile ballots are eliminated, the percentage rises to 97.4. (*The Moses Thatcher Case*, by Stanley S. Ivins, pp. 2-3)

In his *History of Utah*, page 483, Hubert Howe Bancroft gives this information:

By act approved January 3, 1853, it was ordered that general elections should be held annually. . . . in section five of this act each elector was required to provide himself with a vote containing the names of the persons he wished to be elected, . . . and present it folded to the judge of the election, who must number and deposit it. . . . the clerk then wrote the name of the elector, and opposite it the number of the vote. This measure, which **virtually abolished vote by ballot**, gave much ground of complaint to the anti-Mormons.

R. N. Baskin made this statement concerning this matter:

It was also evident that under the existing election law the Liberal party could not elect its ticket after it acquired a majority. A number of Liberal Mormons, especially among the younger members, from time to time expressed to me a desire to vote the Liberal ticket, but refrained from doing so because their marked ballots would disclose the fact and subject them to discipline or expulsion from the Mormon church, and injure their business in a way they could not afford. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, p. 73)

Klaus J. Hansen gives this information:

... absence of the secret ballot assured that only the most recalcitrant would dare oppose the official slate. . . .

Casting a vote in opposition to approved candidates was severely frowned upon, but was not in and of itself grounds for disciplinary action. Running for political office without church approval, however, was a much more serious matter. In the Mormon colony of San Bernardino, . . . B. F. Grouard and F. M. Van Leuven were disfellowshipped simply because they ran for political office against other church members nominated by the authorities, who, incidentally, also happened to be members of the Council of Fifty. Another case of wilful opposition to the political counsel of church leaders occurred in 1854. One of the candidates nominated . . . Albert P. Rockwood, had incurred the dislike of a group of voters, who nominated a candidate their own, Stephen H. Hales, in opposition. According to John Hyde, Jr., a Mormon apostate, Hales obtained the majority; “Stephen Hales was accordingly sent for by Brigham, who gave him a severe reprimand for daring to allow his name to be used as an opponent of ‘the church nomination.’ ” Hales was compelled to resign, and Rockwood seated instead. The most important fact of this incident, apparently unknown to Hales and his supporters, and to Hyde, was that Rockwood belonged to the Council of Fifty. (*Quest For Empire*, pp. 137-138)

On page 40 of the same book, Klaus J. Hansen states:

For over fifty years, Mormon elections were hardly anything more than a “sustaining” of the official candidates. . . . If a man, therefore, opposed the official church candidate, he was questioning the divine sanction under which this candidate had been nominated. Such a man was clearly on the road to apostasy.

In 1853 Dr. Bernhisel was chosen as a delegate to Congress in the Mormon Tabernacle. Brigham Young stated:

If we wish to make political speeches, and it is necessary, for the best interest of the cause and kingdom of God, to make them on the Sabbath, we do it . . .

Brother Kimball has seconded the motion, that Doctor Bernhisel be sent back to Washington, as our delegate. All who are in favour of it, raise your right hands. (More than two thousand hands were at once seen above the heads of the congregation.)

This has **turned into a caucus meeting**. It is all right. I would call for an opposite vote if I thought any person would vote. I will try it, however. (Not a single hand was raised in opposition.) (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 188)

Some years later Brigham Young stated:

Dr. Bernhisel is our delegate; . . . we say, “Let us send him,” and he is unanimously elected. And if we had a thousand officers to elect—if we had to elect the President of the United States, you would **never see a dissenting vote**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 228)

It is interesting to note that Dr. Bernhisel was a member of the Council of Fifty (see *Quest For Empire*, p. 227).

Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

We move as a man, almost; we hearken to the voice of our leader; we are united in our faith and in our works, **whether politically or religiously**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 328)

Brigham Young seemed to have no understanding of the value of the political system in America. He obviously wanted a dictatorship where the “dictator” would rule “to the day of his death.” The following statements are taken from Young’s sermons:

In our Government a President is elected for four years, . . . Would it not be better to extend that period during life or good behaviour; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 345)

Should they keep him in office only four years? Should they make a clause in their Constitution that a President shall serve at most for only two terms without a vacation in his services? That is an item that should not be found in the Constitution of the United

States, . . . We should select the best man we could find, and centre our feelings upon him, and sustain him as our President, **dictator**, lawgiver, controller, and guide in a national capacity, and in every other capacity wherein he is a righteous example . . .

Can the Constitution be altered? It can; and when we get a President that answers our wishes to occupy the executive chair, there let **him sit to the day of his death, and pray that he may live as long as Methuselah**; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp. 11, 14)

It is hardly any secret that Brigham Young wanted to be the man who would “occupy the executive chair . . . to the day of his death.” The reader will remember that the historian Bancroft claimed that Brigham Young said that “he would himself become President of the United States, or dictate who should be President” (*History of Utah*, p. 505).

The church’s political party was known as the “People’s Party.” Dean E. Mann states: “Operating later through the Council of Fifty and the People’s Party, the Church continued to exercise great influence over political affairs until that party’s abandonment in 1890” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1967, p. 45). Klaus J. Hansen says that “the chairman of the central committee of the People’s Party, John Sharp, was a member of the Council of Fifty. . . . William H. Hooper, who served the Mormons in Washington until 1872, belonged to the Council of Fifty. So did George Q. Cannon, who replaced Hooper and served until 1882, when he lost his seat under the Edmunds Act” (*Quest For Empire*, p. 172).

The Mormon writer J. D. Williams gives this information:

Statehood for Utah was delayed because Congress was convinced that the Mormons had too many wives and too few political parties. . . . the parties were few enough, all right—just one. . . . But this one-party system came under challenge in 1869, when a group of Brigham Young’s critics . . . were excommunicated from the Church and moved almost at once to set up a party of their own. . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, pp. 36-37)

Some writers claim that because of persecution the Mormons were driven to vote one way. This is completely untrue; the non-Mormons were forced to form the Liberal Party because of the church’s attempt to control early Utah. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen states:

In the absence of conflict, so the argument runs, Mormon institutions would have been as democratic as those of the United States itself. . . . This explanation, however, is too simple. . . . An examination of the political theory of the Kingdom of God reveals that persecution or no persecution, the Saints were committed to political unity. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 72)

Speaking of the Mormon idea of “the Kingdom of God,” the Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus states:

To establish the Kingdom of God in its political authority would require a major concession on the part of non-Latter-day Saints: that of granting the appropriate **priesthood councils in Zion the power to name men to governmental office**, with the consent of the people. On the other hand, there were certain benefits the non-Latter-day Saint could expect to receive from accepting. (*Joseph Smith and World Government*, p. 33)

The early Mormon leaders could not seem to understand why the Gentiles were not willing to accept their rule. The *Valley Tan* printed an abstract of a sermon by Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, which contains the following statements:

Then will the American people prostrate themselves before the independent Saints of Deseret, and beg for food and protection; then will the nations of the earth bow themselves down to our prophets, . . .

That’s what these Federal officers are sent here for, to wait upon us, to be our servants; and if they had done their duty they would have hung forty before this time for committing treason against Deseret—for violating the laws



of this Territory. When we go to the States we obey their laws, and when they come here they ought to obey our laws. They ought to go to the polls and vote for the man who we want to elect to office. They ought to do as Romans do when they are among Romans. But do they do it? No, they are traitors to Deseret. (*The Valley Tan*, September 14, 1859, p. 2)

The Liberal Party, which was formed to combat the domination of the Mormon Church in politics, had a very difficult time at first. Even the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts had to admit that the Liberal Party received unjust treatment (see *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 307-309).

Stanley S. Ivins gives this information concerning the political situation in Utah toward the end of the 19th century:

Faced with the growing strength of the Liberal Party and the fact that, under the existing Mormon versus Gentile political division, the prospect of statehood for Utah was very dim, someone decided that it was time for a change. So, in the spring of 1891, the People's Party was disbanded, the Mormons were advised to divide on national party lines, and local Republican and Democratic organizations were formed. On the surface, this action suggested that the church was getting out of politics. (*The Moses Thatcher Case*, p. 4)

J. D. Williams gives this interesting information:

Then came the dramatic, now humorous, sequence of events in which theocracy served as midwife for the birth of democracy in Utah. Sometime in 1891 (a day uncertain) at a meeting of the leaders of the People's Party (the Church party), the First Counselor in the Church Presidency, George Q. Cannon, made an appearance. President Cannon informed the party officials that the First Presidency of the Church wanted the existing parties scrapped and the national parties instituted in their place. He then warned that the old religious warfare would be perpetuated under new labels if all the People's Party became Democrats and the Liberals became Republicans.

So the word went forth from that meeting that Mormons should join both national parties. And as the word moved down the hierarchy, some imaginative bishops at the ward level gave "practical translation" to the advice: They stood at the head of the chapel aisle and indicated that the Saints on one side (dare we say "right"?) should become Republicans and those on the other (left?) should become Democrats.

The People's Party disbanded in 1891 as President Cannon had requested and the Liberal Party followed suit in December, 1893. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, pp. 37-38)

## Moses Thatcher

Wallace Turner made these statements in his book, *The Mormon Establishment*, pages 271-272:

Stanley S. Ivins has documented the very cruel way the First Presidency destroyed the ecclesiastical standing of one of the apostles who resisted the return to church domination of political life—Moses Thatcher. . . .

This case established quite clearly in the minds of all Mormon politicians that they must pay attention to the church leaders.

In his work, *The Moses Thatcher Case*, Stanley S. Ivins gives the following information concerning this matter:

Before the next election, things were happening which were to greatly alter the political affiliations of the Mormons. Some of the church leaders met with James C. Blaine and two other high ranking Republicans, and appealed to them for help in getting statehood for Utah. They were laughed at and told that they could not expect such help as long as there were so many Democrats in the Territory. Some time later, at a meeting of church officials in the Gardo House, it was decided that those church leaders who were Republicans would campaign for their party, and those who were Democrats would

remain silent. The only objection to this decision came from Apostle Moses Thatcher, who on at least two occasions, had come out openly against participation of the church in politics. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 10, 1896)

When the 1892 campaign got under way, the high church officials of Republican persuasion went out to tell the Saints that the Brethren and the Lord wanted more Republicans. But their program was somewhat upset when Apostle Thatcher, B. H. Roberts and Charles W. Penrose, disregarding the decision of their brethren, campaigned for the Democrats. Both Utah and the nation went Democratic, and Grover Cleveland was the one who signed the enabling act making Utah a state.

The three brethren who had not kept quite about their Democratic sympathies found themselves in trouble, as we learn from the journal kept by Apostle Marriner W. Merrill. (*Utah Pioneer and Apostle, Marriner W. Merrill and His Family*—Published by Melvin Clarence Merrill—1937). At a January 11, 1893 meeting of the Twelve Apostles, the president of the quorum, Lorenzo Snow, "referred to Moses Thatcher's recent course in not being in harmony with the First Presidency. Then Moses talked and was much agitated and affected and felt humble." Next day the Twelve met with the First Presidency "where matters relating to Apostle Thatcher's recent campaign speeches were discussed as not being with the Presidency in sentiment and feelings. After a six-hour meeting I moved that we all forgive one another and hereafter work in harmony with the First Presidency; seconded and carried unanimously." But full harmony did not follow, for on March 22nd, the Presidency again met with the Twelve, "and occupied the most of the time principally dwelling on their grievances against Apostle Moses Thatcher in the recent campaign." The meeting was adjourned until the following morning, when the "subject of Apostle Moses Thatcher, B. H. Roberts and C. W. Penrose was discussed at length; they all went in direct opposition to the First Presidency policy in the last fall political campaign." After a long discussion, "it was decided that those Brethren should see their wrong, repent, and make confessions to their Quorums and the Presidency. We all partook of bread and wine at 3:30 p.m. and adjourned at 4:30 p.m. to meet again on Monday, April 3rd. It was agreed that the Brethren above named should not attend the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple until they made matters right." . . . Faced with being barred from participating in it, Roberts and Penrose apparently repented, but Thatcher held out to the end. . . . The evening before the dedication, the Twelve met "in the President's office to again consider Apostle Moses Thatcher's case, . . . he made a very humble acknowledgement and said he had done wrong and asked forgiveness, and all voted to forgive him freely." So everyone took part in the April 6th dedication, and at an April 20th meeting of "the Priesthood, . . . in the Temple," all those present agreed to sustain the First Presidency "in all things, political as well as all other matters." So it appeared that harmony and the unquestioned political authority of the Presidency had been restored. But future events did not bear this out.

Although the national administration was now Democratic, the church leaders continued their work for the Republicans and, in the 1893 election, they won control of the Legislature by a narrow margin. Before the 1894 election, the Liberal Party had been disbanded, and the Republicans again won, . . .

The use of church influence in behalf of the Republicans had been no secret, but the Democrats had not chosen to make an issue of it, thinking that to do so would do their cause more harm than good. However, with the approach of the 1895 election, which was to choose the first state officials, they decided that they would try to use the church a little. So they nominated B. H. Roberts for Representative to Congress, and announced that if they won control of the Legislature, Utah's first two Senators would be Moses Thatcher and Joseph L. Rawlins. But this action back-fired on them. During the October general conference of the church, a special priesthood meeting was held in the Assembly Hall, at which Joseph F. Smith strongly rebuked Thatcher and Roberts for accepting political nomination without the consent

of the Presidency. He was backed up by George Q. Cannon and President Wilford Woodruff. This meant that the church was officially opposed to the Democratic ticket, and it so alarmed the party leaders that they reconvened their convention to consider the problem. Some wanted to withdraw all their candidates in protest, but this idea was rejected, and it was decided to make an open issue of church influence in politics. An eight column Address to the People was prepared and published in the *Salt Lake Herald*. It began with an attack upon the union of church and state, then reviewed at length the activities of high church officials in behalf of the Utah Republicans. The campaign became a contest between the Democrats and the church, as represented by its highest leaders. The Republicans won, but by a smaller margin than in 1894.

The involvement of Thatcher and Roberts in this campaign spelled more trouble for them. The *Deseret News* of November 9th carried a long editorial, . . . explaining that church members must be subject to discipline in temporal affairs, and that those who were critical of this principle were in rebellion against divine authority. And from Apostle Merrill's journal, we learn that, at a February 13, 1896 meeting of the First Presidency, Twelve and First Seven Presidents of Seventies, the question of Roberts' "conduct in the last fall's political campaign" was taken up. He defended his course and refused "to make reconciliation" with his brethren. At a March 5th meeting of the same three quorums, his case was again considered, and "After 5 hours' labor with Brother Roberts he was dropped from his Quorum for 3 weeks and suspended from the exercise of the Priesthood for that time, and if no repentance is shown in that time then the action of the Presidency and Apostles and the six Presidents is to be final in his case. The meeting adjourned for 3 weeks." When the adjourned meeting was reconvened, on March 26th, Roberts "made a full confession and was forgiven by all present, and a time of tears and rejoicing was indulged in by all."

In the meantime, "because of events which have happened during the late political contest," a document, which came to be called a **political manifesto**, had been prepared. It was a long declaration of church policy in political matters, which was to be signed by the general authorities and presented to the April conference for approval. It stated that the church had never tried to interfere in affairs of State, and that it had always been understood that men holding high church positions should not accept political office without first obtaining the approval of "those who preside over them." In line with this policy, the signers of the manifesto agreed that, before any "leading official" of the church accepted a political position, or nomination for such a position, he should apply to the "proper authorities" for permission. It was denied that this rule represented a desire to interfere in the affairs of state government. (*Deseret News*, April 6, 1896)

After being labored with for weeks, Mr. Roberts agreed to sign the manifesto, but it was apparently not shown to Moses Thatcher until the day on which it was to be presented to the general conference. That morning it was taken to his home, where he was ill. He asked for time to study it and was given an hour and a half. He saw it as a misleading statement of the past and present attitude of church leaders in political matters, and as a step toward giving those leaders more political power. When his time was up, he returned it, with a written statement that he did not feel that he could sign it without "stultifying" himself. That afternoon, when the general church authorities were presented to the conference to be sustained, **the name of Apostle Thatcher was omitted**, without a word of explanation. This unorthodox, and rather underhanded, punishment of Thatcher was unfavorably looked upon by many of the Saints, as shown by the reception given the political manifesto when it was presented to the different Stakes and Wards. At the Cache Stake Conference, three members of the High Council refused to approve it. When it was presented at Provo, many of the congregation would not vote, a few walked out, and one man stood up and very emphatically voted against it. When presented at the morning session of the Tooele Stake Conference, it received three negative votes. One of them was cast by J. C. De La Mare, an alternate member of the High Council. At the

afternoon meeting, Apostle Francis M. Lyman declared the manifesto to be a revelation, and asked the congregation to vote to suspend Elder De La Mare from his church position. Between 20 and 25 voted for suspension and 8 or 10 against it, but most of the 250 to 300 who were present refused to vote.

There was so much criticism of the action against Thatcher that, at an October 5th meeting of the Presidency and Twelve, "it was decided to explain Moses Thatcher's case at the Conference at 2 p.m." (Merrill Journal) So, at the afternoon meeting, seven speakers defended the church action and charged that Thatcher had been out of harmony with his fellows for four years. Next day President George Q. Cannon, speaking upon the same subject, declared that not since "the great apostacy in Kirtland," had there been so much criticism of church leadership. He warned that this was a sign of apostacy and that those who continued with such criticism would lose the Holy Spirit and "go into darkness." When the church authorities were presented, the name of Thatcher was again omitted. . . .

On July 9th the Quorum of Twelve Apostles had charged their fellow Apostle with apostacy, but on account of his poor health and other delaying circumstances no final action in the matter had been taken.

In the meantime, another election campaign was under way. . . .

Soon after the election, a *Salt Lake Tribune* reporter visited Moses Thatcher and asked him if he was a candidate for the Senate. He replied that he would not work for the office, but if "young Utah" felt that his election would vindicate the principles for which he had contended and help prevent "the forging of chains upon the people of Utah," he would accept the position if it were offered him. This interview was reported in the November 15th [1897] issue of the *Tribune*. Four days later the *News* contained a notice that, at a November 19th meeting of the Council of Twelve Apostles, Brother Thatcher had been dropped from that quorum. Apostle Merrill wrote that he was expelled for insubordination and apostacy.

The prospect of the choice of Thatcher to represent Utah in the Senate brought a strong reaction from the church authorities. On five successive days, beginning November 17th, the *News* featured violent anti-Thatcher editorials. It declared that his candidacy was "an assault upon the doctrines and organic existence" of the church, and that his election would mean that the Democrats wanted to "wound a vital principle of the discipline of the most numerous religious body in this State," and thereby flagrantly insult "that entire religious society." It denied what it called the hysterical implications of the *Tribune* and *Herald*, that the *News* was threatening Thatcher, and insisted that his candidacy was a religious, not a political, question. It was against him because "he stands upon a platform which, fairly interpreted, means nothing more nor less than war against a religious society." (*The Moses Thatcher Case*, by Stanley S. Ivins, pp. 4-8)

Stanley S. Ivins went on to show that Moses Thatcher was defeated, and later the Mormon Church tried to excommunicate him. J. D. Williams calls this a "classic case in the use of church discipline against an Apostle who violated the established rules" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, pp. 39-40).

The reader will remember that Abraham H. Cannon related that his father (George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency) said that "Moses Thatcher's drawing away from his brethren commenced as far as his knowledge concerning it went, at a time when the **Council of Fifty** met in the old City Hall, and Moses opposed the proposition to **anoint John Taylor** as Prophet, Priest and **King**, and Moses' opposition prevailed at that time. Moses has constantly opposed the increase of power in the hands of the President of the Church" ("Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon," December 2, 1895, p. 198, original at Brigham Young University Library).

Moses Thatcher certainly did oppose “the increase of power in the hands of the President of the Church,” as George Q. Cannon stated. We find the following in the back part of a journal kept by Moses Thatcher:

Brother George Q Cannon said to me about May 1885 in the Presidents office that he believed that the President of the Church had a perfect and it should be an unquestioned right to use the **entire revenues or funds** of the Church \_\_\_\_ [for ?] himself o[r] family if he wished to do so, or in any other manner he might choose.

I answered that I did not believe any such dangerous doctrine, . . . (Journal of Moses Thatcher, p. 140; microfilm copy at the Utah State Historical Society)

### Attack on America

Brigham Young taught that the Mormon people were to become “free and independent from all other kingdoms” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 98). This teaching created a great deal of friction between the Mormon people and the United States Government. The Mormon leaders became very bitter against the U.S. Government and its officials. The Apostle Orson Pratt stated: “What else does he say? ‘My Church shall be free and independent of all creatures beneath the celestial world.’ Have we been free from the United States? No, we have not; but we are to be made free from every government upon the face of the earth; . . . The American continent never was designed for such a corrupt Government as the United States’ to flourish or prosper long upon it” (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 204). Joseph Young said: “The administrators of the Government that we live under are just as insane as they can be” (*Ibid.*, p. 207). Bishop Lorenzo D. Young made this statement: “I have long prayed that the Lord Almighty would destroy the nation that gave me birth, unless the rulers thereof repent. Yes, I pray that it may be broken to pieces and become like an old vessel that is broken and thrown out to rot and to return to its native elements” (*Ibid.*, p. 225).

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements about the U.S. Government:

. . . our Government is controlled by ignorance; . . . and every department is more or less governed by ignorance, folly, and weakness. More imbecility has been manifested in the management of public affairs, of late, than ought to be manifested by any government. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 64)

That Government known as the United States’ has become like water spilled on the ground, and other governments will follow. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 336)

The present Government of the United States is self-destroying, as they are now proving. (*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 321)

I shall take the liberty of talking as I please about the President of the United States, . . .

Is a man fit to be President of the United States, who will bow and succumb to the whims of the people? No. (*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 126)

I have just as good a right to say that President Taylor is in hell, as to say that any other miserable sinner is there. (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 183)

. . . President Polk; . . . is now weltering in hell with old Zachary Taylor, where the present administrators will soon be, if they do not repent. (*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 232)

Brigham Young also made some unfavorable comments about Abraham Lincoln:

Our present President, what is his strength? It is like a rope of sand, or like a rope made of water. He is as weak as water. What can he do? Very little . . . Of late, at times, I have almost wished that I had been born in a foreign nation. I feel disgraced in having been born under a government that has so little power, disposition, and influence for truth and right; but I cannot help it. What is the cause of their weakness and imbecility? They have left the paths of truth and virtue, . . . Shame,

shame on the rulers of the nation! I feel myself disgraced to hail such men as my countrymen, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 4)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith made this statement about Abraham Lincoln:

Mr Lincoln now is put into power by that priestly influence; and the presumption is, should he not find his hands full by the secession of the Southern States, the spirit of priestcraft would force him, in spite of his good wishes and intentions, to put to death, if it was in his power, every man that believes in the divine mission of Joseph Smith, or that bears testimony of the doctrines he preached. (*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 18)

Stanley P. Hirshon quotes Brigham Young as making the following statements in 1869:

“Who goes to the White House in these days?” Young had inquired. “A gambler and a drunkard. And the Vice-President is the same. And no man can get either office unless he is a gambler and a drunkard or a thief. And who goes to Congress? You may hunt clear through the Senate and House, and if you can find any men that are not liars, thieves, whoremongers, gamblers, and drunkards. I tell you they are mighty few, for no other kind of men can get in there.” (*The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 278-279)

Daniel H. Wells, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement concerning the U.S. Government: “I do not think there is a more corrupt government upon the face of the earth” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 374). John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

I have vowed in my own mind, over and over again, if I was in Utah, the United States might stand over me until doomsday, before I would do anything for them, unless I was paid for it beforehand. Excuse me, Governor Young, if I am not very patriotic. No man need call upon me to do anything in Utah for the United States, unless they pay me the money down. I won’t trust them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 117)

Mean as the Americans are, they will not, many of them, hire for soldiers. (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 27)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde said:

Just so with the Constitution of the United States. It was framed by the inspiration of the Almighty, we readily grant . . . It has served and fulfilled its purpose . . . The Constitution now serves but little purpose other than a cloak for political gamblers, merchants, and hucksters.

The Almighty looks down from heaven and sees it impossible to save the Constitution, . . . Although it was framed by his wisdom and skill, and his power and goodness, yet with as much cheerfulness will it be overthrown as it was erected or framed. (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 153)

Klaus J. Hansen gives this information:

Brigham Young predicted: “God Almighty will give the United States a pill that will put them to death, and that is worse than lobelia. I am prophet enough to prophesy the downfall of the government that has driven us out. . . . Wo [sic] to the United States: I see them going to Death and destruction.” (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 116-117)

“The time is not far distant,” he [Brigham Young] wrote to the staunch friend of the Mormons in 1858, “when Utah shall be able to assume her rights and place among the family of nations.” Official documents of the period, no doubt purposefully, are dated “State of Deseret,” not “Territory of Utah.” One letter, directed to Col. Thomas Ellerbeck of the Nauvoo Legion, was signed by Thomas Tauner [sic] as “Captain of the Royal Artillery, Deseret.” . . . understandably, the Civil War quickened Mormon expectations for the deliverance of Zion. . . .

Certain enemies of the Mormons, nevertheless, charged the Saints with desiring a confederate victory. What the Mormons, however, really seem to have expected—at least during the beginning of the war—was a mutual destruction of both sides. Such expectations found expression in the diary of Charles Walker who, in 1861, wrote: “The Virginians are preparing to seize the capital at Washington, . . . Bro. Brigham spoke of the



things in the East said he hoped they would both gain the victory said he had as much sympathy for them as the Gods and Angels had for the Devils in Hell.” . . .

In keeping with this idea of preparedness, the Council of Fifty held itself in readiness to take over when other earthly governments would crumble. After it had failed to obtain statehood for its revived State of Deseret in 1862, the Council nevertheless continued the state organization in the enigmatic meetings of the so-called ghost legislature of Deseret, which convened the day after the close of each session of the territorial legislature during the 1860’s. . . . When Lee surrendered . . . it became only too obvious that the anticipations of the Saints and God’s fore knowledge once again had not coincided. Nevertheless, more than a year after the cessation of hostilities, Frances P. Dyer could write to her father that apostle John Taylor “could not finish” an address to the Saints “without running on to the one string that they all harp on all the time till I get sick of it, that is the down fall of the United States government and the building up of Mormonism.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 165-69)

Things have changed a great deal since the early Mormon leaders left the scene. Davis Bitton made this observation:

The Church entered the twentieth century in anxious pursuit of respectability. The Mormons had long been accused of being immoral and un-American. . . . At last the Saints could be “respectable.” . . . They became not only loyal Americans but patriots, determined to prove their Americanism to any doubter. Soon after the turn of the century the new Boy Scouts of America program was adopted by the Church with great enthusiasm. Thousands of Mormon boys could now pledge to do their duty to God and country, with none of the old schizophrenia. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 126)

Although Mormons are now considered to be very patriotic, some of them seem to lack a real understanding of the meaning of freedom (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, p. 103).

## Decline of the Kingdom

The Mormon writer Richard D. Poll states:

As for the doctrine of “separation of church and state,” only when the end of the nineteenth century saw the political kingdom indefinitely postponed did it become an operating principle within the Mormon community. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 137)

Frank J. Cannon was a man who labored very hard to break down the control which the Mormon Church had over the people of Utah. J. D. Williams states:

Republican Frank Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency, . . . became in 1896 one of the state’s first two Senators. . . .

Finding himself opposed by another Democrat, whose candidacy was championed by an Apostle, Heber J. Grant, Senator Cannon rented the Salt Lake Theater and delivered a tirade against church interference in politics. The Senator was then called to Church President Lorenzo Snow’s home. The Prophet told the Senator that it was the “will of the Lord” that he should step aside gracefully to permit his father, George Q. Cannon, President Snow’s first counselor, and a Republican, to be elected to Cannon’s seat. The Senator refused to follow the dictate; the Democrat Legislature refused to elect father or son; and Utah suffered the ignominy of being represented by only one Senator from 1899 to 1901. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, pp. 40-41)

Frank J. Cannon made these comments concerning this matter:

He [President Lorenzo Snow] sat down in his chair, composing himself with an air that might have distinguished one of the ancient kings. . . .

“It would be most unfortunate,” he said, “for us, as a people, if we failed to elect a Senator. . . .” “Last night,” he continued, “lying

on my bed, I had a vision. I saw this work of God injured by the political strife of the brethren. And the voice of the Lord came to me, directing me to see that your father was elected to the Senate.” . . . “The Lord will take care of the event. I want you to withdraw from the race and throw your strength to your father. It is the will of the Lord that you do so.”

“Have you a revelation to that effect also?” I asked.

He answered, pontifically, “Yes.”

“You’ll publish it to the world, then, the same as other revelations?”

“No,” he replied. “No.”

“Then I’ll not obey it,” I said, “because if God is ashamed of it, I am.”

His air of prophetic authority changed to one of combative resolution. He explained that one of the other candidates, a strong Democrat, had agreed to accept the revelation if I would; that the two of us could give our strength to the church candidate; that the Church would turn to my father the votes that it had already in command for McCune, and my father’s election would be carried. (*Under the Prophet in Utah*, pp. 229-231)

Just after the turn of the century the Mormon leaders found themselves in serious trouble because of their attempt to control politics in Utah. Klaus J. Hansen gives this information:

In 1903, a powerful group of senators instigated proceedings to remove Reed Smoot, a Mormon apostle, from his senate seat, on the grounds that the Mormon hierarchy still controlled political affairs in Utah, that separation of church and state were only practiced superficially, and that Smoot was therefore an emissary of the Mormon priesthood as well as a representative of the state. Most of the leading Mormon authorities were subpoenaed to appear before the senate committee. Alleged church control of politics and attempts to establish a political kingdom of God were the major charges levelled against the Mormons. President Joseph F. Smith averred that the church, and not Smoot, was on trial. These hearings, more than anything else, forced Mormon leaders to come to a decision on church influence in politics, and on the future of the political kingdom of God. (*Quest For Empire*, pp. 183-184)

After this investigation the Mormon leaders were forced to be more careful in their attempt to gain political power. The Mormon writer J. D. Williams states that “today, with the normal power imperatives of any large organization with much at stake, the L.D.S. Church remains in politics” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, p. 34). J. D. Williams also gives this interesting information:

More subterranean, and less official, were the endorsement tactics used in the heated Thomas-Bennett election for the U.S. Senate during 1950. A “watch-and-ward society” called the Law Observance and Enforcement Committee had become appended to the Church hierarchy prior to this time. Its primary job was to report to the First Presidency on violations of liquor, tobacco and prostitution laws in Salt Lake County. But in 1950 this committee extended itself in publishing a list of candidates who would support Church standards. Attached to a mimeographed talk which was to be read in the monthly Fast and Testimony Meeting, the list began with the candidates for Senator and Congressman and ran on through thirty-two local offices. Seventeen of the thirty-four Democrats had been crossed out; two of the thirty-four Republicans.

Like Moses Thatcher of old, Mormon Democrats felt their Church had betrayed them. In the ensuing cross-fire, the First Presidency issued a disclaimer through the Salt Lake press declaring that they had neither approved a list of acceptable candidates nor directed the circulation of such a list. But the list, and other gratuitous insults against Thomas, had their effect. He was defeated in November by the prominent Utah businessman-Churchman, Wallace F. Bennett. . . .

On occasion, more covert actions to influence the electorate are tried than front-page editorials and sermons from the pulpit. One thinks particularly of the efforts made by key Church people in 1954 to secure a favorable referendum vote on a one-senator-per-county reapportionment amendment.

To secure that vote in populous Salt Lake County (which would thereby cost the county six out of its seven state senators), a political committee of the Apostles was formed under the co-chairmanship of Elders Henry D. Moyle and Harold B. Lee. They authorized Stake President Junius Jackson to form the Salt Lake Valley Stake Presidents Committee as the campaign vehicle. Under the aegis of that committee, pro-reapportionment pamphlets were prepared and then distributed by Deseret Industry trucks, ward teachers, Beehive girls—by anyone who carried the “Church stamp” so as to convey the impression of Church endorsement of the proposal.

But in the end, the ground was cut from beneath the entire effort by the release of a letter to the press which the First Presidency had written to Professor Frank Jonas, plainly saying that “the Church takes no position with reference to it. . . . No one is authorized to align us with either side of the controversy.” The effort to use Church channels for political campaigning was thereby successfully interdicted and the proposed constitutional amendment went down to defeat on election day. . . .

But the practice of Church officials’ making suggestions to public administrators and law makers has never died. As a case in point, one thinks of the Law Observance and Enforcement Committee during the 1940’s when it reported to Second Counselor David O. McKay. Word from the Committee about a grocery store’s selling cigarettes or beer to minors would lead to a “high level” call to Public Safety Commissioner Ben Lingenfelter, and the police would then check out the offending grocer.

Up until recent times, there were close ties between Church headquarters and city and county planning and zoning officers to assure the reservation of lots for new ward houses as subdivision plats were filed. But the responsibility has now shifted to the ward bishops to negotiate with subdividers.

In the legislative area, relations between Church officials and lawmakers are still very direct. Some are out-in-the open for the public to see; others are behind the scenes. Communiques to members of Congress are periodically sent by the First Presidency. Two famous ones were the 1946 admonition to the Utah Congressional delegation to oppose a peacetime draft and the 1965 letter to all Mormons in Congress to resist the repeal of “right-to-work” laws. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, pp. 43, 45-47)

The “Law Observance and Enforcement Committee” of the Mormon Church, mentioned by J. D. Williams, found itself in trouble with the law in 1966. The following appeared in *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, published at the University of Utah:

Colonel Elmer G. Thomas of Salt Lake City’s Twenty-four Stakes of Zion Law Enforcement and Observance Committee has again stepped in the middle of a muddy puddle.

Summer ’66 found Thomas and the League on the path of righteousness, this time in pursuance of the area’s alcohol vendors. The league apparently found a nineteen year-old Kaysville youth to **pose** at being of legal age who would try to purchase liquor from area package stores. . . .

When the league finished its research and released the findings based on the youth’s visits to Salt Lake liquor stores, they no doubt thought they had rid the Valley of an undesirable element.

A Salt Lake area package agency was closed by the Utah State Liquor Control Commission and a clerk was fired and subsequently charged with illegal sale of liquor to a minor. . . .

Utah’s Attorney General Phil Hansen considerably dampened the effect of the league’s victory with his decision that regardless of the intent of the league’s actions it had violated state statutes in urging a minor to break the liquor laws.

Since Hansen’s decision became public, the youth has been charged with illegal purchase of an alcoholic beverage, his father, also a member of the league has been charged with aiding and abetting the illegal purchase. County Attorney Grover A. Giles hinted his office may file additional charges against “groups” who may have aided, abetted or counseled the Kaysville youth’s actions. (*The Daily Utah Chronicle*, September 23, 1966, p. 2)

Wallace Turner gives this information concerning the church’s stand on right to work laws:

So on June 22, 1965, President McKay and his two counselors, Hugh B. Brown and Nathan Eldon Tanner, wrote a letter to three United States senators and eight representatives in Congress urging them to vote against President Lyndon B. Johnson’s attempt to repeal section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act because this would repeal the nineteen state right to work laws. Only the Mormon members of Congress got the letters; the First Presidency ignored the Gentiles there. . . .

Five of the Democratic members—Senator Moss, Representatives Moss, Dyal, Hanna and Udall—all signed a joint letter. They said that they would not heed the attempt of the Mormon president to give them religious instruction on casting their votes. They wrote:

We yield to none of our brothers in our dedication to the protection of the God-given rights of our fellow citizens. While we respect and revere the offices held by the members of the First Presidency of the church, we cannot yield to others our responsibilities to our constituency, nor can we delegate our own Free Agency to any but ourselves. We know that each of you will agree that in this instance we act in conformity with the highest principles of our church in declining to be swayed by the views expressed in the communications.

In signing the letter, Udall also said that he was going to vote the way the First Presidency indicated, but only because Arizona had a right to work law and he felt compelled to uphold it. (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 292-293)

During the past few years there has been a great deal of controversy in the Mormon Church with regard to Ezra Taft Benson’s political activities. Mr. Benson is an Apostle in the Mormon Church, and although he is not a member of the John Birch Society, his activities on their behalf have caused the Mormon Church leaders a great deal of embarrassment. On January 4, 1964, Drew Pearson made the following comment concerning Ezra Taft Benson:

Benson has praised the man who says Mr. Eisenhower was a dedicated agent of communism—Robert Welch; while Reed Benson, Ezra’s son, has become a paid organizer for Welch’s John Birch Society. . . .

Benson has become so extreme in his views that the Mormon Church, of which he is one of the Twelve Apostles, has quietly transferred him abroad to head the church’s European mission. (*San Francisco Chronicle*, January 4, 1964)

On February 21, 1964, the *Deseret News* reported that “President David O. McKay of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints denied in a letter released here Friday he sent Elder Ezra Taft Benson to Europe because of Elder Benson’s alleged activities with the John Birch Society.”

The *Idaho State Journal* let the “cat out of the bag,” however, when they published two letters written to Rep. Ralph R. Harding. One of them was written by Joseph Fielding Smith, who has since become President of the Mormon Church, and the other was written by Robert McKay, who is the son of the late President David O. McKay. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reprinted parts of these letters on Friday, February 21, 1964:

The paper then quoted Mr. Smith’s letter as saying:

“I am glad to report to you that it will be some time before we hear anything from Brother Benson, who is now on his way to Great Britain where I suppose he will be at least for the next two years. When he returns, **I hope his blood will be purified.**”

Robert McKay’s letter, the paper said, expressed a similar sentiment.

“We shall all be relieved when Elder Benson **ceases to resist counsel** and returns to a concentration on those affairs befitting his office,” he wrote. “It is my feeling that there will be an **immediate and noticeable curtailment of his Birch Society activities**.” . . .

There was speculation last December when Mr. Benson was sent to Europe by the church that he was **being exiled** for his political views. The LDS Church officially denied the rumors. . . .

President Smith, when contacted in his Salt Lake apartment Thursday afternoon, said he had written to Rep. Harding late last year stating that Elder Benson was on his way to Great Britain to serve as a mission president.

“I don’t recall writing ‘When he returns, I hope his blood will be purified.’ If I did write such a statement, I meant that **when he returned he would be free of all political ties**,” President Smith declared.

The church official said his letter was personal to Rep. Harding and was not intended for publication. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 21, 1964, p. 4-A)

In his book, *The Mormon Establishment*, Wallace Turner shows that Benson has continued his activities for the Birch Society and that this has caused a great deal of controversy in the Mormon Church.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown that the Council of Fifty had a great deal of power in early Utah. Klaus J. Hansen gives this information:

An examination of Utah territorial legislatures from 1851 to 1896 reveals that not until the 1880’s, when the influx of Gentiles into the territory in large numbers began to crack Mormon political hegemony, did the Council of Fifty lose its political influence. (*Quest For Empire*, p. 137)

The reorganization of the Council of Fifty in 1880 suggests that it may have been dormant for a period. . . . On Monday, March 29, Nuttall recorded in his diary that he “went this morning with Elder

Franklin D. Richards at his office and examined the records of the council of 50 or Kingdom of God and made out lists of members now living.”

The reorganization of the Council took place immediately after the general conference of the church in April. . . . On April 21, the Council again convened at the city hall. At this meeting, Feramorz Little, Mayor of Salt Lake City, was “admitted as a member.” . . . The Council of Fifty, organized by Joseph Smith himself through revelation, apparently could not simply be pushed aside. (*Ibid.*, pp. 173-174)

We know that the Council of Fifty was still in existence in 1884, for Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his diary:

At 10 a.m. I attended a meeting in the Social Hall with S. B. Young, John W. Taylor and John Q., and was introduced to 50. “The Kingdom of God and its laws, and the keys thereof, and judgment in the hands of His servant, Ahman Christ.” (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” October 9, 1884, vol. 5, p. 24)

It is interesting to note that the “Minutes of the Council of Fifty,” for 1880 lists Joseph F. Smith as a member (*Quest for Empire*, p. 226). Joseph F. Smith became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, and his son, Joseph Fielding Smith, recently became the tenth President.

Several years ago we discussed the Council of Fifty with a man who had been a member of the church’s “Law Enforcement and Observance Committee.” He stated that this committee was not part of the Council of Fifty, but he told us of a conversation he had with B. H. Roberts in which Roberts claimed that the Council of Fifty was established by revelation and would always be a part of the church. J. D. Williams, however, feels that the Council of Fifty is no longer in existence:

While the laity have no sure knowledge of its demise, one presumes that the Council, like polygamy, was abandoned about the time of statehood as the full machinery of civil government replaced the vestiges of theocracy. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1966, p. 47)





## Does the Council of Fifty Still Exist?

On pages 414-415 of this book, we tell how Joseph Smith set up a secret organization known as the Council of Fifty. The Council of Fifty was set up for the purpose of establishing “one-world government” under the control of the Mormon priesthood. In an article published in *Rocky Mountain Magazine*, January-February, 1980, page 17, Michael Parrish related:

... in the words of one believer, a former instructor at church-owned Brigham Young University: “The Mormons do intend to take over the world, certainly world government. There’s no secret about that—it’s in the writings of Joseph Smith right on down. The Constitution of the United States will ‘hang by a thread’ and the church will save it by establishing a theocracy.”

Most scholars feel that the Council of Fifty completely dissolved sometime around the turn of the century, but there are some people who feel it is still functioning. In *Mormon Spies, Hughes and the C.I.A.*, pages 51-52, we considered some material which indicated that the “Council of Fifty” may still be in existence and that Ezra Taft Benson, who is next in line to be President of the Church, is a member. We were not able to offer any real proof concerning this matter, but evidence has recently turned up to show that Heber J. Grant, the seventh President of the Church, was a member of the Council of Fifty and that members of this organization were still alive for many years after the turn of the century. The following is taken from a typed copy of “Heber J. Grant Journal Sheets”:

—1932 Sheets (Jan. 3, 1932): “Brother Franklin S. Richards called at Brother David P. Howells’ home this morning at my request, and we examined a private record covering a period of a number of years, of an organization that at one time had between forty and fifty members, when I was the junior apostle. Today Brother Franklin and I are the only surviving members. We got about two-thirds of the way through the record and I arranged to meet him again next Sunday and finish it.”

Mormon scholar D. Michael Quinn does not make any direct quotations from this document, but he seems to verify its authenticity:

On 3 January 1932, Heber J. Grant recorded that he and Franklin S. Richards were the only surviving members of the Council, and with the death of President Grant on 14 May 1945 the technical survival of the Council of Fifty ended. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1980, p. 191)

Now, while Dr. Quinn may be right in stating that “the technical survival of the Council of Fifty” ended on May 14, 1945, it is also possible to believe that after reading the records of the Council of Fifty in 1932, President Grant decided to get the organization functioning again. After all, the Council almost died during Brigham Young’s lifetime. Quinn states that, “John Taylor, revitalized the Council of Fifty by reconvening it on 10 April 1880 for the first time ‘since last met, in Oct. 68’” (*Ibid.*, p. 173). On page 174 of the same article Quinn says that “John Taylor resurrected the Council of Fifty.” Whether President Grant “resurrected” it again after January 1932 is not known, and, as we pointed out in *Mormon Spies, Hughes and the C.I.A.*, the charge that it is still in existence comes from “hear-say information.”

In any case, Ezra Taft Benson would have had a good opportunity to learn about the goals of the Council of Fifty because he was “ordained an apostle 7 Oct. 1943” and would have been well acquainted with President Grant (see *Deseret News 1980 Church Almanac*, p. 80). Unless the church releases all of the secret records of the Council of Fifty, we may never know whether Ezra Taft Benson is a member of the Council of Fifty or whether the organization died out in 1945. We do know, however, that

Benson’s goals are consistent with those of the Council of Fifty. If the Council of Fifty is not in existence at the present time, it seems reasonable to believe that Benson might want to reestablish it. He would certainly have the power to do this if he became the “Living Prophet.”

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for November 4, 1974, reported that, “President Ezra Taft Benson, . . . said, in an interview this week, it is ‘entirely possible’ the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) will one day declare support for a political candidate. . . . President Benson stands next in the traditional line of ascension to the Mormon presidency.”

In a speech delivered at BYU on February 26, 1980, Benson proclaimed that the Prophet has a right to dictate to his people on political matters and even to “lead them in government. Alma was the head of the Church and of the government in the Book of Mormon; Joseph Smith was mayor of Nauvoo and Brigham Young was governor of Utah . . . Those who would remove prophets from politics would take God out of government.” Those who know of President Benson’s previous attempts to involve the church in politics realize the danger that lies ahead if he should become the “Living Prophet.” This is a very real possibility because Spencer W. Kimball, the present leader, is four years older than Benson and now in poor health.

## Are Mormon Leaders Still Anointed Kings?

On page 416 of this book we pointed out that the church’s attempt to suppress the fact that Joseph Smith was anointed king has failed and that Mormon scholars are beginning to admit that the charge is true. Recently, D. Michael Quinn conceded that Joseph Smith’s scribe, William Clayton, recorded the matter in his journal and that a revelation given to the Council of Fifty mentioned the matter:

This leads to the final office in the symbolic Kingdom of God on earth as embodied in the Council of Fifty. William Clayton recorded in his journal that in the 11 April 1844 meeting of the Council of Fifty, “was prest. Joseph chosen as our prophet Priest, & King by Hosannas.” . . . Although it has been suggested that William Mark’s statements referred to conventional LDS temple rites rather than to a theocratic ceremony, the evidence does not support this objection. Aside from the contemporary account of William Clayton and some reminiscent descriptions by William Marks, the revelation to the Council of Fifty on 27 June 1882 also stated that God called Joseph Smith, Jr., “to be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator to my Church and Kingdom; and to be a King and Ruler over Israel.” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1980, p. 186)

On page 418 of this book we presented evidence which shows that President John Taylor was made king on February 4, 1885. Dr. Quinn confirms that John Taylor was anointed king and cites the following from a “Manuscript in Franklin D. Richards Miscellaneous Papers, Church Archives”:

... President Taylor stated the object of the Council directed Br Nuttall to read a Revelation which he said he received more than a year ago requiring him to be anointed & set apart as a King Priest and Ruler over Israel on the Earth—over Zion & the Kingdom of Christ our King of Kings. . . . F.M.L. motioned that we proceed to obey the requirement of the revelation. when we clothed in our Priestly attire. E Snow offered prayer, when after the usual ceremony F.M. Lyman prayed in the circle. L. Snow consecrated a bottle of oil. Counselor Cannon anointed President John Taylor and we all laid hands on the Pres. & Geo. Q. sealed the anointing according to a written form which had been prepared. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1980, p. 187)

On page 188 of the same article, Dr. Quinn produces circumstantial evidence that Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Church was also anointed king:

Although the Council of Fifty did not convene after 1884, members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve may have performed this theocratic ordinance for the Presidents of the Church who followed John Taylor. At any rate, John W. Taylor, former member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and one of the last men admitted to the Council of Fifty, addressed President Joseph F. Smith in 1911 as “Prophet, President and King” in a letter regarding the Council of Fifty.

Although we cannot actually prove that the President of the Mormon Church is still anointed as king, Apostle Bruce R. McConkie makes it plain that he is in reality “the earthly king”:

1. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as it is now constituted is the kingdom of God on earth. . . . The Church and Kingdom are one and the same. . . .

The Church (or kingdom) is not a democracy; . . . The Church is a kingdom. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Eternal King, and the President of the Church, the mouthpiece of God on earth, is the earthly king. All things come to the Church from the King of the kingdom in heaven, through the king of the kingdom on earth. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1979, pp. 415-16)

### Records of the Council of Fifty Still Suppressed

D. Michael Quinn, one of the church’s best scholars, has done a great deal of research on the Council of Fifty. Unfortunately, however, Dr. Quinn was not allowed access to important records concerning this secret organization:

These teachings of Joseph Smith to the Council of Fifty, found nowhere else, fill hundreds of pages. On 16 March 1880, nearly 200 pages of the Council’s minutes concerning only its “origin and Organization” were read to President John Taylor, Joseph F. Smith, and Franklin D. Richards. . . . Joseph F. Smith wrote that the Prophet’s 1844 instructions to the Council of Fifty were “grand & god like.”

When Joseph Smith went to Carthage, Illinois, for his last imprisonment, the Church nearly lost these voluminous teachings of the Prophet to the Council of Fifty. . . . Joseph Smith told William Clayton to either burn or bury the records of the Council of Fifty. William Clayton trusted that calmer, more reasonable and more secure times would come for the Latter-day Saints and therefore preserved the records for future generations. Though not available at this time, those teachings of Joseph Smith and of his successors in the Council of Fifty are a far greater legacy to the Latter-day Saints than the often-mundane activities of the Council itself. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1980, p. 192)

Writing in *The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal*, vol. 1, 1981, page 17, Dr. Quinn refers to the “still unavailable minutes of the Council of Fifty. These minutes are in the vault of the LDS First Presidency’s office.” Although Quinn has been hindered in his research because of the church’s policy of suppression, he has brought forth some very important material concerning the Council of Fifty. One interesting thing that he points out is “the subordination of the Council of Fifty to Church authority”:

At times, the Council of Fifty was even a rubber stamp for prior decisions of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

From the beginning, the LDS Presidency and apostles directed the Council of Fifty to predetermined ends. . . . The most striking example of this rubber-stamp quality of the Council of Fifty occurred in October

1882. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve discussed on 4 October who should be the candidate for Utah’s delegate to Congress, and in the morning of 11 October 1882, the Presidency and apostles voted that John T. Caine be the delegate. Three hours later, at the direction of the LDS hierarchy, the Council of Fifty convened, discussed who should be the delegate to Congress, “nominated” John T. Caine, and appointed a committee to inform the nominating committee of the Church’s political party, the People’s Party.

Members of the Council of Fifty who were not in the First Presidency or the Quorum of the Twelve were probably unaware of the extent to which those authorities manipulated meetings of the Council of Fifty so as to arrive at predetermined decisions. Therefore, the unsophisticated Council members developed unrealistic views. . . . Even Apostle Lyman Wight exaggerated the Council of Fifty’s importance because his long absences from Nauvoo during 1844 and 1845 prevented his seeing the extent to which the Presidency and apostles constituted a shadow government behind the Council of Fifty’s shadow government. These overly enthusiastic Council of Fifty members simply did not understand that the Mormon hierarchy was supreme in both Church and Kingdom, and that it allowed no rival. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1980, pp. 174, 176-177)

Although we cannot agree with all the observations Dr. Quinn makes in his article, we do feel that he has made a real contribution to those who wish to understand the Council of Fifty and its role in making Mormon leaders kings.

### Secret Meeting Before Mormon Kingdom Fully Established

In his book, *The Progress of Man*, pages 417-418, Joseph Fielding Smith, who later became the tenth President of the church, said that “there is a nucleus of a government, formed since that of the United States, which is perfect in its nature, having emanated from a Being who is perfect.

“But some may enquire, is it right—is it lawful for another government to be organized within the United States, of a theocratical nature? Yes, perfectly so!”

In his book, *The Way to Perfection*, pages 290-291, Joseph Fielding Smith tells of a secret meeting to be held in Missouri before Christ returns:

Until this grand council is held, Satan shall hold rule in the nations of the earth; but at that time thrones are to be cast down and man’s rule shall come to an end. . . . Preparation for this work is now going on. . . .

This council in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman is to be of the greatest importance to this world. At that time there will be a transfer of authority from the usurper and impostor, Lucifer, to the rightful King, Jesus Christ. . . .

When this gathering is held, the world will not know of it; the members of the Church at large will not know of it, yet it shall be preparatory to the coming in the clouds of glory of our Savior Jesus Christ as the Prophet Joseph Smith has said. The world cannot know of it. The Saints cannot know of it—except those who officially shall be called into this council—for it shall precede the coming of Jesus Christ as a thief in the night, unbeknown to all the world.

### Mullen, Mormons and the C.I.A.

One thing that really concerns those who know about the Council of Fifty and the church’s ultimate plan to rule the world is the large number of Mormons involved in intelligence work for the U.S. Government. Some people feel that there may be a connection between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Mormon Church. During the investigation of the Watergate break-in it

was discovered that the Robert R. Mullen Company, which handled international public relations for the Mormon Church, also provided cover for the CIA. We first became aware of this company in 1966 when Robert Mullen wrote the book, *The Latter-day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today*. Although Mr. Mullen claimed he was a non-Mormon, he was far from an unbiased observer. In fact, his book was nothing but a thinly disguised propaganda piece written for the church. This, of course, is not too surprising since his firm handled public relations for the church. According to the church's newspaper, *Deseret News*, Oct. 8, 1966, Mullen "was engaged to publicize the first European tour of the famous Tabernacle Choir . . ." The Mullen Company was still handling public relations for the church at the time of the Watergate break-in.

In any case, Robert Bennett, the son of the noted Mormon Senator Wallace F. Bennett, became President of the Mullen Company in 1971. One of Robert Bennett's employees was Howard Hunt, the notorious spy who took part in the Watergate break-in. According to James McCord, who was also involved in the Watergate affair, some of the planning for the burglary took place in the Mullen Company. He gave this testimony in the Senate Watergate Hearings:

Mr. McCord. The meetings, as best I recall, in which these references by Mr. Hunt took place, took place in Mr. Hunt's office, in the Robert F. Mullen Co. . . .

Mr. Liddy, during those discussions, as best I recall, would raise the topic that the planning and the progress of the operation itself was going forward, comments about what Mr. Mitchell was saying to him about what could be done in terms of the priorities of the operation; that is, which ones were to be done first and second. . . .

Mr. Thompson. Do you recall anything that Mr. Hunt said to you about Mr. Colson's involvement or did you just get the general impression that Mr. Colson was involved in some way from what Mr. Hunt told you?

Mr. McCord. I believe my previous testimony which I will restate before this committee, was to the effect that when I had met Mr. Hunt in his offices at 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue [this is the address of the Mullen Co.] with Mr. Liddy that he had referred to his previous work at the White House for Mr. Colson, referring to him as his superior; that during the session that Mr. Hunt, Mr. Liddy, and I had in Mr. Hunt's offices, Mr. Hunt had a typed plan that he had typed himself, step-by-step, for the entry of the Democratic National Committee headquarters; . . . (*Hearings Before The Select Committee On Presidential Campaign Activities Of The United States Senate* . . . , U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973, Book 1, pp. 142-143)

Besides the Watergate break-in, other illegal surveillance activities were discussed at the company which handled the Mormon Church's public relations. Even a student from the church's own Brigham Young University was recruited for the spying activities. We find the following in *The Senate Watergate Report*, vol. 1, page 297:

D. Ruby II. In February 1972, Howard Hunt hired Thomas Gregory, a student at Brigham Young University, to infiltrate the Muskie campaign. Hunt met Gregory through Robert Fletcher, the nephew of Robert Bennett, Hunt's employer at the Mullen Company.

On January 17, 1973, the Brigham Young University paper, *Daily Universe* reported:

BYU student Thomas Gregory testified yesterday in Washington D.C. that he was paid \$3400 for spying and quit after a "close call" in an effort to bug Gen. George McGovern's headquarters.

Gregory testified in the Watergate bugging trial that he met with E. Howard Hunt, G. Gordon Liddy, James W. McCord Jr., and four other defendants in a Washington hotel room early last May.

He said McCord expressed interest in planting electronic listening devices in the offices of McGovern campaign officials, according to Associated Press reports. . . . He did agree to remain in the building late on May 28 and leave some locks open when he departed. However, another man working in the headquarters discovered him and wanted to know why he was there.

The fact that the Mormon Church used the Mullen Company to handle its public relations becomes very intriguing when we learn of the deep involvement this company had with the CIA. J. Anthony Lukas wrote:

. . . when Mullen established its "own" office in Stockholm in 1962, it was staffed by two CIA men—James Everett and Jack Kindschi—who pretended to be working on a study for General Foods, . . . while they were actually debriefing Soviet and Chinese defectors. . . . Kindschi moved for a time to Mexico City, again under Mullen cover, while Everett established a Mullen office in Amsterdam . . . there is evidence that Mullen & Company may have served a similar role at home. (*Nightmare: The Underside Of The Nixon Years*, New York, 1976, p. 38)

It is interesting to note that we had corresponded with CIA agent James Everett for a number of years. In fact, he had written to us from Sweden on January 20, 1965, on Mullen & Company stationery (see photograph in *Mormon Spies, Hughes and the C.I.A.*, p. 14) and had requested copies of our publications on Mormonism. When we first confronted James Everett with the question of whether he had worked for the CIA, he denied any involvement. Later, however, we found evidence that Everett had served as an agent. On May 29, 1976, we decided that we would confront Mr. Everett again with this important question. This time we had the evidence and Mr. Everett frankly confessed that he had been under "deep cover" while he was with the Mullen Co. and that this fact had come out in testimony before the Nedzi committee. The findings of the Nedzi committee have been published under the title, *Inquiry Into The Alleged Involvement Of The Central Intelligence Agency In The Watergate And Ellsberg Matters: Hearings Before The Special Subcommittee On Intelligence Of The Committee On Armed Services, House of Representatives, Ninety-Fourth Congress, First Session*. These hearings not only throw light on James Everett, but they also show the cover-up which Robert Mullen and Robert Bennett engaged in after the Watergate break-in when they tried to keep their company's relationship with the CIA a secret. One CIA memo, written March 1, 1973, contains some enlightening information:

1. Mr. Robert R. Mullen, . . . telephoned CCS on the morning of February 28 to advise us that Sandy Smith, a reporter from *Time Magazine*, was in the Mullen office late on February 27. Smith started off by saying that "a source in the Justice Department" had informed him that the company "is a front for CIA." Mr. Mullen denied the allegation stoutly, said the company clients are all legitimate and offered to let Smith inspect the company books. . . .

3. Mullen told Smith that Bob Bennett, partner of Mr. Mullen who was on a business trip to California, really knew most about Hunt's later period of Mullen employment. . . .

10. . . . It was agreed that Mr. Colby would recommend to the DCI, Mr. Schlesinger, that Messrs. Mullen and Bennett be allowed to read the June 21, 1972 memorandum to the FBI and that they be asked to continue to deny any allegation of association with the Agency, and state in effect that there was no relationship, and if there were, it, of course, would not be admitted. . . .



12. Mr. [deleted] and Mr. Mullen met near the Watergate and proceeded to Mr. Mullen's apartment in the Watergate through a rear entrance to the Watergate. Mr. Bennett joined them shortly and both read the memorandum. . . . They said they would continue to deny any association with the Agency other than the already acknowledged relationship with the Cuban Freedom Committee.

13. . . . Mr. Bennett said that he recently spent four hours in Los Angeles being interviewed by a *Newsweek* reporter and had convinced him that the Mullen Company was not involved with the Watergate Affair. Mr. Bennett rather proudly related that he is responsible for the article "Whispers about Colson" in the March 5 issue of *Newsweek*. Mr. Bennett does not believe the company will be bothered much more by the news media . . . Mr. Bennett said also that he had been feeding stories to Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post* with the understanding that there be no attribution to Bennett. Woodward is suitably grateful for the fine stories and by-lines which he gets and protects Bennett (and the Mullen Company). . . . Mr. Bennett mentioned the February 12, 1973 meeting among himself, Mullen and [deleted], when he stated his opinion that the Ervin Committee investigating the Watergate incident would not involve the company. He said that, if necessary, he could have his father, Senator Bennett of Utah, intercede with Senator Ervin. His conclusion then was that he could handle the Ervin Committee if the Agency can handle Howard Hunt. . . .

14. . . . Bennett believes he and his Agency affiliations will not be raised again. He has the Ervin Committee shut off and feels the Agency has the responsibility to persuade Howard Hunt to avoid revealing what he knows of the history of cover arrangements with the company. Bennett and Mullen further suggested that the Agency "plug the leak" in the FBI and/or Department of Justice. (CIA memo, dated March 1, 1973, as cited in *Inquiry Into The Alleged Involvement Of The Central Intelligence Agency In The Watergate And Ellsberg Matters*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 1073-1075)

In his testimony before the Nedzi committee, Robert Bennett gave this information:

Mr. Nedzi. Did you ever receive any instructions from anyone in the CIA to misrepresent or to refuse to represent the truth to the press?

Mr. Bennett. In the July 10 meeting with Mr. Lukoskie when I told him that I denied to the press that Mullen had any CIA ties, he expressed approval of that. He urged me to continue to take that posture. . . .

Mr. Nedzi. At one point Mr. Eisenstadt, in his memo, makes reference to a statement allegedly made by you, " \* \* \* that they take care of Hunt and you take care of Ervin." Would you comment on that statement?

Mr. Bennett. That is an accurate statement. I am not sure the way it appeared in the paper is accurate. There have been other phrases.

Mr. Nedzi. The statement in the memorandum was, "His conclusion then was that he could handle the Ervin committee if the Agency can handle Howard Hunt."

Mr. Bennett. Yes, that is accurate. The reference to the newspaper to my father was not accurate. We are talking about a coverup, Mr. Chairman. We are talking about a coverup of the Mullen Co.'s relationship with the CIA overseas. As I explained this morning, I have consistently attempted, prior to the time that it was blown by CBS News, to keep this relationship dark. I was convinced that the Ervin committee would not expose that relationship. I was not convinced that Howard would—that Howard might, very easily, get on the stand and, for some purpose connected with his own defense, expose Mr. Everett in [deleted.]

I was saying to the Agency . . . I am satisfied that the Ervin committee can be handled in terms of covering up the relationship between the Mullen Co. and the CIA. I said, "I cannot handle Howard.

That is your responsibility." That is the message that I was giving the CIA. (*Inquiry Into The Alleged Involvement Of The Central Intelligence Agency In The Watergate And Ellsberg Matters*, pp. 1082, 1105, 1106)

Robert Bennett, of course, knew that if the whole story came out it would bring embarrassment to both the Mormon Church and the CIA. In spite of his efforts to cover up the matter, the truth became known, and Jack Anderson, who is himself a member of the Mormon Church, revealed that Bennett knew of the "White House burglary-bugging team" before the Watergate break-in was discovered:

WASHINGTON — CIA front man Robert Bennett, son of veteran Sen. Wallace Bennett, R-Utah, has conceded that he knew a White House burglary-bugging team was on the prowl in advance of the celebrated Watergate break-in.

A secret memorandum, written by his CIA case officer, states the Senator's son withheld vital information from the authorities.

In an interview with my associate Les Whitten, Bennett acknowledged he knew at least three days before the Watergate burglary that White House aide E. Howard Hunt, and his second-story crew had plotted to break into the campaign headquarters of Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., and bug the place.

Instead of reporting the conspiracy to the police, Bennett kept his mouth shut. He also confided to his CIA contact that he had held back information from the original Watergate prosecutors when they later questioned him about the Watergate break-in.

This episode is another link in the mysterious CIA involvement in Watergate. We uncovered the first piece of the puzzle as early as April 7, 1973, when we reported that the CIA had "ordered its agents not to talk to the FBI about the explosive Watergate case." Thereafter, we published several reports about the CIA and Watergate, but the full story still hasn't been told. . . .

Bennett's nephew referred a Brigham Young University student, named Thomas Gregory, to Hunt who recruited the young man as a political spy. . . . Gregory went back to Bennett and explained his misgivings. As Bennett related it, Gregory had been told by Hunt to work late one night at McGovern headquarters and leave a door open so the White House burglars could sneak in.

Gregory informed Bennett that Hunt was "reporting to someone higher up." Hunt's White House connections impressed young Gregory. Bennett said he also felt Hunt would do nothing illegal because "he had a full-time lawyer advising him." The lawyer, it turned out, was Hunt's co-conspirator, G. Gordon Liddy. (*Deseret News*, June 25, 1974)

For a more complete statement about Bennett's cover-up see our publication, *Mormon Spies, Hughes And The C.I.A.*, pages 35-39.

At any rate, we think the most significant thing about James A. Everett's confession that he was a secret agent for the CIA is the new light it throws on Robert R. Mullen's book, *The Latter-day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today*. After we found that the Mullen Company provided cover for the CIA, we began to suspect that Mr. Mullen's book might have some connection to the CIA. Since the investigation by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the connection between the CIA and the publishing world has become known. The *New York Times* for April 27, 1976, reported that "Prior to 1967, the Central Intelligence Agency sponsored, subsidized or produced over 1,000 books: approximately 25 percent of them in English. In 1967 alone, the C.I.A. published or subsidized over 200 books, . . ." The Mullen book on the Mormons appeared in the fall of 1966, and was printed by "Doubleday & Company."

It is interesting to note that the Senate Select Committee found that another book “actually written by C.I.A. agents” was unwittingly published by Doubleday. This, of course, does not prove that the CIA had anything to do with Mullen’s book about the Mormons, but when we remember that Mullen provided cover for the CIA, we cannot help but be a little suspicious of any book which came from his public relations firm. Now, when we add to this the fact that CIA agent James Everett worked on foreign editions of the book on the Mormons the whole thing becomes even more intriguing. We became aware of Mr. Everett’s involvement with the Mullen book when we first talked to him on the telephone on October 7, 1974. At that time, of course, he was denying any connection between himself and the CIA. Now that we learn that Mr. Everett was really a secret agent, this takes on new significance. Why would a CIA spy be working on a book for the Mormons? Mr. Everett later explained that this work was just part of his cover and that it had no connection with the CIA. In other words, he needed a legitimate project to work on so that he could cover up his secret activities. This could very well be true, but then how can we be certain that it was not also a part of his CIA role? How do we know where to draw the line? In a conversation on May 29, 1976, Mr. Everett made a very revealing statement concerning his work on the Mullen book. He said that before the various translations were made, it was necessary to make certain changes to make the book fit each country and that he helped make these revisions. In other words, he had a part in the decision making process as to what should appear in each translation of the book. These revisions were then approved by Mr. Mullen.

The situation we have, then, is this: Robert Mullen, whose company provided cover for the CIA and helped to prepare literature for groups connected with the CIA, wrote a book promoting the interests of the Mormon Church. It was published by a company which had previously been unwittingly used by the CIA to print a book written by CIA agents. After Mr. Mullen’s book about the Mormons appeared in English, it was translated into foreign languages and a secret agent of the CIA, James A. Everett, helped to make revisions in the text to fit the various countries. Because of these strange circumstances, we cannot help but raise the question as to whether the CIA has some interest in the programs of the Mormon Church.

In the book, *Mormon Spies, Hughes And The C.I.A.*, pages 55 and 68, we pointed out that some former CIA agents believe that the Mormon missionary system is sometimes used to provide cover. Mr. Everett claims that this is “a lot of hogwash.” He indicated that the CIA would never use such young men. We, of course, agree that most missionaries would be too young, but there are certainly many that are old enough. Then, too, there are mission presidents who serve for a longer period. In an Associated Press story printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, we find the following:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has more than 30,000 missionaries worldwide, denies any connection with the CIA. But the confusion is understandable—the CIA does some of its most successful recruiting in predominantly Mormon Utah.

This summer, the CIA conducted an experimental radio advertising campaign in Utah. Charles Jackson, the CIA’s chief recruiting officer, said “well over 100 applicants responded to the radio spots.” . . .

“Utah is one of our good sources,” said Denver CIA recruiter Jack Hansen, now in Provo to recruit at BYU, whose student newspaper—the *Daily Universe*—is currently running CIA job advertisements. . . .

“We’ve never had any trouble placing anyone who has applied to the CIA,” said Dr. Gary Williams head of the BYU Asian Studies Department. “Every year, they take almost anybody who applies.”

Former Mormon missionaries have the three qualities the CIA wants: foreign language ability, training in a foreign culture and former residence in a foreign country, Williams said. . . .

Williams admitted that some governments are concerned about the “pretty good dose of returned missionaries who’ve gone back to the countries they were in, as Central Intelligence agents.”

He said Brazil was among the countries which have questioned the church about the number of former missionaries who’ve returned as CIA employees, and Taiwan had expressed concern because a mission president there had worked with the CIA several years prior to his church assignment. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, October 1, 1981)

The *Idaho Statesman*, which printed the same AP story on October 1, 1981, included a very interesting paragraph which did not appear in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

Young Mormons leaving on missions have been approached to work concurrently for the CIA, Williams said. He said he knew of none who had ever accepted.

Patrick J. McGarvey, who used to work for the CIA, claimed that he personally knew a man who used a missionary cover while working for the C.I.A. In his book, *C.I.A.: The Myth and the Madness*, page 57, McGarvey related: “Deep cover knows few bounds. . . . A friend found himself back in the Mormon mission in Hong Kong after his training.” While McGarvey’s book would seem to show that the church has been used to provide cover for CIA activities, we seriously doubt that the CIA would use a large number of Mormons while they are still serving on their missions. If very many were used, it would soon become generally known and the cover would not be effective. In any case, there can be no doubt that a large number of returned missionaries are being recruited to the CIA. On February 22, 1975, an employee of the CIA sent us a letter in which he stated:

I am currently employed with the Central Intelligence Agency and can attest to the fact that the Agency has been very fruitful in hiring Mormons, especially former missionaries.

. . . I would appreciate it if you would keep the above information in your confidence as to not using my name. I do not feel that I have given you any secret information but people can sometimes make something out of nothing.

The CIA would naturally be drawn to the Mormon missionary who has learned a foreign language and has had some experience in a foreign country. If the CIA already has a “surprising number” of Mormons in its employ at the present time, they will probably have a great many more in the future because the church is developing the “language center of the world” to train missionaries at Brigham Young University. In the BYU alumni paper we read:

It’s a profound combination: take BYU and add a multimillion dollar language center designed to teach at least 20 languages to 22,250 missionaries each year. The result is, as one observer conjured, the “language center of the world.” (*Brigham Young University Today*, August, 1974)

The church’s educational system and genealogical program could also be very useful to the CIA.

After reading our book, *Mormon Spies, Hughes and the C.I.A.*, Jim Kostman of the Assassination Information Bureau, an organization which has done research on the murder of John F. Kennedy, became so interested in the possibility of a Mormon-CIA relationship that he flew out from Massachusetts to talk with us. In the interview, Mr. Kostman told us he talked with a man who had been involved with the CIA. This man claimed that when he was trying to locate a piece of

equipment belonging to the CIA, he was told that it was on loan to the Mormon Church Genealogical Department, and that the church did a great deal for the CIA.

In the January 1975 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* we reported that a man who had taught at the Brigham Young University told us that the church's educational system contains a large number of men who have been involved in the CIA or FBI. Later we found evidence that even the church's commissioner of education, Dr. Neal A. Maxwell, was at one time connected with the CIA. In the Brigham Young University's paper *The Daily Universe* we found the following: "Dr. Neal A. Maxwell, church commissioner of education . . . served for two years with the United States Central Intelligence Agency" (*Daily Universe*, February 23, 1971). According to the *Deseret News*, Church Section, for November 14, 1964, Dr. Maxwell served as an assistant to Senator Bennett after he left the CIA: "From 1952-54 he served with the Central Intelligence Agency and from 1954-56 was legislative assistant to Sen. Wallace F. Bennett, R-Utah." This is very interesting in light of the fact that Sen. Bennett's son, Robert, later ran the Mullen Company which served as a CIA front while handling public relations for the church. After we publicized the information about Maxwell's involvement with the CIA, a television station picked up the story. Although it may have only been a coincidence, shortly after this he was removed from his job as commissioner of education. Since that time, however, he has become one of the highest leaders in the Mormon Church. On

July 24, 1981, the *Salt Lake Tribune* announced that he had been moved up to become a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles. In addition, Bob Gottlieb and Peter Wiley report that Maxwell is on the church's Special Affairs Committee:

Recently, the church organized the Special Affairs Committee to deal with issues, particularly national and international issues, that might "impact on church interests," as one key church operative put it. The committee consists of former railroad executive Gordon Hinckley, former Mayor of Palo Alto, California, James Faust and former Central Intelligence Agency man and University of Utah vice president Neal Maxwell. . . . A number of politicians told us that they "cleared" their candidacies with the Special Affairs Committee to at least assure that the church would not oppose them, since its opposition is considered the kiss of death in Utah politics. (*The Nation*, August 16-23, 1980, pp. 151-152)

While any direct connection between the Mormon Church and the CIA would be very difficult to prove, the circumstances surrounding the publication of Robert Mullen's book tend to make us very suspicious. The reader will remember that *The Latter-day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today* was written by a man who prepared material for organizations linked to the CIA, and since a secret agent worked on foreign editions, we cannot help but suspect that it is in some way connected with the interests of the CIA. We feel that this whole matter needs further investigation to determine if there has been a secret attempt to link church and state through the CIA. For more information on this important subject we recommend our book, *Mormon Spies, Hughes and the C.I.A.*





## 28. The Danites

John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

Joseph Smith, Jr., S. Rigdon, and Hyrum Smith moved their families to this place, Far West, in the spring of 1838. As soon as they came here, they began to enforce their new organized plan, which caused dissensions and difficulties, threatenings and even murders. Smith called a council of the leaders together, in which council he stated that any person who said a word against the heads of the Church, should be driven over these prairies as a chased deer by a pack of hounds, having an illusion to the Gideonites, as they were termed, to justify themselves in their wicked designs. Thus on the 19th of June, 1838, they preached a sermon called the **salt sermon**, in which these Gideonites understood that they should **drive the dissenters**, as they termed those who believed not in their secret bands, in fornication, adultery or midnight machinations. . . . They had threatened us, **to kill us**, if we did not make restitutions to them, by upholding them in their wicked purposes and designs. . . . But to our great astonishment, when we were on our way home from Liberty, Clay County, we met the families of Oliver Cowdery and L. E. Johnson, whom **they had driven from their homes**, and robbed them of all their goods, save clothing, bedding, etc.

While we were gone Jo. and Rigdon and their band of Gadaiatons kept up a guard, and watched our houses, and abused our families, and threatened them, if they were not gone by morning, they would be **drove out, and threatened our lives**, if they ever saw us in Far West. (*John Whitmer's History*, p. 22)

In a manuscript written in 1839, Reed Peck gives this information:

The people of the surrounding country were still friendly & harmony prevailed among the Mormons till the middle of June when the enmity of the two parties from Kirtland manifested itself to an alarming degree At this period measures were conserted no doubt by instigation of the presidency to free the community of the Cowderies, Whitmers, Lyman Johnson and some others, to effect which a secret meeting was called at Far West, by Jared Carter and Dimick B. Huntington two of Smiths greatest courtiers where a proposition was made and supported by some as being the best policy to **kill these men** that they would not be capable of injuring the church. . . . the Sunday following (June 17th) in the presence of a large congregation— S. Rigdon took his text from the fifth chapter of Mathew “Ye are the salt of the Earth but if the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted, it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and be trodden under foot of men” From this scripture he undertook to prove that when men embrace the gospel and afterwards lose their faith it is the duty of the Saints to trample them under their feet . . . and called on the people to rise en masse and **rid the county of such a nuisance** He said it is the duty of this people to **trample them into the earth** and if the county cannot be freed from them any other way **I will assist to trample them down or to erect a gallows on the square of Far West and hang them up** as they did the gamblers at Vicksburgh and it would be an act at which the angels would smile

with approbation Joseph Smith in a short speech **sanctioned** what had been said by Rigdon, though said he I don't want the brethren to act unlawfully but will tell them one thing Judas was a traitor and in stead of hanging himself **was hung by Peter**, and with this **hint** the subject was dropped for the day . . . On the next Tuesday these dissenters as they were termed were informed that preparation[s] were being made **to hang the[m] up** and if they did not escape their lives would be taken before night, . . . The wrath of the presidency and the threats of han[g]ing &c. were undoubtedly a farce acted to frighten these men from the county that they could not be spies upon their conduct or that they might deprive them of their property and indeed the proceedings of the presidency and others engaged in this affair fully justify the latter conclusion, . . . (“The Reed Peck Manuscript,” dated Sept. 18, 1839, University of Utah, pp. 6-7 of typed copy)

William Harris made this statement concerning the Salt Sermon:

About this time, Rigdon preached his famous “salt sermon.” . . . He informed the Mormons that the church was the salt; that dissenters were the salt that had lost its savor, and that **they were literally to be trodden under the feet of the church, until their bowels should be gushed out**. In order to give weight to this interpretation, he attempted to sustain his position from the Bible! He referred to the case of Judas, informing the people that he did not fall headlong and his bowels gush out, without assistance, but that the **apostles threw him, and with their feet trampled them out!** He also said that Ananias and Sapphira his wife, did not fall down dead, as translated; but that **Peter and John slew them**, and the young men, or deacons, carried them out and buried them. (*Mormonism Portrayed*, by William Harris, Warsaw, Ill., 1841, pp. 32-33)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts frankly admitted that Sidney Rigdon, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, preached the “*Salt Sermon*”:

Sometime in June Elder Sidney Rigdon delivered what was afterwards called his “Salt Sermon,” . . .

The doctrine of the text the speaker applied to the dissenting brethren and intimated that the “trodden under foot of men” should be **literal**, much to the scandalizing of the church, since the dissenters made capital of it to prejudice the minds of the non-“Mormons” of the surrounding counties. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1930, vol. 1, p. 438)

After telling of the “Salt Sermon,” B. H. Roberts stated:

This, unfortunately, was followed shortly afterwards by a communication drawn up by Elder Rigdon, it is said, and addressed to the leading dissenters, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, William W. Phelps and Lyman E. Johnson, commanding them to leave Caldwell county within three days under penalty of a “**more fatal calamity**” befalling them if they refused to depart. The document was signed by eighty-four men, more or

less prominent in the church, but neither the Prophet's nor Sidney Rigdon's name is included among the signatures. This action was undoubtedly a **departure from that strict adherence to legal procedure** for which the church must stand or else accept the doctrine of the "old settlers" of Jackson county that there exists with the community, outside of legal procedure, the right to expel undesirable people from that community. . . . Those eighty-four citizens of Caldwell county were **not justified in taking the law into their own hands** and under **threats of vengeance** driving these dissenters from Far West, for that was the effect of these threats. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 438-439)

The letter to the dissenters was reproduced in *Senate Document 189*. In this letter we find the following:

"To Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, William W. Phelps, and Lyman E. Johnson, greeting:

"Whereas the citizens of Caldwell county have borne with the abuse received from you . . . having exhausted all the patience they have, . . . **out of the county you shall go**, and no power shall save you. And you shall have three days after you receive this communication to you, including twenty-four hours in each day, for you to depart **with your families** peaceably; which you may do undisturbed by any person; but in that time, if you do not depart, we will use the means in our power to cause you to depart; **for go you shall**. . . . vengeance sleepeth not, neither does it slumber; and unless you heed us this time, and attend to our request, it will overtake you at an hour when you do not expect, and at a day when you do not look for it; and for you there **shall be no escape**; for there is but one decree for you, which is **depart, depart, or a more fatal calamity shall befall you**. . . . we will put you from the county of Caldwell: so help us God." (*Senate Document 189*, 26th Congress, 2d Session, February 15, 1841, pp. 6, 7, 9)

Ebenezer Robinson tells that this letter was "signed by 83 determined men. Among the names we recognize some of the members of the High Council, and others holding high positions in the church, including that of **Hyrum Smith, one of the First Presidency**" (*The Return*, October 1889, typed copy, p. 51).

Reed Peck wrote the following:

We found that the events of a few days had placed Caldwell County unde[r] a despotic government where even liberty of speech was denied to those not willing to unite in support of the New Order . . . A friend of long standing . . . said that if **Joseph Smith should tell him to cut my throat he would do it** without hesitation . . .

A few individuals of us were ever after this opposed to the rule of the presidency perceiving that all spiritual and temporal affairs were under their control and no monarch on earth ever had supreme power over his subjects more than they over the inhabitants of Caldwell county only they durst not exercise it to so great a degree. Their word was law in religious civil and military matters, . . . In the latter part of June a young man from Ohio having reported something about J Smith & S Rigdon, was taken by constable D. B. Huntington Geo W Robinson and a few others compelled to sign a libel & **kneel before S. Rigdon** and ask pardon as the only alternative to escape a **caining** from the constable who held his staff over him in an attitude for striking until he bent the knee . . . (*The Reed Peck Manuscript*, pp. 7-9)

Reed Peck also stated:

John Corrill observed to a person in Far West that he did not "think it his duty to unite with the firm and that he had no confidence in the revelation that required it" Joseph Smith and S Rigdon learning that he had made this observation, chid him severely for his rebellion in the presence of several persons Smith said to him "if you tell about the streets again that you do not believe this or that revelation **I will walk on your neck** Sir" at the same time smiting his fists to evince his great rage He talked of dissenters and cited us to the case of

Judas, saying that Peter told him in a conversation a few days ago that himself **hung Judas** for betraying Christ He also said "if you do not act differently and show yourself approved you shall never be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven—I will stand at the entrance and oppose you myself and will keep you out if I have to take a fisty cuff in doing it." (*Ibid.*, p. 13)

## Origin of the Danites

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838, God spake to me again by his own voice, from the heavens, and told me to "separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them." In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into error and blindness. . . . In June, 1838, at Far West, Mo., **a secret organization was formed**, Doctor Avard being put in as the leader of the band; a certain oath was to be administered to all the brethren to bind them to support the heads of the church in everything they should teach. **All who refused to take this oath were considered dissenters from the church, and certain things were to be done concerning these dissenters, by Dr. Avard's secret band**. . . . my persecutions, for trying to show them their errors, became of such a nature that I had to leave the Latter Day Saints; and as I rode on horseback out of Far West, in June 1838, the voice of God from heaven spake to me as I have stated above. I was called out to hold the authority which God gave me! (*An Address To All Believers In Christ*, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., 1887, pp. 27-28)

In the *Comprehensive History of the Church*, the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gives us the following information concerning the secret band known as the Danites:

It is in this testimony and principally in the statement of Dr. Avard, that **the existence of the "Danites" in the "Mormon" church is affirmed**. Avard declared that about four months before the date of his testimony,—which would be in the month of July, 1838—"a band called the 'Daughter of Zion' (afterwards called the 'Danite Band') was formed of the **members** of the Mormon church, the original object of which was to drive from the county of Caldwell all those who dissented from the Mormon church; in which they succeeded admirably and to the satisfaction of all concerned." (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 500-501)

Reed Peck gives this interesting information concerning the Danite Band:

Some time previous to this secret meetings had been held in F West . . . I atten[ded] one about the last of June and heard a full disclosure of its object—Jared Carter Geo W. Robinson and Sampson Avard, under the instruction of the presidency, had formed a secret military society, called the "daughter of Zion". . . "When any thing is to be performed no member shall have the privilege of judging whether it would be right or wrong but shall engage in its accomplishment and trust God for the result

"It is not our business or place to know what is required by God, but he will inform us by means of the prophet and we must perform If any one of you see a member of the band in difficulty in the surrounding country contending for instance with an enemy, you shall extricate him **even if in the wrong** if you have to do with his adversary as Moses did with the Egyptian **put him under the sand** and both pack off to Far West and we will take care of the matter ourselves. No person shall be suffered to speak evil or disrespectfully of the presidency The secret signs and purposes of the society are not to be revealed on pain of **death**" &c &c About 50 persons were initiated into the Society at the time I

was introduced . . .

I was appointed Adjutant of the band . . . though I declared to my trusty friends that I would never act in the office—All the principles of the Society tended to give the presidency unlimited power over the property, persons and I might say with propriety **lives** of the members of the church as physical force was to be resorte[d] to if necessary to accomplish their designs **The blood of my best friend must flow by my own hands if I would be a faithful Danite should the prophet command it** Said A McRae in my hearing “If Joseph should tell me to **kill** Vanburen in his presidential chair I would immediately start and do my best to assassinate him let the consequences be as they would—” . . . Captains of fifties & Captains of tens and all these officers with the privates were to be under the administration of the presidency of the church and wholly subject to their control At a meeting for the organization of the Danites Sampson Avard presented the society **to the presidency** who blessed them and accepted their services as though they were soon to be employed in executing some great design They also made speeches to the society in which great military glory and conquest were represented as a waiting them. . . . In the fore part of July the “brother of Gideon” or Jared Carter Capt Genl of the Danites having complained to Joseph Smith of some observations made by Sidney Rigdon in a sermon was tried for finding fault with one of the presidency and deprived of his station and Elias Higbee was appointed in his stead

Carter’s punishment according to the principles of the Danites should have been **death** In the evening after the trial . . . D. B. Huntington stated that **Joseph declared during the examination that he should have cut Carter’s throat on the spot** if he had been alone when he made the complaint Huntington also said that on his trial Carter came within a finger point of **losing his head**. Sampson Avard related at the same time the arrangements that had been made by the presidency and officers present at the trial respecting the dissenters— Said he, “all the head officers are to be furnished by the presidency with a list of dissenters both in Ohio and Missouri and if for example I meet with one of them who is damning and cursing the presidency, I can curse them too and if he will drink I can get him a bowl of brandy and after a while take him by the arm and get him one side in the brush when **I will into his guts in a minute and put him under the sod**. When an officer has disposed of a dissenter in this way he shall inform the presidency, and them only with whom it shall remain an inviolable secret. In July the law of consecration took effect which required every person to give up to the bishop all surplus property of every description not necessary for their present support Sampson Avard the most busy actor and sharpest tool of the Presidency informed John Corrill and Myself that “all persons who attempted to deceive and retain property that should be given up would meet with the fate of Ananias and Saphira who were **killed by Peter!**” (*The Reed Peck Manuscript*, pp. 9-12)

In his dissertation written at Brigham Young University, Leland Gentry gave the following information:

The Band went by several titles. In its initial stage, it was referred to as the “Big Fan” or “Brothers of Gideon,” while it was known as the “Daughters of Zion” in its second phase. Somewhere along the line, the term “Danite” was adopted, . . . There were about **three hundred men belonging to the Danite order**. . . . meetings were secretive and carefully guarded. . . . Members of the Organization were placed under solemn covenant and a penalty of death not to reveal any secrets committed to them. . . .

Secret signs and tokens of recognition were taught, enabling Danites to detect a friend under any circumstances. The “Signal of distress,” once given, must be responded to, even at the risk of certain death. . . .

Avard took advantage of important Latter-day Saint teachings to further the growth of his Danite band. He taught his followers that they were living in a “new and different dispensation,” one in which the Kingdom of God would break in pieces and consume all earthly kingdoms. The duty of all noble and loyal Danites was to waste

away the Gentiles by stealing their goods and consecrating them to the Kingdom of God. If any questioned this procedure, the reply was given that the earth is the Lord’s not man’s, and that the laws of the land do not apply when one commits himself to God alone. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri*, pp. 362-364)

## Attempted Explanations

Mormon writers have been somewhat divided concerning the Danite Band. Some have denied that it even existed. Others have admitted its existence but denied that Joseph Smith was connected with it. Still others have admitted that it existed and had church approval.

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett stated:

Writers to this day who should know better bring in this Danite band which never existed. John Taylor to Vice President Colfax said when the Danite story was brought up, “I was there and knew to the contrary; and so did the people of Missouri, and so did the Governor.” (*More Remarkable Stories of How We Got The Revelations in The Doctrine and Covenants*, Extension Publications, B.Y.U., p. 20)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, also stated:

I have heard a good deal about Danites, but I never heard of them among the Latter-day Saints. If there was such an organization, I never was made acquainted with it . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 168, footnote)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe, on the other hand, admitted that Dr. Avard tried to organize a secret band but denied that the church supported it (see *Gospel Interpretations*, by John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake, 1947, pp. 245-250).

The Mormonologist Hugh Nibley states: “It is significant that those who have written on the Danites, from Bennett to Brooks, have not bothered to mention that the earliest and fullest discussion of the subject is by Joseph Smith himself. Is it not odd that they will not consider this account—. . .” (*Sounding Brass*, by Hugh Nibley, Salt Lake City, 1963, p. 217). The statement Dr. Nibley refers to is found in the *History of the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 178-182:

. . . Satan himself was no less busy in striving to stir up mischief in the camp of the Saints: and among the most conspicuous of his willing devotees was one Doctor Sampson Avard, . . . he stated that he had the sanction of the heads of the Church for what he was about to do; and by his smiles and flattery, persuaded them to believe it, and proceeded to administer to the few under his control, an oath, binding them to everlasting secrecy to everything which should be communicated to them by himself. Thus Avard initiated members into his band, firmly binding them, by all that was sacred, . . . and would often affirm to his company that the principal men of the Church had put him forward as a spokesman, and a leader of this band, which he named **Danites**.

Thus he duped many, . . . He held his meetings daily, and carried on his crafty work in great haste, to prevent mature reflection upon the matter by his followers, until he had them bound under the penalties of death to keep the secrets and certain signs of the organization by which they were to know each other by day or night.

After those performances, he held meetings to organize his men into companies of tens and fifties, appointing a captain over each company. . . . he then called his captains together and taught them in a secluded place, as follows:

*Avard’s Instructions to His Captains.*

My brethren, as you have been chosen to be our leading men, our captains to rule over this last kingdom of Jesus Christ—and you have been organized after the ancient order—I have called upon you here today to teach you, and instruct you in the things that pertain to your



duty, and to show you what your privileges are, . . . Know ye not, brethren, that it soon will be your privilege to take your respective companies and go out on a scout on the borders of the settlements, and take to yourselves spoils of the goods of the ungodly Gentiles? for it is written, the riches of the Gentiles shall be consecrated to my people, the house of Israel; and thus you will waste away the Gentiles by robbing and plundering them of their property; and in this way we will build up the kingdom of God, and roll forth the little stone that Daniel saw cut out of the mountain without hands, . . . If our enemies swear against us, we can swear also. . . . I would swear to a lie to clear any of you; and if this would not do, I would put them or him under the sand as Moses did the Egyptian; and in this way we will consecrate much unto the Lord, and build up His kingdom; . . . And if any one of this Danite society reveals any of these things, I will put him where the dogs *cannot bite him*.

At this lecture all of the officers revolted, . . .

Avard's teachings were still manfully rejected by all . . . the eyes of those present were opened, Avard's craft was no longer in the dark, and but very little confidence was placed in him, even by the warmest of the members of his Danite scheme.

When a knowledge of Avard's rascality came to the Presidency of the Church, he was cut off from the Church, and every means proper used to destroy his influence, at which he was highly incensed, and went about whispering his evil insinuations, but finding every effort unavailing, he again turned conspirator, and sought to make friends with the mob.

And here let it be distinctly understood, that these companies of tens and fifties got up by Avard, were **altogether separate and distinct** from those companies of tens and fifties organized by the brethren for **self defense**, in case of an attack from the mob. . . . Therefore, let no one hereafter, by mistake or design, confound this organization of the Church for good and righteous purposes, with the organization of the "Danites," of the apostate Avard, which **died almost before it existed**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 178-182)

There are several reasons why this statement attributed to Joseph Smith cannot be accepted. One of the most important is that it contradicts another statement made by him on January 3, 1844:

The **Danite system** alluded to by Norton **never had any existence**. It was a term made use of by **some of the brethren** in Far West, and grew out of an expression **I made use of** when the brethren were preparing to defend themselves from the Missouri mob, in reference to the stealing of Macaiah's images (Judges chapter 18)—If the enemy comes, **the Danites** will be after them, meaning **the brethren** in self defense. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 165)

Notice that in the first statement Joseph Smith admits that there was a Danite Band, whereas in the second he denies its existence. Furthermore, in the first statement he claims that Avard named the group "Danites," but in the second he states that it "was a term made use of by some of the brethren in Far West, and grew out of an expression **I made use of**."

Toward the end of the first statement Joseph Smith says that the "companies of tens and fifties got up by Avard, were altogether separate and distinct from those companies of tens and fifties organized by the brethren for self defense, in case of an attack from the mob." He also states:

Therefore, let no one hereafter, by mistake or design, confound this organization of the Church for good and righteous purposes, with the organization of the "Danites," of the apostate Avard, which died almost before it had existed.

While it is true that there were two organizations—i.e., the "Danites" and the "Armies of Israel"—the two were not really as "separate and distinct" from each other as Joseph Smith would have us believe. Actually, the Danites served in the "Armies of Israel." The Mormon writer Leland Gentry states:

The so-called "**Armies of Israel**" created at Far West and Adam-ondi-Ahman by order of General Alexander Doniphan were later confused with the **Danites**. The confusion was natural, since both groups were broken down into smaller units and since **many Danites also belonged to the legitimate militia**. The latter made no visible attempt, apparently, to distinguish between their services for one group or the other. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, BYU Thesis, 1965, p. 362)

Thus we see that the "Danites" and the "Armies of Israel" were not really so distinct. In the first statement concerning the Danites Joseph Smith stated:

When a knowledge of Avard's rascality came to the Presidency of the Church, he was cut off from the Church, and every means proper used to destroy his influence, at which he was highly incensed, and went about whispering his evil insinuations, but finding every effort unavailing, he again turned conspirator, and sought to make friends with the mob. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 181)

It does not take much research to show that this statement is completely false. Leland Gentry admits that the Danites were in existence in June, 1838, but Avard was not excommunicated until March, 1839. In an extract from the minutes of a conference held March 17, 1839, we read:

. . . elder George W. Harris made some remarks relative to those who had left us . . . After the conference fully expressed their feelings upon the subject, it was unanimously voted that the following persons be **excommunicated** from the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, viz: George M. Hinckle, **Sampson Avard**, John Corrill, Reed Peck, Wm. W. Phelps, Frederick G. Williams, Thomas B. Marsh, Burr Riggs, and several others. After which the conference closed by prayer. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 1, p. 15)

Thus we see that Joseph Smith's statement is completely untrue. Joseph Smith stated that as soon as the presidency found out about Avard's teachings they excommunicated him and then he turned conspirator and "sought to make friends with the mob." What actually happened was that the presidency were well aware of Avard's teachings and supported him. When Avard was later arrested, he turned against the church and testified against Joseph Smith. According to the *History of the Church* his testimony was given on November 13, 1838 (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 209). It was three months after his testimony against the church that he was finally excommunicated.

In spite of these facts, Mormon writers still continue to propagate this untruthful story. President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

These Danites did subscribe to some oath of vengeance on their enemies. However, as soon as Joseph Smith discovered what was going on, he put a stop to it and Avard was excommunicated. (*Essentials in Church History*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 227)

Dr. Hugh Nibley quotes Lorenzo Dow Young, who told a similar falsehood:

"From the meeting I went directly to Brother Brigham and related the whole history of the affair. He said he had **long suspected** that something wrong was going on, but had seen no direct development. He added we will go at once to brother Joseph who **has suspected** that some secret wickedness was being carried on by Dr. Avard. Dr. Avard was **at once** cited before the authorities of the Church and cut off for his wickedness. He turned a bitter enemy of the saints." (*Sounding Brass*, by Hugh Nibley, p. 220)

From the information quoted above it is very obvious why we cannot believe Joseph Smith's statement concerning the Danites.

## Joseph Smith to Blame

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett admits that "Such a band as the 'Danites' **did exist**, as historians affirm; . . .

The organization had been for the purpose of **plundering and murdering** the enemies of the Saints (*The Restored Church*, by William E. Berrett, Salt Lake City, 1956, pp. 197-198).

Although Mr. Berrett admits that the Danite band did exist, and that it was for the purpose of “plundering and murdering the enemies of the Saints,” he claims that the Mormon Church leaders were not responsible for it being formed. While many Mormons would like to believe that Joseph Smith was not responsible for the Danite band, the evidence shows that he was to blame. David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, claimed that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were responsible. In an interview, which was published in the *Kansas City Daily Journal*, David Whitmer stated:

... they issued a decree organizing what was termed the “Danites, or Destroying Angels,” who were bound by the most fearful oaths to obey the commandments of the leaders of the church. **The Danites consisted only of those selected by Smith and Rigdon.** They t[h]reatened myself, John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery and Lyman Johnson with **the vengeance of the Danites** . . . (*Kansas City Daily Journal*, June 5, 1881)

The Mormon argument that Joseph Smith had nothing to do with the Danites breaks down rapidly when we begin to examine the facts. Several men who had been members of the Mormon Church testified that the Danites were supported by the church. Thomas B. Marsh, who had been President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, made this statement in an affidavit given October 24, 1838:

“They have among them a company, considered true Mormons, called the Danites, who have taken an oath to support the heads of the Church in all things that they say or do, whether right or wrong. Many, however, of this band are much dissatisfied with this oath, as being against moral and religious principles.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 167, footnote)

Even some of those who remained faithful admitted that the Danites were a church organization. Oliver Boardman Huntington stated the following in his diary:

But a few weeks before, and but a few rods from this same place, I first formed a knowledge, and took the first mystic step in the new and unknown bonds of **the brothers and ites of Dan**; entered an apprentice in the divine brotherly union; . . . This society of **Danites** was condemned by the public like the rest of Mormonism; . . . (Diary of Oliver Boardman Huntington, vol. 1, p. 36, typed copy at Utah State Historical Society)

The following is found in the *Biographical Sketch of Luman Andros Shurtliff*:

About this time I was invited to unite with a society called the **Danite** society. It was got up for our personal defense, also for the protection of our families, property and religion. Signs and pass words were given by which members could know the other wherever they met, night or day. (*Biographical Sketch of Luman Andros Shurtliff*, p. 32, Utah State Historical Society)

The memory of the “Danites” was not soon forgotten. On September 22, 1846, the Nauvoo Legion was taken through “the old Missouri Danite drill.” Hosea Stout records the following in his journal:

We then had a drill muster for an (h)our or so. I took the command by order of the Col. After drilling a while **I took them through the old Missouri Danite drill.** (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, University of Utah Press, 1964, vol. 1, p. 197)

On another occasion Hosea Stout wrote:

Saturday March 21st 1846. This morning some of the teams began to move . . . we then went on again performing as we rode some Danite evolutions of horsemanship as practised in the War in Davis County Missouri in the fall of 1838. (*Ibid.*, pp. 140-141)

Under the date of June 5, 1847, Hosea Stout wrote:

To day the Omahas were to come in & I was ordered to meet them . . .

We received them as usual formed on horse back according to the **Danite** system of horsemanship and consequently I was in the center of the line (*Ibid.*, p. 259)

In a footnote on page 141 of the same volume, Juanita Brooks states:

17. These “Danite evolutions of horsemanship” are mentioned several times by Stout, Lee and other contemporary writers. Some were used in southern Utah as a part of parades and celebrations as late as the 1860’s.

After the Mormons arrived in Utah, Brigham Young made this statement:

If men come here and do not behave themselves, they will not only find the **Danites**, whom they talk so much about, biting the horses’ heels, but the scoundrels will find them biting their heels. In my plain remarks, I merely call things by their **right names**. Brother Kimball is noted in the States for calling things by their right names, and you will excuse me if I do the same. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 6)

## Stealing From the Gentiles

In his book, *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, Leland Gentry claims that Joseph Smith was not fully aware of what Dr. Avarad was doing. On page 322 he states:

In time, however, under the leadership of Avarad, the movement assumed a third purpose entirely foreign to the spirit of Mormonism; stealing from the Gentiles. . . . During the very trying period known as the “Mormon War,” some of the Danites did rob their enemies’ homes and then consecrated the property thus taken as “spoils of war.” “It was frequently observed among the troops,” said John Clemenson, “that the time had come when the riches of the Gentiles should be consecrated to the Saints.”

While the argument that stealing is “foreign to the spirit of Mormonism” may sound quite convincing to Mormons today, it does not hold much water for those who are well versed in early Mormon history. Mary Ettie V. Smith, for instance, stated that the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde received goods which were taken from the Gentiles while the Mormons were on the way to Utah:

The horses, and other booty purchased or stolen, was forwarded at once to Kanesville, and was there received by Orson Hyde, who, after assorting it, forwarded it on to the plains, or made such disposition of it as would place it beyond the reach of the Gentiles, in case suspicion should be directed towards them. Orson Hyde is one of the “Twelve Apostles,” and is often in the States. There are now many persons living by whom these facts can be proved. (*Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress, And Present Condition. Embracing The Narrative Of Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith, Of Her Residence And Experience Of Fifteen Years With The Mormons*, Hartford, 1870, p. 107)

Mrs. Smith also charged that Bill Hickman was involved in this stealing from the Gentiles:

Somewhat along in the evening, William Hickman, one of the “Danites,” came to the cabin door, . . . He had not heard that our child was dead. Hickman said: “This will make it bad for us; but what a splendid night for our expedition, and things are in such a shape we cannot put it off?”

Wallace pointed to our dead baby, under the window, and made no reply.

“Yes,” said Hickman, “I see that is serious. But we must go.” . . . Hickman, although somewhat embarrassed, said they would fasten the door, as well as they could, but Wallace must go, and it was time they were there already; and, taking him by the arm, hurried him away, and they left me alone with my dead child. (*Ibid.*, pp. 70-71)

On pages 76-77 of the same book, Mrs. Smith stated:

I asked Wallace, a few days after, where he went the night he left me with the wolves, and went with William Hickman. . . .

Wallace said, “the President of the ‘stake,’ David Fulmer [Fulmer?], had received the information, that a Gentile family by the name of Martin, were about to pass Garden Grove . . . and that they had a great many cattle and horses. . . .



“The ‘Danites’ were therefore . . . to intercept him, and take Martin’s stock...which we accordingly did—Hickman and myself, with some others. . . .” In reply to another question, he said, “If the emigrants, when they lose their cattle, go on, and do not run against their fate by making us too much trouble, in looking for, or in the attempt to recover them, they are not harmed; *otherwise they are put out of the way.*”

While these charges may seem incredible to a Mormon today, they are well within the realm of possibility. That the early Mormon leaders approved of stealing from the Gentiles is made very plain in the journal of John Bennion. In 1860 Bennion felt that William Hickman—this is the same man spoken of by Mrs. Smith—should be punished for his evil deeds, but he soon learned that Bishop Gardiner “had been bound & could not act” against Hickman and that Orson Hyde—President of the Twelve Apostles and the man whom Mrs. Smith accuses of receiving stolen property—taught that a man should **not** be punished for stealing from the “gentiles.” The following is taken from Bennion’s journal:

Sat 13 went to the city met Bp Gardiner had a talk with him about **W. A. Hickmans wicked course** for some time past he said that up till now he had **been bound & could not act** I told him I was not bound neither was I afraid to expose the whickedness of any man that it was my duty to expose we got home about sun down in the evening I met with Bp & councillors & parties concerned [to] try George Hickman for stealing mules when about to commence trial **Elder Hyde** come in and by Bp Gardners solicitation he preached and the trial was **postponed** after meeting Bp council & **Elder Hyde** had a long talk in my house br **Hyde** said **speaking of stealing** that a man may **steal & be influenced by the Spirit of the Lord to do it** that **Hickman had done it years past** said that he **never would institute a trial against a brother for stealing from the gentiles** but stealing from his brethren he was down on it he laid down much teaching on the subject

S 14th went to meeting at the mill to hear br **Hyde** . . . he give much good instruction spoke on last nights intention to try Hickman give it as **the word of the Lord to set him free** for the past, bid him go & sin no more. (“John Bennion Journal,” October 13 and 14, 1860, original journal at Utah State Historical Society)

Since this evidence comes from John Bennion’s journal—not from an anti-Mormon source—it cannot be easily dismissed.

On page 339 of his book, *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, Leland Gentry says: “Danites were apparently taught to obey the commands of their superiors **without question** or hesitation.” While such a teaching may seem extreme today, in the early period of Mormon history it was publicly taught. Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor to Brigham Young, once said that “if you are told by your leader to do a thing, do it, **none of your business whether it is right or wrong**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 32). On another occasion he said that if a person does things “according to counsel and **they are wrong, the consequences will fall on the heads of those who counseled you, so don’t be troubled**” (*William Clayton’s Journal*, p. 334).

Since the Mormon people were receiving this type of teaching from their leaders it is no surprise that they allowed themselves to be bound by oaths not to reveal the secrets of the Danite society. Leland Gentry made this statement:

The organization was characterized by secret oaths, signs, and penalties for infraction of Danite covenants; promises were exchanged to protect or to help a fellow Danite regardless of the cost or circumstances, such action to be taken without question or hesitation. Those who joined the Order became so involved that it was impossible for them to withdraw without endangering their lives. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 730)

## Cutting Throats

It is very interesting to note that Orson Hyde, one of the Twelve Apostles in the Mormon Church, became very upset at Sidney Rigdon after Joseph Smith’s death, and accused him of teaching murder when the Mormons were in Far West. The following statement by Orson Hyde appeared in the Mormon newspaper, the *Nauvoo Neighbor*:

Elder Rigdon has been associated with Joseph and Hyrum Smith as a **counselor to the church**, and he told me in Far West that it was the imperative of the Church to obey the word of Joseph Smith, or the presidency, without question or inquiry, and that if there were any that would not, **they should have their throats cut** from ear [to] ear. (*The Nauvoo Neighbor*, December 4, 1844)

This was a very damaging admission to make. Since Sidney Rigdon was a counselor to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency, it would be almost impossible to believe that Joseph Smith was not aware of what was going on.

Although Leland Gentry will not admit that Joseph Smith was involved with the Danites, he is almost forced to admit that Sidney Rigdon had something to do with them. On page 348 of his book, *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, he states:

Sidney Rigdon’s connection with the Danites is also buried in mystery. Although he denied that neither he or Joseph Smith belonged to the Order, statements are credited to him during this period which have strong Danite overtones. Rigdon’s biographer, Daryl Chase, allows that while the testimony given against Rigdon at the trial was one-sided, it does show that he “was one of the chief storm-centers on the Mormon side.”

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen frankly admits that Sidney Rigdon helped organize the Danite Band:

Sampson Avard, with the connivance and encouragement of Sidney Rigdon, had organized a secret military organization bound together by oaths and secret passwords. . . . Ostensibly, Avard had organized the band in self-defense against the depredations of the Missourians. But his real intentions went farther, and must be identified with **Smith’s ambitions** to establish the political kingdom of God. Although the prophet repudiated Avard’s excessive zeal and excommunicated him from the church, there can be no question that the germ for Avard’s ideas must be sought in ideas that originated with the leader of Mormonism himself. (*Quest for Empire*, by Klaus J. Hansen, pp. 57-58)

The Mormon argument that Joseph Smith was not aware of the Danite Band really begins to break down when the Mormon writer Leland Gentry has to admit that the First Presidency—including Joseph Smith—attended a Danite meeting:

Increased pressures from doubtful **Danites** resulted in the only visit **Joseph or Hyrum Smith** ever made to **Danite meetings**. It is possible that Sidney Rigdon may have visited more than once. Avard informed those present at the meeting that “he had procured the **Presidency** to come there to show that what he had been doing was according to their direction and will.” However, adds Peck, Avard “did not explain to the Presidency” before the assembly “what his teachings had been in that society.” John Clemenson, also present for the same occasion, testified as follows:

The three composing the **Presidency** was at one of those meetings, and to satisfy the people, Dr. Avard called on **Joseph Smith, Jr.**, who gave them a pledge that if he led them into difficulty, he would give them his head for a football and that it was the will of God these things should be so. The teacher and active agent of the society, [however], was Dr. Avard.

It will be recalled that the Danite organization went through three stages of development, the longest of which



was the second stage, namely, self-protection from mob violence. . . .

It was during the very early period of stage number two that the **First Presidency** visited a **Danite meeting** at Avarð's request. Although Avarð "did not explain to the Presidency what his teachings had been in the society," he did justify its right to existence on the grounds that it was organized to protect the Saints. Owing to the unresponsive attitude of the Missouri Legislature toward requests for a local militia, the **First Presidency**, not understanding the full intent of Avarð's mind, may have felt that the Society had a legitimate basis for existence. Hence **Joseph Smith's** statement that "it was the will of God these things should be so." This comment was nothing more than a commendation to those assembled that their services in defence of their brethren were acceptable unto the Lord and in line with His will. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, pp. 342-343)

On page 362 of the same book Leland Gentry states:

The student stands aghast at the methods by Sampson Avarð. Avarð skillfully utilized numerous devices to construct and perpetuate his organization. He told his followers that he acted under Joseph Smith's direction and then swore his men to everlasting secrecy so that they could not inquire for themselves. He even induced the First Presidency to attend a Danite meeting and give their approval to what he was teaching, without, of course, informing them what his teachings were. He demonstrated outward allegiance to the Church himself by obeying the Law of Consecration and by urging his followers to do the same.

It would seem, then, that Mormon writers have backed themselves into a corner. The only reasonable thing for them to do now is to admit the whole truth about the Danites. Harold Schindler, a Mormon writer, does exactly that. He states:

One of the great controversies surrounding the Sons of Dan concerns the question of whether or not Joseph knew and approved of its existence prior to the society's public exposure in November, 1838. The point is relevant because if his denials of such knowledge are true, it marked the only occasion in Orrin Porter Rockwell's life when he strayed from the dictates of the church by entering into an unauthorized doctrinal venture. His close relationship and devoted obedience to the prophet makes it inconceivable that he would have failed to inform Joseph of the Danites. Even so, **the prophet's absolute grip on the church precludes the possibility that Avarð could have carried out an undertaking of such magnitude in secrecy.** Finally, the argument presents itself that the prophet probably encouraged the concept, since it played a dual role of preventing a recurrence of the Kirtland rebellion by uncovering potential apostates almost immediately while at the same time protecting the Mormons against their Gentile enemies. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, by Harold Schindler, 1966, p. 44)

### "War of Extermination"

On July 4, 1838, the Mormons had a celebration at Far West. In Joseph Smith's *History* we find the following:

July 4.—The day was spent in celebrating the Declaration of Independence . . . and also by the Saints making a "Declaration of Independence" from all mobs and persecutions which have been inflicted upon them, . . .

The oration was delivered by President Rigdon, at the close of which was a shout of Hosanna, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 41-42)

B. H. Roberts made this comment concerning Rigdon's speech:

This oration by Sidney Rigdon has always been severely criticised as containing passages that were ill-advised and vehemently bitter. Especially those passages which threatened a **war of extermination** upon mobs should they again arise to plague the saints. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 42, footnote)

An extract from Rigdon's speech is published in the

*Comprehensive History of the Church*. The following is taken from that account:

"But from this day and this hour we will suffer it no more. We take God and all the holy angels to witness, this day, that we warn all men, in the name of Jesus Christ to come on us no more for ever, for from this hour we will bear it no more; our rights shall no more be trampled on with impunity; the man, or the set of men who attempt it, do it at the expense of **their lives**. And that mob that comes on us to disturb us, it shall be between us and them **a war of extermination**; for we will follow them until the **last drop** of their blood is spilled; or else they will have to exterminate us, for we will carry the seat of war to their own houses and their own families, and one party or the other shall be utterly destroyed. . . . No man shall be at liberty to come into our streets, to threaten us with mobs, for if he does he shall **atone** for it before he leaves the place; neither shall he be at liberty to vilify and slander any of us, for suffer it **we will not**, in this place. . . . Neither will we indulge any man, or set of men, in instituting vexatious law suits against us, to cheat us out of our rights; if they attempt it we say **woe be unto them**. We this day, then, proclaim ourselves free with a purpose and determination that never can be broken, No, never! No, never! No, never!" (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, vol. 1, p. 441)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that Joseph Smith approved of the "declaration":

The unwisdom of the utterance has been quite generally recognized by our writers, and by them responsibility for it has been placed upon the rather fervid imagination of Sidney Rigdon, who delivered the speech, and who quite generally is supposed to have been mainly or wholly responsible for it. This is **not** true. The speech was carefully prepared, written before delivery in fact, and read by other presiding elders of the church before its delivery. It immediately appeared in *The Far West*, a weekly newspaper published at Liberty, Clay county; and was also published in pamphlet form by Ebenezer Robinson on the press of the *Elders' Journal*. **Joseph Smith** in his journal **speaks of it approvingly**; and in the *Elders' Journal*, of which he was the editor, and in the editorial columns under his name, the speech is approvingly recommended to the saints. In view of these facts, if the "declaration" was of doubtful propriety, and unwise and impolitic, responsibility for it rests not alone on Sidney Rigdon, but **upon the authorities of the church** who approved it, and the people who accepted it by their acclamation. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 443)

When Sidney Rigdon later fell into a state of apostacy, the other Mormon leaders tried to blame him for all their troubles in Missouri. They claimed that his declaration was the cause of the trouble that they had with the Gentiles; they even acted as if Joseph Smith had nothing to do with the speech. The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde stated:

Now I don't know of any man in this church that has gone deeper into matters than he [Sidney Rigdon] did in Far West in his oration on the 4th of July. He was the cause of our troubles in Missouri, and although brother Joseph tried to restrain him, he would take his own course, . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 5, p. 104)

Brigham Young went so far as to say: "Elder Rigdon was the prime cause of our troubles in Missouri, by his fourth of July oration" (*Times and Seasons*, statement of Brigham Young at the church trial of Sidney Rigdon, October 1, 1844, vol. 5, p. 667).

It was not long after Sidney Rigdon gave his speech that war broke out between the Mormons and the inhabitants of Missouri, and the Mormons were finally driven from the state. As in all wars, innocent people were killed and atrocities were committed by both sides (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pp. 66-78).

Although we must not try to justify the actions of the non-Mormons in Missouri (especially concerning the massacre

at Hawn's Mill, where innocent Mormons were killed), we cannot accept the explanation given by many Mormon historians. They claim that the non-Mormons were completely to blame and that the Mormons were persecuted because of their religion.

It should be remembered that Sidney Rigdon said that if a war started it would be a war of "extermination." When Governor Boggs issued his "infamous" Exterminating Order, he stated that the Mormons "must be exterminated or driven from the state, if necessary for the public good." The Mormon writer Harold Schindler stated: "It was more than coincidence that Boggs chose that particular word in his instructions to General Clark" (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 58).

While we feel that Governor Boggs was wrong in driving the Mormons out of Missouri (the innocent with the guilty), the Mormons should remember that they drove the dissenters out of Caldwell County.

The Mormon writer Leland Gentry stated:

One of the important questions emerging from a study of the Mormon War is which of the troops from either side were legal and which were not. As shown in former portions of this work, men which at certain times were not authorized to act were, at other times, legitimate militia. This fact compounds rather than simplifies the problems. Moreover, **both sides** appear to have engaged in illegal as well as legal operations. The Mormons had their secret order of Danites, which organization was not officially empowered to act. The non-Mormons banded together in several unofficial companies to commit their deeds of mayhem. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 501)

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen feels that one of the main reasons the Mormons were persecuted was because of their idea of "a temporal kingdom of God":

Yet the burden of responsibility must not be placed, in the fashion of the defenders of Mormonism, entirely on the Gentiles. What the apologists have done is to project twentieth-century Mormon values and practices into the nineteenth century. They, understandably, can see no reason why anybody would want to persecute them. Neither can they concede this possibility to their ancestors. Consequently, in the eyes of the apologists, the cessation of conflict is primarily evidence of a matured American society willing to accept the religious peculiarities of Mormonism. What the apologists do not want to admit is that **Mormonism itself** had to undergo fundamental changes in order to make possible its acceptance by society at large. . . .

As long as the Saints, however, exerted all their efforts toward the realization of a **temporal kingdom of God** on earth, conflict with their environment was inevitable. One enemy of the Saints asked the pointed question, if the Mormons were entirely the victims of the ill will of their neighbors, "why have they come into violent conflict with the people in **all** their seven places of settlement? For they have tried every different kind of people, from New York, through Ohio, Illinois, and Missouri, to Salt Lake. Are all the people of all those places incurably vicious, mobbers and trespassers on religious right?" (*Quest for Empire*, 1967, pp. 149-150)

## Mormon Crimes

The Mormon writer Leland Gentry makes this observation: "Latter-day Saint historians have generally been **unwilling** to concede that the Mormons of 1838 did the burning or plundering which the non-Mormons charged against them" (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 383).

According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith stated that the mob burned their own houses:

The mob seeing that they could not succeed by force, now resorted to strategem; and after removing their property out of their houses, which were nothing but log cabins, they fired them, and then reported to the authorities of the state that the "Mormons" were burning and destroying all before them. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 163-164)

Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, made an affidavit in which he stated:

They went to work and moved their families out of the county and set fire to their houses; and **not being able to incense the "Mormons" to commit crimes**, they had recourse to this stratagem to set their houses on fire, . . . which deed was most diabolical and of the blackest kind; for indeed the "Mormons" did **not** set them on fire, nor meddle with their houses or their fields. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 408-409)

While many Mormon apologists have tried to blame everything on the Missourians, the Mormon writer Leland Gentry admits that there is another side to the story:

The evidence tends to support the view that **both sides** engaged in incendiary acts. . . .

The charge of theft raises another interesting point. As formerly noted, the Danites were taught to take from the Gentiles and consecrate to the Church. Nearly every person who testified at the trial against the Mormon leaders made mention of this fact. John Clemenson stated that "it was frequently observed among the troops [at Diahman] that the time had come when the riches of the Gentiles should be consecrated to the Saints." Jeremiah Myers testified that "the consecrated property . . . was dealt out to those in need" by Bishop Vinson Knight. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, pp. 385, 387)

It must be acknowledged that the fears which the non-Mormons entertained against the Saints were **real**. The charges of burning and stealing had partial foundation in fact, and these actions were interpreted as acts of war. To the Saints, however, these deeds were mere acts of retaliation, necessities laid upon them as a result of similar doings by the mobs. Moreover, that which was taken was considered to be "consecrated property" belonging to the Church. It was dealt out carefully to those in dire need.

The role of the Danites in the Mormon War is not clear. There is little doubt that some participated in the Battle of Crooked River, and several are known to have done so in the burnings and plunderings in Daviess County. The meeting in Far West over which Sidney Rigdon allegedly presided has all the earmarks of being **Danite-inspired**. The formation of a "Destruction Company," thoroughly Danite in intent, was most unfortunate for the Saints in view of future developments. It laid them open to further charges of aggression. (*Ibid.*, pp. 426-427)

By the time that Doniphan ordered the Saints to form in their own defense, the Danite movement had entered its third phase, namely, pillaging, spoiling, and burning the property of all who opposed the Saints. (*Ibid.*, pp. 328-329)

To help insure the departure of the dissidents, a secret organization was formed among the Saints known as the Danite Band. This Order went through three principal stages of development. First, it was organized to drive out the Dissenters. Having accomplished this object, the Society's members pledged themselves to protect the lives and property of their brethren against all comers. At the peak of the Mormon War, the movement assumed its third and final object, namely plundering and burning the property of non-Mormon enemies. It is likely that this Organization was responsible for many of the excesses later charged against the Saints in general. (*Ibid.*, p. 729)

Both the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde and Thomas B. Marsh, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, left Far West and made affidavits against the church:

### AFFIDAVIT OF THOMAS B. MARSH

At the request of a committee of the citizens of Ray county, I make the following statement . . . Joseph Smith, the prophet, had preached a sermon in which he said that all the Mormons who refused to take up arms, if necessary, in the difficulties with the citizens, should be shot or otherwise put to death; and as I was there with my family,

I thought it most prudent to go and did go with my wagon as the driver. We marched to Adam-ondi-Ahman and found no troops or mob in Davies county. . . . a company of about eighty Mormons, commanded by a man fictitiously named Captain Fearnought, marched to Gallatin. . . . I afterwards learned from the Mormons that they had burnt Gallatin and that it was done by the aforesaid company that marched there. The Mormons informed me that they had hauled away all the goods from the store in Gallatin and deposited them at the Bishop's storehouse at Diahmon [sic]. On the same day, Lyman Wight marched about eighty horsemen for Mill Port [sic]. He returned before night and called for Joseph Smith and Hiram [sic] Smith, to report to them . . . and said Wight reported that he had been in sight of Mill Port [sic]—saw no one to fight—but that the people had gone and left their houses and property. **The prophet**, on hearing the property was left, commenced a reply and said: "We had better see to it," when Wight stopped him by saying, "Never mind, we will have a private council," and Smith replied, "Very Well." . . . The same evening a number of footmen came up from the direction of Mill Port [sic] laden with property which I was informed consisted of beds, clocks, and other household furniture. . . . During the same time, a company called the Fur Company were sent out to bring in fat hogs and cattle, calling the hogs, bears, and the cattle, buffaloes. . . . They have among them a company consisting of all that are considered true Mormons, called the **Danites**, who have taken an oath to support the heads of the church in all things that they say or do, whether right or wrong; many, however, of this band, are much dissatisfied with this oath as being against moral and religious principles. On Saturday last, I am informed by the Mormons that they had a meeting in Far West, at which they appointed a company of twelve, by the name of the Destruction Company, for the purpose of **burning and destroying**; and that if the people of Buncombe came to do mischief upon the people of Caldwell and committed depredations upon the Mormons, they were to burn Buncombe; and if the people of Clay and Ray made any movements against them, this destroying company were to burn **Liber[t]y and Richmond**. This burning was to be done secretly, . . . At the same meeting, I was informed, they passed a decree that no Mormon dissenter should leave Caldwell county alive; and that such as attempted to do it, should be shot down and sent to tell their tale in eternity. In a conversation between Dr. Avard and other Mormons, said Avard proposed to start a pestilence among the Gentiles, as he called them, by poisoning their corn, fruit, &c., and saying it was the work of the Lord; and said Avard advocated lying for the support of their religion, and said it was no harm to lie for the Lord. The plan of said Smith, the Prophet, is to take this State, and he professes to his people to intend taking the United States and ultimately the whole world. This is the belief of the Church, and my own opinion of the Prophet's plans and intentions. . . . I have heard the prophet say that he should yet tread down his enemies and walk over their dead bodies; that if he was not let alone, he would be a second Mahomet to this generation, and that he would make it one gore of blood from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean; that like Mahomet, whose motto, in treating for peace, was "The Alcoran or the Sword," so should it eventually be with us, "**Joseph Smith or the sword**." These last statements were made during the last summer. The number of armed men at Adam-ondi-Ahman was between three and four hundred.

THOMAS B. MARCH [sic]

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day herein written. HENRY JACOBS, J.P. Ray County, Mo.  
Richmond Mo., October 24, 1838.

#### AFFIDAVIT OF ORSON HYDE

The most of the statements in the foregoing disclosure of Thomas B. March [sic] I know to be true; the remainder I believe to be true.

ORSON HYDE

Richmond, October 24, 1838.

Sworn to and subscribed before me on the day above written. HENRY JACOBS, J.P.

(*Correspondence, Orders, etc.*, Missouri, 1841, pp. 57-59, as quoted in *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, pp. 412-414)

After the Mormons had surrendered, General Wilson wrote a letter in which he stated:

It would astonish you to see the **immense piles of stolen property** which has been brought in, and deposited by the Mormons, consisting of almost everything to be found at a farm house, and much remaining yet concealed. Large quantities have been found in and near town. (*Correspondence, Orders, etc.*, Missouri, 1841, as quoted in *A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, p. 499)

Even John Whitmer, one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, told of the criminal acts of the Mormons:

After they had driven us and our families, they commenced a difficulty in Daviess County, adjoining this county, in which they began to rob and burn houses, etc. etc., took honey which they, (the Mormons) called sweet oil, and hogs which they called bear, and cattle which they called buffalo. Thus they would justify themselves by saying, "We are the people of God, and all things are God's; therefore, they are ours." The old inhabitants were not slack in paying them in their own coin. Thus war and bloodshed commenced and the result was the Church was driven from this land, the pure in heart and innocent, as well as the more wicked, save a few dissenters who were left here to fulfill some of the former commandments. (*John Whitmer's History*, p. 22)

Although the testimony of non-Mormons and those who later apostatized from the church shows that the Mormons were guilty of many crimes in Missouri, some of the statements made by faithful members of the church are absolutely devastating. Benjamin F. Johnson, for instance, made this statement:

. . . I started upon a two-year-old colt which by some circumstance I had got astride of, and fell into rank with a company of near twenty mounted men, with Cornelius P. Lot as our Captain. I soon learned our destination was to Taylor's on Grand River, about nine miles above, where it was said arms and ammunition were held for the use of the mob. . . . There were two men with a number of women and children, and all affirmed that there was nothing of the kind there. After a thorough search of houses, barns, etc., our captain ordered a search in the cornfields to hunt the cornshocks, which soon resulted in the discovery of arms and ammunition and of their falsehoods. The females hastily took from the houses what they could carry, and here I might say there was almost a trial of my faith in my pity for our enemies, even those who were plotting our destruction. Among the women was one, young married and apparently near her confinement, and another with small children and not a wagon, and many miles away from any of their friends, and snow had begun already (in November) to fall. My sympathies were drawn toward the women and children, but I would in no degree let them deter me from duty. So while others were pillaging for something to carry away, I was doing my best to protect, as far as possible, the lives and comfort of the families who were dependent on getting away upon horseback. . . . While others were doing the **burning and plunder**, my mission was of mercy so far as duty would permit. But of course I made enemies at home, and became more known by those who were our avowed enemies. Before noon we had set all on **fire** and left upon a circuitous route towards home. (*My Life's Review*, Independence, Mo., 1947, pp. 38-39)

Oliver Boardman Huntington, another faithful member of the Mormon Church, recorded the following in his journal:

Open hostilities had previously commenced on both sides, by the mobs burning one or two houses, and committing several outbreaks upon the brethren in the country around. . . . it was my natural turn to glory in excitement, . . . every day, almost, brought fresh news of some new outrage and outbreak, on one side; and the next would be



a signal revenge or victory on the other; yet my desires were not satisfied, for I wished and desired to be in the midst of the scene; and often in vain spent tears, implored my father to let me go with the scouting parties. . . . At the time that Galeton was to be **burned**, I pleaded with father to let me go; but to no effect. On the appointed day I went to the top of the hill; a little above the well known pile of burnt stones, . . . even an altar that Adam built, . . . I say I stood there and cast my eyes in the direction of Galeton, as near as I could judge, and saw **the smoke** rising towards Heaven, which filled me with ambition, the love of excitement, tumult and something new.

In tears I looked far over the trees and wished and sighed and wished again that I was there, . . . I stood along on the Prairie and cried. The next day I went to Bishop Knights and **saw the plunder**, and **O what lots**, I thought; and heard them tell, in what order they took the place, marching up on the run, and one man who was in such a fright to save his life, that he ran from the store to his horse, and on his way, pulled out his knife, and in stead of untying his horse, cut the reins, mounted and dashed into the woods out of sight in almost the twinkling of an eye. The store they burned, but the goods were preserved. (“Oliver Boardman Huntington Journal,” pp. 31-32, typed copy, Utah State Historical Society)

On page 34 of the same journal, Mr. Huntington tells what the Mormons did with the plunder before they surrendered:

The day on which they [the Missouri Militia] arrived, by the request of some of our leading men, they camped out of the city and on the other side of the river, to stay until the next day; and none to disturb us until they came over to receive our arms. As there had been a great many things **plundered by us** which were then in our houses we thought it good to get one night to get it all out of our houses to a general place of deposit. Therefore nearly all the brethren were employed in taking all plundered property to a general plunder depot; that they should not know who had this mans or that mans, and thereby perhaps save some lives. This employment lasted until daylight. . . . At the appointed hour the brethren were at Lyman Wights new block building, not finished, where also all the plundered property was stowed, . . .

In a letter to his father, dated October 29, 1838, Albert P. Rockwood wrote the following:

. . . the companies are called Dan because [the] Prophet Daniel has said the Saints shall take the Kingdom & possess it for ever. . . . the Missouri mob have all left Davis Co. the fear of God rests down upon them and they flee when no man persueth. the Brethren are fast returning from the northern Campaign with hearts full of gratitude, not a drop of blood has been spilt, the Mob disperse by hundreds on the approach of the **Danites**, . . . Thursday 25 . . . 70 horsemen started for the encampment of the mob...the mob was secreted behind the bank of the River 4 of the Brethren were wounded. David Patten was one of them. a Rush was now made by the Brethren on the mob secreted, when a terrible but short conflict ensued in less than 2 minutes the mob was seen making their escape up the opposite bank, . . . leaving about 70 Horses with saddle Bridles some arms Blankets Tents waggons &c. which were taken as the spoil of our enemies. . . . Now Father come to Zion & fight for the Religion of Jesus, many a Hoary head is seen with their armour about them bold to defend their Masters cause. You may ask if the Prophet goes out with the Saints to Battle? I answer he is a Prophet to go before the people as in times of old & if you wish to know what sword he carries, just turn to the book of Mormon & see the sword that Nephi took from Laban when he slew him you there will see what he has got. Is not this marvelous? Well when you come [to] Zion you will learn many marvelous things which will strengthen you in the faith & which are for the edification of the Saints. **Bro. Joseph has unsheathed his sword** & in the name of Jesus declares that it shall not be sheathed again until he can go into any country or state in safety & peace . . . (“Albert P. Rockwood Paers,” letter dated October 29, 1838, Coe Collection, Yale University Library)

## Joseph Surrenders

Ebenezer Robinson gives us this information:

In the afternoon of the 30th of October, 1838, a large body of armed men were seen approaching Far West, whom we supposed were mobbers coming to attack the city, as at that time we did not know of the Governor’s order calling out the Militia, . . . President Joseph Smith, Jr., delivered an address, . . . in which he made this declaration that if the mob persisted in coming upon us, “We will play h—l with their apple cart.” (*The Return*, vol. 2, no. 1, Jan. 1890, typed copy)

John Taylor, the third President of the Mormon Church, made this statement about the trouble at Far West:

. . . there were not more than about 200 of us in the place. We had one fellow who was taken with a fit of trembling in the knees, and he ordered our people to retreat. As soon as Joseph heard this sound, he exclaimed, “Retreat! where in the name of God shall we retreat to?” He then led us out to the prairie facing the mob and placed us in position; and the first thing we knew a flag of truce was seen coming towards us. The person bearing it said that some of their friends were among our people for whose safety they felt anxious. . . . Joseph Smith, our leader, then sent word back by this messenger, said he, “Tell your General to withdraw his troops or I will send them to hell.” I thought that was a pretty bold stand to take, as we only numbered about 200 to their 3,500; but they thought we were more numerous than we really were, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 23, p. 37)

Joseph Smith’s bold attitude was undoubtedly outward show, for John Corrill related the following:

Smith appeared to be much alarmed, and told me to **beg like a dog for peace**, and afterwards said he had rather go to States-prison for twenty years, or had rather die himself than have the people exterminated. (*A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 1839, p. 41)

At any rate, Joseph Smith surrendered and was almost shot by the militia. As it ended up, however, he was turned “over to the civil authorities for trial” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 209). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts wrote:

Finding that he was debarred from proceeding by court-marshal, General Clark turned over his first group of prisoners together with the second group, numbering fifty-six, to be examined in a court “of inquiry” at Richmond before Judge Austin A. King. The prisoners were accused of “treason, murder, arson, burglary, robbery, larceny and perjury.” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 498-499)

The “court of inquiry” began on November 12, 1838. Harold Schindler states: “All testimony heard in Judge King’s court can be found in Correspondence, Orders, etc., pp. 97-151. . . . This also was published as *Senate Document No. 189*, 26th Congress, 2nd Session, 1841” (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, 1966, p. 63). Juanita Brooks gives this information:

October 31, 1838, really marked the end of the Danite Band. All were ordered to bring whatever loot they had taken to a central place where it could not be identified with any specific person. Joseph Smith and several of the leaders surrendered and were confined in Liberty Jail, and those who had participated in the Battle of Crooked River fled into the unsettled stretches of Iowa to the north. . . .

In the minds of the Missourians, the twenty-eight men who fled north were the Danites, and their absence removed the stigma from other members. Some of the Danite leaders had turned state’s evidence; others had scattered. Charles C. Rich and Hosea Stout were among those who fled, and for three months were absent from their wives. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary Of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, Introduction, pp. xv-xvi)

Sampson Avard, the leader of the Danite Band, was one of those who turned state’s evidence. In his testimony he stated:

Sampson Avard, a witness produced, sworn, and examined

on behalf of the State, deposes and saith: That about four months since, a band, called the Daughters of Zion, (since called the Danite band,) was formed of the members of the Mormon church, the original object of which was to drive from the county of Caldwell all those who dissented from the Mormon church; . . . I consider **Joseph Smith, jr.**, as the prime mover and **organizer of this Danite band**. The officers of the band, according to their grades, were brought before him, at a school-house, together with Hiram Smith and Sidney Rigdon: **the three composing the first presidency of the whole church**. Joseph Smith, jr., blessed them, and prophesied over them: declaring that they should be the means, in the hands of God of bringing forth the millennial kingdom. It was stated by Joseph Smith, jr., that it was necessary this band be bound together by a covenant, that those who revealed the secrets of the society should be put to death. The covenant taken by all the Danite band was as follows, to wit: They declared, holding up their right hands, "In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, I do solemnly obligate myself ever to conceal, and never to reveal, the secret purposes of this society called the Daughters of Zion. Should I ever do the same, I hold my life as the forfeit." The prophet Joseph Smith, jr., together with his two counsellors, (Hiram Smith and Sidney Rigdon,) were considered as the supreme head of the church; and the Danite band feel themselves as much bound to obey them, as to obey the Supreme God. Instruction was given by Joseph Smith, jr., that if any of them should get into a difficulty, the rest should help him out; and that they should stand by each other, right or wrong. This instruction was given at a Danite meeting, in a public address . . . Lyman Wight observed, that, before the winter was over, he thought we would be in St. Louis, and take it. Smith charged them that they should be united in supporting each other. Smith said, on some occasions, that one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight; that he considered the United States rotten. He compared the Mormon church to the little stone spoken of by the Prophet Daniel; and the dissenters first, and the State next, was part of the image that should be **destroyed** by this little stone. . . . Captain Patten (who was called by the prophet Captain Fearnought) . . . led the troops to Gallatin, . . . He made a rush into Gallatin, dispersed the few men there, and took the goods out of Stolling's store, and carried them to Diahmon, and I afterwards saw the storehouse on fire. When we returned to Diahmon, the goods were deposited in the Lord's storehouse, under the care of Bishop Vincent Knight. Orders were strictly given that all the goods should be deposited in the Lord's storehouse. . . . On the day Patten went to Gallatin, Colonel Wight went to Millport, as I understood. I saw a great many cattle, beds, furniture, &c., brought into our camp by the Mormons. . . . Some months ago I received orders to destroy the paper concerning the Danite Society; which order was issued by the **first presidency**, and which paper, being the constitution for the government of the Danite Society, was in my custody, but which I did not destroy. It is now in General Clark's possession. . . . This paper was taken into President Rigdon's house, and read to the prophet and his councillors, and was unanimously adopted by them as their rule and guide in [the] future. After it was thus adopted, I was instructed by the council to destroy it, as, if it should be discovered, it would be considered treasonable. . . . Smith, after erecting his bulwarks, (the night after General Lucas arrived,) asked me if I did not think him pretty much of a general; and I answered in the affirmative. We were advised, all the time, to fight valiantly, and that the angels of the Lord would appear in our defence and fight our battles. (*Senate Document 189*, 26th Congress, 2d Session, pp. 1-6, 9)

On page 21 of the same document, Sampson Avard stated:

I was continually in the society of the presidency, receiving instructions from them as to the teachings of the Danite band; and I continually informed them of my teachings; and they were apprised of my course and teachings in the Danite society. (*Senate Document 189*, p. 21)

John Corroll, who had been a very prominent Mormon, also testified for the State. The following is taken from his testimony:

President Rigdon last summer preached a sermon, commonly called the Salt sermon, which seemed to have for its object to produce a feeling among the people to get rid of the dissenters, for crimes alleged, and because they disagreed with them. . . . I was afterwards invited to one of these meetings, where an oath, in substance the same as testified to by Dr. Avard, was administered. . . . I took exceptions only to the teaching as to the duties of that society, wherein it was said, if one brother got into any kind of a difficulty, it was the duty of the rest to help him out, right or wrong. At the second, or at least the last meeting I attended, the presidency, (to wit: Joseph Smith, jr., Hiram Smith, and Sidney Rigdon,) and also George W. Robertson, was there. There was at this meeting a ceremony of introducing the officers of the society to the presidency, who pronounced blessings on each of them, as introduced, exhorting to faithfulness in their calling, and they should have blessings. After this, President Smith got up . . . he observed to the people that they should obey the presidency, and, if the presidency led them astray, they might destroy them. In the last, or in some public meeting, Joseph Smith, jr. said: if the people would let us alone, we would preach the gospel to them in peace; but, if they came on us to molest us, we would establish our religion by the sword; and that he would become to this generation a second Mahomet.

About April last, I heard Joseph Smith, jr. and President Rigdon (who appeared to be vexed, on account of troubles and lawsuits they had had) say that they would suffer vexatious lawsuits no longer, and that they would resist even an officer in the discharge of his duty . . . On Monday, Joseph Smith, jr. made a speech; and some resolutions were passed, purporting that those persons who would not engage in their undertaking, their property should be consecrated [confiscated] to the use of those who did engage in their undertaking. On Sunday, Joseph Smith, jr., in his discourse, spoke of persons taking, at some times, what, at other times, would be wrong to take; and gave as an example the case of David eating the shew-bread, and also of the Saviour and his Apostles plucking the ears of corn and eating, as they passed through the cornfield. . . . It was my understanding that Dr. Avard's teaching in the Danite society proceeded from the presidency. (*Ibid.*, pp. 12-14)

John Cleminson was another witness called in behalf of the State. The following is taken from his testimony:

John Cleminson, . . . sworn, . . . deposes and saith: Some time in June, I attended two or three Danite meetings; and it was taught there, as a part of the duty of the band, that they should support the presidency in all their designs, right or wrong; that whatever they said was to be obeyed, and whoever opposed the presidency in what they said, or desired done, should be expelled from the county, or have their lives taken. The three composing the presidency was at one of those meetings; and to satisfy the people, Dr. Avard called on Joseph Smith, jr., who gave them a pledge, that if they led them into a difficulty he would give them his head for a foot-ball, and that it was the will of God these things should be so. The teacher and active agent of the society was Dr. Avard, and his teachings were approved of by the presidency. Dr. Avard further taught as a part of their obligation, that if any one betrayed the secret designs of the society, they should be killed and laid aside, and nothing said about it. . . . When process was filed against Joseph Smith and others, in my office as clerk of Caldwell circuit court, for trespass, Joseph Smith, jr., told me not to issue that writ; that he did **not** intend to submit to it; . . . I felt myself intimidated and in danger, if I issued it, knowing the regulation of the Danite band. . . .

When we first went to Daviess, I understood the object to be to drive out the mob, if one should be collected there; but when we got there, we found none. I then learned the object was, from those who were actively engaged in the matter, to drive out all the citizens of Daviess and

get possession of their property. . . . It was frequently observed among the troops, that the time had come when the riches of the Gentiles should be consecrated to the Saints. (*Senate Document 189*, pp. 15-16)

In the testimony of George M. Hinkle we find the following:

There was much mysterious conversation in camps, as to plundering, and house-burning; so much so, that I had my own notions about it; and, on one occasion, I spoke to Mr. Smith, jr., in the house, and told him that this course of burning houses and plundering, by the **Mormon troops**, would ruin us; that it could not be kept hid, and would bring the force of the State upon us; that houses would be searched, and stolen property found. Smith replied to me, in a pretty rough manner to keep still; that I should say nothing about it; that it would discourage the men; and he would not suffer me to say any thing about it. . . .

I saw a great deal of plunder and bee-steeds brought into camp; and I saw many persons, for many days, taking the honey out of them; I understood this property and plunder were placed into the hands of the bishop at Diahmon. . . .

The general teachings of the presidency were, that the kingdom they were setting up was a temporal kingdom; . . . Until lately, the teachings of the church appeared to be peaceable, . . . but lately a different idea has been advanced—that the time had come when this kingdom was to be set up by **forcible means**, if necessary. It was taught, that the time had come when the riches of the Gentiles were to be consecrated to the true Israel. This thing of taking property was considered a fulfillment of the above prophecy . . . Joseph Smith, jr. made a speech to the troops who were called together, in which he said: That the troops which were gathering through the country were a damned mob; that he had tried to please them long enough; that we had tried to keep the law long enough; but, as to keeping the law of Missouri any longer, he did not intend to try to do so. That the whole State was a mob set; and that, if they came to fight him, he would play hell with their apple-carts. . . . While the last expedition was in progress in Daviess county, a portion of the troops returned to Far West, . . . Rigdon . . . held in his hand a letter from Joseph Smith, jr., in Daviess county, in which, he said, there was a profound secret, and the boys who were present were sent away. The letter, as near as I recollect it, was as follows: That our enemies were now delivered into our hands, and that we should have victory over them in every instance. The letter stated that, in the name of Jesus Christ, he knew this by the spirit of prophecy. . . . (*Senate Document 189*, pp. 21-25)

In Burr Riggs' testimony the following appears:

Burr Riggs, a witness for the State, produced, sworn, and examined, deposed and saith: In the latter part of June last, immediately after the witness and Cowdery left Far West, I fell into company with Joseph Smith, jr., and Geo. W. Robinson. Jos. Smith, jr., said there were certain men using their influence against the proceedings of the presidency, and if they were suffered to go on they would do great injury. And Smith told Robinson, the first man he heard speaking against the presidency, and against their proceedings, he must tie him up and give him thirty-nine lashes; and if that would not do, give him thirty nine more, until he was sorry for what he had said; and Robinson said he would do it. . . . Two or three days before the surrender of the Mormons to the militia at Far West, I heard Jos. Smith, jr. say that the sword was now unsheathed, and should not again be sheathed until he could go through these United States, and live in any county he pleased, peaceably. . . . there was a meeting in Far West, in which Mr. Sidney Rigdon presided. There were present about 60 or 100 men; . . . Mr. Rigdon said that the last man had run away from Far West that was going to; that the next man who started, he should be pursued and brought back, dead or alive. This was put to vote, and agreed to, without any one objecting to it. He further said, that one man had slipped his wind yesterday, and had been thrown aside into the brush for the buzzards to pick, and the first man who lisped it should die. (*Senate Document 189*, p. 30)

In his testimony, Jesse Kelly claimed that a Mormon captain stated that they were going to take the entire State:

The captain asked us if we belonged to the mob, and we replied not; . . . the captain then said, if we did not wish to fight them, we must leave the State; for we intend said he, after we get possession of Daviess, to take Livingston; and after that, keep on, till we take possession of the **whole state**. (*Senate Document 189*, p. 31)

Addison Price made a similar statement in his testimony: "It was said by several of the company, that, as soon as they had rid Daviess county, they would have Livingston, and, before they stopped, they intended to have the State" (*Senate Document 189*, p. 32).

John Whitmer, one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave this testimony in behalf of the State:

John Whitmer [Whitmer], a witness for the State, produced, sworn, and examined, deposed and saith: About the 17th of April last, . . . Joseph Smith, jr., spoke in reference to difficulties they had, and their persecutions, &c., in and out of the church. Mr. Smith said he did not intend in future to have any process served on him, and the officer who attempted it should **die**; that any person who spoke or acted against the presidency of the church, should leave the country or die; that he would suffer no such to remain there; that they should **lose their head**. George W. Harris, . . . observed, "the head of their influence, I suppose." Mr. Smith replied, Yes, he would so modify it. Mr. Rigdon . . . in speaking of the head of their influence, he said that he meant that ball on their shoulders, called the head, and that they should be followed to the ends of the earth. Mr. Rigdon further remarked, that he would suffer no process of law to be served on him hereafter.

Some time in June, after Mr. Rigdon had preached his "salt sermon," I held conversation with several Mormons on the subject of that sermon, . . . I also conversed with George W. Robinson, . . . I told him I thought it was contrary to the laws of the land to drive men from their homes; to which he replied, such things had been done of old, and that the gatherings of the saints must continue, and that dissenters could not live among them in peace.

I also conversed with Mr. J. Smith, jr., on this subject. I told him I wished to allay the (then) excitement, as far as I could do it. He said the excitement was very high, and he did not know what would allay it; but remarked, he would give me his opinion, which was, that if I would put my property into the hands of the bishop and high council, to be disposed of according to the laws of the church, he thought that would allay it, and that the church after a while might have confidence in me. I replied to him, I wished to control my own property. In telling Mr. Smith that I wished to be governed by the laws of the land, he answered, "Now, you wish to **pin me down to the law**." And further, this deponent saith not. (*Senate Document 189*, pp. 32-33)

William W. Phelps, a very prominent Mormon, also gave testimony for the State. In his testimony he made these statements:

William W. Phelps, a witness on the part of the State, produced, sworn, . . . and saith: That, as early as April last, at a meeting in Far West . . . Mr. Rigdon arose, and made an address to them, in which he spoke of having borne persecutions, and law-suits, and other privations, and did not intend to bear them any longer; that they meant to resist the law, and, if a sheriff came after them with writs, they would **kill him**; and, if any body opposed them, they would take **off their heads**. . . . In the fore part of July, I being one of the justices of the county court, was forbid by Joseph Smith, jr., from issuing any process against him. . . . A few days before the 4th day of July last, I heard D. W. Patten (known by the fictitious name of Captain Fearnought) say that Rigdon was writing a declaration, to declare the church independent, I remarked to him,



I thought such a thing treasonable—to set up a government within a Government. He answered, it would not be treasonable if they would maintain it, or fight till they died. . . . I was at the meeting the Monday before the last expedition to Daviess, . . . Joseph Smith, jr., I think it was, who addressed the meeting, and said, in substance, that they were then about to go to war in Daviess county; that those persons who had not turned out, their property should be taken to maintain the war. . . . Joseph Smith, jr., . . . said it was necessary to have something to live on; and, when they went out to war, it was necessary to take spoils to live on. . . . I went on to Diahmon a few days after the Mormon troops had gone out. I went on to the tavern, late at night, where I found Joseph Smith, jr., Hiram Smith, and others. . . . Wight asked J. Smith, twice, if he had come to the point now to resist the law; that he wanted this matter now distinctly understood. . . . Smith replied, the time had come when **he should resist all law**. . . . I heard J. Smith remark, there was a store at Gallatin, and a grocery at Millport; and in the morning after the conversation between Smith and Wight about resisting the law, a plan of operations was agreed on, which was: that Captain Fearnought, who was present, should take a company of 100 men, or more, and go to Gallatin, and take it that day; to take the goods out of the store in Gallatin, bring them to Diahmon, and burn the store. . . . I saw Lyman Wight parade a horse company, and start off with it towards Millport. I also [saw] a foot company the same day go off.

On the same day, in the evening, I saw both these companies return; the foot company had some plunder, . . . I was invited to a school-house, . . . A guard was placed around the house, and one at the door.

Mr. Rigdon then commenced making covenants, with uplifted hands. The first was, that, if any man attempted to move out of the county, or pack their things for that purpose, that any man then in the house, seeing this, without saying any thing to any other person, should kill him, and haul him aside into the brush; and that all the burial he should have should be in a turkey buzzard's guts, so that nothing of him should be left but his bones. That measure was carried in form of a covenant, with uplifted hands. After the vote had passed, he said, Now see if any one dare vote against it, and called for the negative vote; and there was none. The next covenant, that, if any persons from the surrounding country came into their town, walking about—no odds who he might be—any one of that meeting should kill him, and throw him aside into the brush. This passed in a manner as the above had passed. The third covenant was, “conceal all these things.” Mr. Rigdon then observed that the kingdom of heaven had no secrets; that yesterday a man had slipped his wind, and was dragged into the hazel brush; and, said he, “the man who lisps it shall die.” (*Senate Document 189*, pp. 43-46)

After the inquiry some of the Mormons were released. Joseph Smith, however, was not released. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts states:

Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin, Hyrum Smith, Alexander McRae, and Sidney Rigdon were held for **treason** against the state, **murder, burglary, arson, robbery and larceny**; and were committed to prison without bail in Liberty, Clay county, . . . (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 500)

The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen claims that Judge Austin A. King conducted the inquiry in a “very biased manner,” yet he admits that the evidence cannot be entirely discounted:

. . . the testimony given at the trial was offered by enemies of the Mormons or personal enemies of Smith, including a number of apostates. But, although such testimony has to be viewed with considerable caution, it cannot be discounted entirely, especially in view of Smith's subsequent endeavors in behalf of the political kingdom of God. The evidence of the apostates, in fact, reveals how far Smith had attempted to go in establishing that kingdom. (*Quest for Empire*, p. 152)

Joseph Smith made “at least two attempts to escape” from the authorities in Missouri. Finally, after spending some time in the Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith did escape.

John Whitmer stated:

Smith and those others were tried by those officers for treason, etc., but found that they were not legally authorized to execute them after having found them guilty of many breaches of the law of the land, they put them in the hand of civil officers of the government, to be tried by the law of the land, and were committed to jail; but before the trial came on, which was named to some of the counties of this state, where the people were not so much prejudiced against them, as they were moved from Clay County to the county where they were to be tried, they hired the guard to let them go, . . . money hired those base and corrupt men, who let them go; and this through the wickedness of those to whom their safe-keeping were committed, these men escaped the justice of the law of the land which they had transgressed, and went unpunished at this time. (*John Whitmer's History*, p. 22)

Harold Schindler makes this statement concerning the escape:

While many Missourians still pressured to have the Mormons hanged, several officials in high places, perhaps Boggs himself, had come to the realization that an “escape” would be convenient to all concerned, since the fugitives certainly would leave the state at the first opportunity, and it was unlikely they would return with a grand jury indictment hanging over their heads. Accordingly, Sheriff Morgan and his guards conveniently became intoxicated during the ride to Boone County. Late that night the five prisoners galloped across the border into Illinois. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell*, by Harold Schindler, 1966, p. 65)

## Trouble in Illinois

After the Mormons were driven from Missouri, they gathered in Illinois and built the city of Nauvoo. Within a few years, however, the Mormons found themselves in serious trouble with the people in Illinois. In 1844 Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were assassinated by a mob, and in 1846 the Mormons were driven from Illinois.

While we cannot endorse the methods used by the people of Illinois in driving the Mormons out, there is another side to the story which the Mormon leaders do not tell their people.

John D. Lee claimed that some enemies of the church were killed in Nauvoo by orders from the church leaders:

**I knew of many men being killed in Nauvoo by the Danites.** It was then the **rule** that all the enemies of Joseph Smith should be **killed**, and I know of many a man who was quietly **put out of the way by the orders of Joseph and his apostles** while the Church was there.

It has always been a well understood doctrine of the Church that it was right and praiseworthy to kill every person who spoke evil of the Prophet. This doctrine had been strictly lived up to in Utah, until the Gentiles arrived in such great numbers that it became unsafe to follow the practice, but the doctrine is still believed, and no year passes without one or more of those who have spoken evil of Brigham Young being **killed**, in a secret manner.

Springfield, Utah, was one of the hot-beds of fanaticism, and I expect that more men were **killed** there, in proportion to population, than in any other part of Utah. In that settlement it was **certain death** to say a word against the **authorities**, high or low. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photo-reprint of 1880 ed., p. 284)

According to John D. Lee, the police in Nauvoo were very similar to the Danite organization:

Whatever the **police** were ordered to do, they were to do and ask no questions. Whether it was right or wrong mattered not to them, they were responsible only to their leaders, and they were amenable only to God. I was a confidant among them, and they let me into the secret of all they did, and they looked to me to speak a good word for them with Brigham, as they were ambitious to please him and obtain his blessing. I knew that I was in their full confidence, and the captain of the police never asked me to do anything he knew I was averse to doing. Under Brigham Young, Hosea Stout was Chief of Police. They showed me where they

buried a man in a lot near the Masonic Hall. They said they got him tight and were joking with him while some men were digging **his grave**. They asked him to go with them into a pit of corn, saying it was fully grown. They told him they had a jug of whiskey cached out there. They **led him to his grave**, and told him to get down there, and hand up the jug, and he should have the first drink. As he bent over to get down, Rosswell Stevens struck him with his police cane on the back of the head and dropped him. They then **tightened a cord around his neck** to shut off his wind, and then they covered him up, and set the hill of corn back on his grave to cover up any tracks that might lead to his discovery.

Another man they took in a boat, about two o'clock at night, for a ride. When out in the channel of the river, the man who sat behind him struck him upon the head and stunned him. They then tied a rope around his neck and a stone to the other end of the rope, and sent him to the bottom of Mississippi River. There was another man whose name I have forgotten, who was a great annoyance to the Saints at Nauvoo. He generally brought a party with him when he came to the city, and could threaten them with the law, but he always managed to get away safely. They (the Saints) finally concluded to entrust his case to Howard Egan, a policeman, who was thought to be pretty long headed. He took a party of chosen men, or "destroying angels," and went to La Harp, a town near the residence of this man, and watched an opportunity when he would pass along. They **"saved" him, and buried him** in a wash-out at night. In a short time afterwards a thunder storm washed the earth away and exposed the remains. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, p. 159)

Notice that John D. Lee stated that the Mormon police committed murders for the church and that "Under Brigham Young, Hosea Stout was Chief of Police." The Mormon paper, *Deseret Weekly*, contained this statement concerning Hosea Stout:

He . . . was intimately associated with the Prophet Joseph Smith for a number of years, prior to his death, and for some time acted as his body guard, as well as being an officer of the Nauvoo Legion and **chief of police**. (*Deseret Weekly*, March 9, 1889, as quoted in *On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 740)

Fortunately, Hosea Stout's diary has survived, and it is certainly one of the most revealing documents that we have ever encountered. The fact that it was written by a faithful Mormon makes it even more significant. In his diary Hosea Stout frankly tells of some of the violent methods used by the Mormon leaders. For instance, under the date of April 3, 1845, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

In the morning I went to the Temple and was roughly accosted by Brs Cahoon & Cutler about a circumstance which took place last night at the Temple. They said that the Old Police had **beat a man almost to death** in the Temple. To which I replied I was **glad of it** and that **I had given orders to that effect** in case anyone should be found in the Temple after night and they had only done as they were told, or ordered. . . . we concluded to lay the matter before President Brigham Young and get his advice, as we went we met Brother H. C. Kimball and while relating the matter to him Brother Brigham came to us and we related the matter to him and he **approved** of the proceedings of the Police and said he wanted us to still guard the Temple to regulate the matters there which was done to our satisfaction and justification. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 32)

Under the date of January 9, 1846, Hosea Stout recorded:

When we came to the Temple some what a considerable number of the guard were assembled and among them was William Hibbard son of the old man Hibbard. He was evidently come as a spy. When I saw him I told Scott that we must "bounce a stone off of his head." to which he agreed we prepared accordingly & I got an opportunity **& hit him on the back of his head which came very near taking his life**. But few knew anything about what was the matter he left the ground out of his senses when he came to himself he could not tell what had happened to him &c. (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 103)

Other entries in Hosea Stout's diary show that he was a very brutal man (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, p. 7).

The people of Illinois were well aware of the fact that the Mormon leaders used violent methods in dealing with their enemies. In the *Warsaw Signal* for January 7, 1846, we find the following reprinted from the *Springfield Journal*:

Some other disclosures are talked of as having been made: the manner in which persons are disposed of, who are supposed to be enemies of the leading Mormons. They are seized by some members of the Danite or other band, a leather strap placed around the neck, so that if the least resistance is made, they are choked; and in this condition they are taken to a skiff, carried to the middle of the river, their bowels ripped open, and their bodies sunk. This is what is termed making "catfish bait" of their enemies. It is said that quite a number of persons were disposed of in this manner. (*Warsaw Signal*, January 7, 1846)

We have already shown that Joseph Smith formed a secret "Council of Fifty" in Nauvoo. The Mormon writer Klaus J. Hansen states that several Danites were initiated into the "Council of 50":

Proven loyalty in one secret organization could be advantageous to another. As a result, several important Danites were among those initiated into the Council of Fifty in 1844. . . . Rumors circulating in Nauvoo during 1844 that Smith had revived the Danite band cannot be substantiated and are most likely a result of the suspected purposes and activities attributed to the Council of Fifty by the uninitiated. (*Quest for Empire*, p. 58)

Mr. Hansen admits that the "Council of Fifty" may have been involved in the practice of "blood atonement":

The law of **blood atonement** was still another law revealed from heaven which was difficult to enforce even in the kingdom of God. If, according to this doctrine, a member of the kingdom committed the crimes of murder and adultery, or if he betrayed one of his fellow Mormons to the enemies of the church, or revealed the secrets of the kingdom, he could save his soul only if he expiated for the crime by the shedding of his blood. Blood atonement was, of course, a form of capital punishment. Yet because of its theological implications, and because the Council of Fifty was to administer it, the doctrine was surrounded with an aura of mystery, terror, and holy murder. The Council of Fifty heightened the atmosphere of fear and secrecy associated with this practice by conducting cases involving the possibility of blood atonement in utmost secrecy for fear of public repercussions. (*Quest for Empire*, p. 69)

Juanita Brooks gives us this information concerning a man who was almost put to death by the "Council of Fifty":

The most surprising case before the YTFIF [fifty spelled backwards] was that of Ira West, one of the first captains in the organization as they left Nauvoo. No specific charges are entered in the record . . . but it is very clear that he was no longer in good fellowship and that action against him was to be drastic. In the first appeal against him, made on March 3, it was declared:

Then can the members of this council suffer their sympathy to arise to that extent that mercy will Rob Justice of its claims, Suffering infernal thieves, Murderers, Whoremongers & every other wicked curse to live among us, adding sin to sin, crime to crime, corrupting the morals of the People when their Blood ought to flow to atone for their crimes. **I want their cursed heads to be cut off** that they may atone for their sins, that mercy may have her claims upon them in the day of redemption.

The case was held over until the next day, when it was clear that "The Council all agreed that he had **forfeited his head**, but the difficulty was how he should be disposed of." Some suggested that he should be executed



publicly, others thought that he should just disappear, then the people would know he was gone, and other offenders would take warning. Still others put up a strong argument for a case in open court before a judge and jury.

Finally, Brigham Young said to the marshal, “Take Ira E. West & Thomas Byrns into custody & put them in chains, & on the day of the Election, there offer them for sale to the highest bidder.” . . .

One might assume that perhaps this man did lose his life, but the diary of Hosea Stout, at that time not a member of the Council of Fifty, tells what happened. Writing under date of Monday, March 12, 1849, he says:

Today was our first political election which commenced at 10 o’clock A.M. A large assemblage of men convened where many subjects were discussed and among the rest the subject of Ira E. West who had been tried by the H.C. & cut off from the church & fined 100 dollars for lying, stealing & swindling &c—and afterward had attempted to run away & was now in chains. He was here offered for sale to anyone who would pay his debts & take him untill he could work it out. No one however took him & for a while the prospect was fair for him to loose his head—His brother C. West took him at last, I believe.

(John D. Lee, by Juanita Brooks, pp. 143-144)

Since the records of the Council of Fifty were kept secret, there is no way of knowing how many people could have been sentenced to death by this secret organization.

Brigham Young, who led the church after Joseph Smith’s death, was very prone to use violent methods in dealing with apostates and enemies of the church. On one occasion he stated: “Now, you Gladdenites, **keep your tongues still, lest sudden destruction come upon you**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 83).

Ebenezer Robinson related that a “brother from Canada” became “very much exercised, spiritually, and fasted and prayed, . . . when one morning, just after daylight he came out of the house and . . . hallooing at the top of his voice, warning the people and the nations to repent and prepare for the things which were coming upon the earth.” According to Robinson, Joseph Smith just walked away, “but **Brigham Young came with a raw-hide whip, and whipped the man back into the house**” (*The Return*, vol. 1, p. 115).

Even Brigham Young’s dreams were filled with violence. Under the date of September 10, 1845, he related:

I dreamed last night that I was chased by a mob to a place like a barn . . . one chased me so close that he got into the same room with me and it was Thomas Ford, who appeared only two and one-half feet high, I took his wrist between my fingers and stepped to the door and knocked down one after another of the mob with him till I discovered he was dead. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 439)

On March 27, 1853, Brigham Young told of a dream he had in which he cut the throats of some “mobbers” and “murderers”:

I dreamed . . . I took my large bowie knife, that I used to wear as a bosom pin in Nauvoo, and **cut one of their throats from ear to ear**, saying “Go to hell across lots.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 83)

On one occasion Brigham Young stated:

I have never yet talked as rough in these mountains as I did in the United States when they killed Joseph. I there said boldly and aloud, “If ever a man should lay his hands on me and say, on account of my religion, ‘Thou art my prisoner,’ the Lord Almighty helping me, I would **send that man to hell across lots**.” I feel so now. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 317)

Speaking of the trouble the Mormons had with the people of Illinois, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency in Brigham Young’s time, stated:

I felt pretty well in Nauvoo, at the time brother Brigham was speaking of; though I did regret—perhaps I did wrong—but I did regret that peace was proclaimed so quick; for I tell you there were about one or two score of men I wanted to **see under the sod**; then I was willing to make peace: . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 334-335)

Brigham Young made these comments concerning this matter:

I do not know that anybody complained in Nauvoo, except brother Kimball; and he was only sorry that the war closed so soon, for we had our eyes upon a good many of those infernal scoundrels, and we wanted **to sod them**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 338)

On another occasion Brigham Young said:

I have sometimes had feelings of this kind—“Draw your swords, ye Elders of Israel, and never sheathe them so long as you have an enemy upon the earth.” I sometimes felt, before the move, like taking the sword and **slaying my enemies**, until they were wasted away. (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 150)

## Using the Mean Devils

Edward Bonney, who became famous for his work of bringing murderers to justice in the Mississippi Valley, made these comments concerning the Mormons in Nauvoo:

While the Mormons were rapidly increasing in numbers and daily increasing their power and wealth, the country around was suffering severely from a succession of robberies almost without parallel in the annals of crime. Stock of every description and goods of all kinds were constantly taken, and all in the vicinity trembled lest they, like their neighbors, might be stripped of their all without a hope of restoration or revenge.

The offenders were frequently tracked in the direction of **Nauvoo**, and sometimes, though rarely, the property was recovered, but in no case could the perpetrators of the crime be arrested and brought to justice. In case of an arrest at Nauvoo the accused were immediately released by the city authorities, and the cry of “Persecution against the Saints” raised, effectually drowning the pleas for justice of the injured, and the officer forced to return and tell the tale of defeat. This done, the fugitive found a safe shelter under the widespread wings of the **Mormon leaders** and laughed at pursuit. (*The Banditti of the Prairies*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, pp. 15-16)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart admits that some Mormons were stealing, but he claims that the leaders of the church did not approve of this course:

By late 1841 the reputation of the Church, and particularly the reputation of its leaders, was suffering from the thievery and lies of several Mormon converts who, like Sampson Avard in Missouri, had begun stealing from both Mormons and non-Mormons, and falsely claiming that the Church leaders condoned their actions. Joseph, Hyrum, and the Quorum of Twelve each in turn issued public statements denouncing the actions and lies of these people. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 155)

While it is true that the Mormon leaders denied the charge of stealing, we must remember that they also denied polygamy at the very time they were practicing it! Therefore, we cannot put any more stock in their denials of stealing than we can in their denials of polygamy, especially in light of the evidence we have presented.

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

And if the Gentiles wish to see a few tricks, we have “Mormons” that can perform them. **We have the meanest devils on the earth** in our midst, and **we intend to keep them, for we have use for them**; and if the Devil does not look sharp, we will cheat him out of them at the last, for they will reform and go to heaven with us. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 176)

. . . we have some of the **meanest men** that ever disgraced God’s footstool right in the midst of the Latter-day Saints. Do not be startled at that, because it is **true**. I have told the people many a time, if they want anything done, **no matter how mean**, they can find men here who can do it, if they are to be found on the earth. (*Ibid.*, vol. 15, p. 226)

. . . do you say there are are [sic] people here who are **wicked**? So we say. Could I wish things to be otherwise? No, I would **not** have them different if I could. . . .

Some of the Elders seem to be tripped up in a moment,



and revelation they can get from the devil, and make use of them to add sin to sin. This fact is also another proof that all hell is against this people, for there is not a person in the world, that gives way to wickedness, but what has antipathy against this people.

Now hearken, O ye Texians; do you say there are people here who are wicked? So we say. Could I wish things to be otherwise? No, I would not have them different if I could. We can produce the best men and the worst, the best women and the worst, and thus prove, according to the sayings of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, that this is the kingdom of God, or at least answers to the Savior's description of that kingdom.

Were I in Texas I would say, let me tell you that I have not embraced any man on this earth, in my faith, but I have embraced the doctrine of salvation, and it is no matter what the people do in Utah. Here is the doctrine of salvation, talk against that, prove that to be false, or find a flaw in it, if you can. As for the people, they cannot save you. Never embrace a man in your faith, for that is sectarianism.

There are many of the men and women now before me who have looked for a pure people, and have supposed that that was a proof of the truth of our doctrines, but they will never find such a people until Satan is bound, and Jesus comes to reign with his Saints. The doctrine we preach is the doctrine of salvation, and it is that which the Elders of this Church take to the world, and not the people of Utah.

Some of the Elders seem to be tripped up in a moment, if the wicked can find any fault with the members of this Church; but bless your souls, I would not yet have this people faultless, for the day of separation has not

yet arrived. I have many a time, in this stand, dared the world to produce as mean devils as we can; we can beat them at anything. We have the greatest and smoothest liars in the world, the cunningest and most adroit thieves, and any other shade of character that you can mention.

We can pick out Elders in Israel right here who can beat the world at gambling, who can handle the cards, cut and shuffle them with the smartest rogue on the face of God's foot-stool. I can produce Elders here who can shave their smartest shavers, and take their money from them. We can beat the world at any game.

We can beat them, because we have men here that live in the light of the Lord, that have the Hely Priesthood, and hold the keys of the kingdom of God. But you may go through all the sectarian world, and you cannot find a man capable of opening the door of the kingdom of God to admit others in. We can do that. We can pray the best, preach the best, and sing the best. We are the best looking and finest set of people on the face of the earth, and they may begin any game they please, and we are on hand, and can beat them at anything they have a mind to begin. They may make sharp their two-edged swords, and I will turn out the Elders of Israel with greased feathers, and whip them to death. We are not to be beat. We expect to be a stumbling block to the whole world, and a rock of offence to them.

I never preached to the world but what the cry was, "That damned old Joe Smith has done thus and so." I would tell the people that they did not know him, and I did, and that I knew him to be a good man; and that when they spoke against him, they spoke against as good a man as ever lived.

I recollect a conversation I had with

them bring those priests, editors, and politicians who have howled so long about us, and we will attend to their cases. But I pray that I may never witness such scenes as I have in the midst of this people. If they will let us alone, we will preach the Gospel; and if they do not, we will do it, and we will build up Zion, if all the devils in hell howl. Let us know that we have to build up Zion until the Spirit of peace shall overrule our country.

Do you ever reflect upon the matter? Look at St. Louis. More murders have been committed there in almost any few days than have been committed in this Territory since it was organized. It is customary there to have murders committed almost daily; but we, above all other people, ought never to have such a crime committed in our midst; and we never have had, so far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned.

I will now tell you something. It is a secret; and I wish you to keep it to yourselves. There have been men here who have had their plans arranged for robbing; and I will take the liberty to say that, when we find them, "judgment will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet." Those are my feelings, and I express them plainly, that the good and honest may be able to pass from the Eastern States to California, and back and forth, in *peace*. And when

a "Mormon" unlawfully disturbs anybody, I say, let him be overtaken by a "Vigilance Committee." And when mobocrats come here, they will find a "Vigilance Committee." Now, listeners, send that to the States, if you wish. I want the people in the States to know that there are a few poor curses here, and also to know that we do not want a gang of highwaymen here. And I say to all such characters, if you come here and practice your iniquity, we will send you home quick, whenever we can catch and convict you. I wish such characters would let the boys have a chance to lay their hands on them.

If men come here and do not behave themselves, they will not only find the Danites, whom they talk so much about, biting the horses' heels, but the scoundrels will find something biting *their* heels. In my plain remarks, I merely call things by their right names. Brother Kimball is noted in the States for calling things by their right names, and you will excuse me if I do the same.

We will build up Zion and establish the kingdom of God upon the earth, and the wicked cannot help themselves. I have not built up this kingdom, neither did Joseph Smith. What the Lord told brother Joseph to do, that he did. And what the Lord tells you and me to do we will do, by the help of God. May God bless us all. Amen.



if the wicked can find fault with the members of this Church; but bless your souls, I would not yet have this people faultless, for the day of separation has not yet arrived. I have many a time, in this stand, **dared the world to produce as mean devils as we can; we can beat them at anything.** We have the greatest and smoothest **liars in the world**, the cunningest and most adroit **thieves**, and any other shade of character that you can mention.

We can pick out **elders** in Israel right here who can beat the world at gambling, who can handle the cards, cut and shuffle them with the smartest rogue on the face of God's foot-stool. I can produce **elders** here who can shave their smartest shavers, and take their money from them. **We can beat the world at any game.** . . . We are the best looking and finest set of people on the face of the earth, and they may begin any game they please, and we are on hand, and can beat them at anything they have a mind to begin. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 77)

## Bill Hickman

When Brigham Young said that “we have the meanest devils on the earth . . . and we intend to keep them, for we have **use for them**,” he may have had Bill Hickman in mind, for he was considered a man that would do anything that was mean. Under the date of October 28, 1871, in the *Church Chronology*, Bill Hickman was called a “notorious outlaw.” The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts called Hickman “a typical western desperado” (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 133).

The interesting thing concerning Bill Hickman is that toward the end of his life he wrote a book in which he stated that he had committed his crimes with the approval of the Mormon Church leaders. He claimed that he had committed murders by the orders of Brigham Young and the Apostle Orson Hyde. J. H. Beadle, who wrote the preface to *Brigham's Destroying Angel*, made this observation:

. . . while all the Mormon people spoke of Bill Hickman as a desperately bad man, and guilty of untold murders, I was struck by two curious and then unexplainable facts:—

1. The first was, that while everybody, from Brigham Young down, united in calling Hickman a murderer, and while evidence could easily be collected of several of his crimes, not a single attempt had been made by priest or people to bring him to justice. For twenty years the Mormons had the courts and juries exclusively in their own hands. During that time many persons had been executed for crime; they could do as they pleased in judicial matters, and abundant evidence was before them against Hickman; but no grand jury ever moved, there was no indictment, and not even a complaint before an examining magistrate. This indicated something—but what? Until I obtained Hickman's manuscript, I never fully knew. When Hickman was arrested all the Mormon speakers and papers united in denouncing him as “a notorious criminal, who had long been able to evade justice.” If this was known, as they admit it was, why was not Hickman arrested and punished during that long period in which the Mormons arrested and punished whomsoever they pleased? (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, Salt Lake City, 1904, Preface)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, claims that the Mormon Church was not aware of Bill Hickman's crimes:

To Beadle's mind the significant thing about Hickman was that the Mormons knew he was bad, and yet did not prosecute him. Prosecute him for what? The West was full of bad and dangerous men who couldn't be prosecuted until they were caught in a crime. Hickman's early crimes were **all most secret, known only to himself**, until he confessed to Beadle. (*Sounding Brass*, p. 258)

Actually, many of Bill Hickman's crimes were publicly known. As early as December 25, 1859, the Mormon Apostle Amasa Lyman admitted that Hickman had a bad reputation:

The spirit of thieving stalks abroad in our land, . . . say some, “we hear that there is stealing done over yonder (pointing towards the west), and that it is **Bill Hickman** and his gang that do it.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 307)

The truth of the matter is that the Mormon leaders were well aware of Bill Hickman's crimes and they actually shielded him from justice. This fact is made very plain in the journal of John Bennion. The reader will remember that in 1860 Bennion felt that Hickman should be punished for his evil deeds, but he soon learned that Bishop Gardiner “had been bound & could not act” against Bill Hickman and that Orson Hyde (President of the Twelve Apostles) taught that a man should not be punished for stealing from the “gentiles”:

. . . br Hyde said **speaking of stealing** that a man may **steal & be influenced by the spirit of the Lord to do it** that **Hickman had done it years past** said that he **never would institute a trial against a brother for stealing from the gentiles** but stealing from his brethren he was down on it he laid down much teaching on the subject . . . (“John Bennion Journal,” October 13, 1860)

The reader will remember that we quoted Mary Ettie V. Smith as stating that the Apostle Orson Hyde received stolen goods at Kanesville and that Bill Hickman was involved in this stealing. There is also good reason to believe that Hickman was involved in crime in Nauvoo. The *Warsaw Signal*, March 26, 1845, printed a letter which contained this statement: “Wm. A. Hickman stole some bacon, was put in jail, in a few days was bailed out by two brother Mormons . . .”

The *Bloomington Herald*, November 22, 1845, published this statement by Edward Bonney concerning Bill Hickman:

. . . Haight left, went immediately to Fort Madison, . . . thence to Nauvoo and procured some witnesses headed by Wm. A. Hickman, a fugitive from justice, from Iowa, who has served one term, in the Alton penitentiary and has twice been chased from Missouri into Nauvoo, with stolen horses, within the last two months. (*The Bloomington Herald*, November 22, 1845, typed copy)

After the trouble in Nauvoo, Hickman was arrested and put in prison. In his autobiography Bill Hickman states:

I stayed a few days, and when the jailer came in one afternoon, I knocked him down, took his bowie knife and cut the chain off my leg, took his pistols and left, and have not been back since, which was about twenty-five years ago. This was the only time I was ever in prison. (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, p. 46)

Bill Hickman came west to make his home among the Mormons. In Utah the Mormon leaders not only protected him from justice, but they also encouraged him in his crimes. J. H. Beadle stated:

. . . long after Hickman was known as a murderer he was successively promoted to a number of offices; he was Sheriff and Representative of one county, Assessor and Collector of Taxes, and Marshal; and during all this time he was on terms of personal intimacy with Brigham Young. (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, Preface, p. vi)

Under the date of May 9, 1854, Hosea Stout recorded this statement in his journal: “Judge Appleby organized the County of Green River by appointing Robert Alexander Clerk of Probate Court, W.A. Hickman Sheriff also assessor and Collector as well as prosecuting attorney” (*On the Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 516).

The Mormon leaders not only allowed this “notorious outlaw” to be Sheriff, but they also gave him a position in the church. In 1858 Bill Hickman “was chosen as Counselor to Acting Bishop Harker.” (*Historical Record*, by Andrew Jenson, vol. VI, p. 343, as quoted in *On the Mormon Frontier*, vol. 2, p. 668, n. 36)

In his book, *Desert Saints*, page 149, Nels Anderson gives this interesting information:

On August 30, 1856, General Burr wrote to his chief, Thomas A. Hendricks, Commissioner of the General Land Office in Washington, that one of his deputies, a Mr. Troskolowski, had been “assaulted and severely beaten



by three men under the direction of one Hickman, a noted member of the so-called “Danite band.” The beating had been administered, it was alleged, by order of higher-ups in the church.

Burr tried without effect to get the Utah civil authorities to take action against the offenders. He was told that the beating was probably deserved because the men of Burr’s party had been “talking and railing against their religion.” He concluded: “We Gentiles feel that we cannot rely upon the laws for protection and are permitted to live here at the pleasure of the rulers.”

On page 137 of the same book, Nels Anderson states that “It is hard to believe that he [Hickman] had not been a killer for the Mormon cause; . . .”

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information concerning Hickman:

. . . Joseph Troskolawsski, the United States Deputy Surveyor for Utah . . . put on the stagecoach for Ohio twelve-year-old Emma Wheat, who was being forced into a marriage she detested. On the following evening in the Salt Lake City store run by Hooper and Thomas S. Williams he met and spoke briefly to Bill Hickman, the famed Danite or Shenpip. When Troskolawsski stepped outside, three other Danites sneaked behind him and knocked him down. While one beat him about the head with the butt of a whip, the others stamped and kicked him. “Kill the d—d son of a b—h,” Hickman screamed joining in, “kill him quick, I’ll stand the consequences.” Hooper and Williams eventually rescued Troskolawsski, who by then was choking on his own blood. . . .

The next day David H. Burr, the Surveyor General, burst into Young’s office and asked if the prophet was going to tolerate such crimes. Young sent for Hickman, then bragging about his feat all over town, and talked to him for two hours. The following day he got Hickman out of town by sending him with presents for the Indians at Green River. (*The Lion of the Lord*, 1969, p. 127)

Like his predecessor, however, Young hated Gentiles. Even the army could not stop atrocities. One day in the mid-1860’s Hickman, angered because a favorite wife had been refused credit, beat and dragged down a flight of stairs Fay Kimball, a clerk for Bell and Livingston, the merchants. Kimball was bedridden for several months and then left Utah. His uncle, the senior partner of Kimball and Lawrence, complained to Young about the attack but, leaving the prophet’s office, bumped into Hickman, who asked: “Well, what did you make of it?” (*Ibid.*, pp. 269-270)

Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith related the following:

About the time referred to in the last chapter, Jesse T. Hartly came to Great Salt Lake City. He was a man of education and intelligence, and a lawyer by profession. I never knew where he was from, but he was a Gentile when he came, and soon after married a Mormon girl by the name of Bullock, which involved a profession, at least, of Mormonism. . . . At all events, the eye of the Prophet was upon him from the first, . . . the Prophet regarded him with some suspicion, . . . when all the Heads of the Church were on the stand; and the Prophet rose at once with that air of judicial authority, from which those who know him best understand there is no appeal, and said: “This man, Hartly, is guilty of heresy. He has been writing to his friends in Oregon against the Church, and has attempted to expose us to the world, and he should be sent to hell cross lots.” This was the end of the matter as to Hartly.

His friends after this avoided him, and it was understood that his fate was sealed. He knew that to remain was death; he therefore left his wife and child, and attempted to effect an escape.

Not many days after he had gone, Wiley Norton told us, with a feeling of exultation, that they had made sure of another enemy of the Church. That the bones of Jesse Hartly were in the canons, . . .

Nearly a year and a half after this, when on my way to the States, I saw the widow of Jesse Hartly at Green River. She had been a very pretty woman, and was at that time but twenty-two years old. I think

she was the most heartbroken human being I have ever seen . . . she commenced by saying:

You may have suffered; . . . But the cruelty of my own fate, I am sure, is without a parallel—even in this land of cruelty.

I married Jesse Hartly, knowing he was a “Gentile” in fact, but he passed for a Mormon, but that made no difference with me, although I was a Mormon, because he was a noble man, and sought only the right. . . . I do not understand all he discovered, or all he did; but they found he had written against the Church, and he was cut off, and the Prophet required as an atonement for his sins, that he should lay down his life. . . . They kill those there who have committed sins too great to be atoned for in any other way. The Prophet says, if they submit to this he can save them; otherwise they are lost. Oh! that is horrible. But my husband refused to be sacrificed, and so set out alone for the United States: thinking there might be at least a hope of success. I told him when he left me, and left his child, that he would be killed, and so he was. William Hickman and another Danite, shot him in the canons; and I have often since been obliged to cook for this man, when he passed this way, knowing all the while, he had killed my husband. My child soon followed after its father, and I hope to die also; for why should I live? They have brought me here, where I wish to remain, rather than to return to Salt Lake, where the murderers of my husband curse the earth, and roll in affluence unpunished. (*Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress, And Present Condition*, Hartford, 1870, pp. 308-311)

In his confessions Bill Hickman admitted that he had killed Hartley by orders of Orson Hyde and Brigham Young:

When we had got across what was known as the Big Mountain, and into East Canon, some three or four miles, one Mr. Hartley came to us from Provo City. This Hartley was a young lawyer . . . and had married a Miss Bullock, of Provo, . . . at the April Conference, Brigham Young, before the congregation, gave him a tremendous blowing up, calling him all sorts of bad names, and saying he ought to have his throat cut, which made him feel very bad. He declared he was not guilty of the charges.

I saw Orson Hyde looking very sour at him, and after he had been in camp an hour or two, Hyde told me that he had **orders from Brigham Young**, if he came to Fort Supply to have him used up. “Now,” said he, “I want you and George Boyd to do it.” I saw him and Boyd talking together; then Boyd came to me and said: “It’s all right, Bill; I will help you to kill that fellow.” One of our teams was two or three miles behind, and Orson Hyde wished me to go back and see if anything had happened to it. . . . Hartley stepped up and said he would go. Orson Hyde then whispered to me: “Now is your time; don’t let him come back.” We started, and about half a mile on had to cross the canon stream, . . . While crossing, Hartley got a shot and fell dead in the creek. His horse took fright and ran back to camp.

I went on and met Hosea Stout, who told me the team was coming close by. I turned back, Stout with me, for our camp. Stout asked me if I had seen that fellow, meaning Hartley. I told him he had come to our camp, and he said from what he heard he ought to be killed. I then told him all that had happened, and he said that was good. When I returned to camp Boyd told me that his horse came into camp with blood on the saddle, and he and some of the boys took it to the creek and washed it off. Orson Hyde told me that was well done; that he and some others had gone on the side of the mountain, and seen the whole performance. We hitched up and went to Weber River that day. (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, pp. 97-98)

It is interesting to note that Hosea Stout’s diary confirms the fact that Hartley was in trouble with the church. Under the date of April 9, 1854, he stated: “I was not present much of the time but the same subject was continued

and lectures were delivered against girls marrying gentiles & winter Saints & one Mr Hartley cut off from the Church . . . He is said to be a runaway horse thief from Oregon came here & married joined the church & had sent up his name to get his endowment” (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 512).

Hickman claimed that Hosea Stout was in the company going to Green River, and that he told him of the murder. Hickman said that this trip took place “about the first of May” in 1854 (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, p. 96). Hosea Stout’s diary confirms the fact that he was in the party with Hickman. Under the date of May 1, 1854, he stated:

About noon I started for Green River G. W. Boyd hauling my provision and luggage. I took Henry Allen along with me . . . We crossed over the first mountain & encamped on the creek changing my loading in the mean time into W.A. Hickman’s wagon. (*On The Mormon Frontier*, vol. 2, p. 514)

Notice that Hosea Stout mentions “G. W. Boyd” as being in the party. Bill Hickman stated that a man by the name of “George Boyd” was supposed to help with the murder.

Hickman claimed that Apostle Hyde helped cover up the fact that Hartley had been murdered:

When supper was over, Orson Hyde called all the camp together, and said he wanted a strong guard on that night, for that fellow that had come to us in the forenoon had left the company; he was a bad man, and it was his opinion that he intended stealing horses that night. This was about as good a take-off as he could get up, it was all nonsense; it would do well enough to tell; as everyone that did not know what had happened believed it. (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, p. 98)

Hosea Stout also mentioned Orson Hyde’s speech to the company:

This evening Elder Hyde informed the company that Mr J—Hartley who did not make his appearance to day with us had most likely had some dishonest intentions by his leaving & wished the guard to renew their diligence lest their horses might be stolen. (*On The Mormon Frontier*, vol. 2, p. 514)

J. H. Beadle makes this observation concerning Hickman’s confession of the murder of Hartley:

In a few brief words Hickman narrates one of the most cruel, causeless, and cold-blooded murders ever perpetrated. Hartley’s case is the one most generally known in Utah of all mentioned in this book, . . . Of all the crimes committed by Hickman this one seems to rest most heavy on his conscience. In conversation he strove to avoid it, and at this point his manuscript is heavily blurred and blotted, with frequent erasures, and every evidence of an uncertain hand and hesitating mind, impelled to, yet dreading the narration. (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, p. 201)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, claims that “The Hickman stories were not true.” He accuses J. H. Beadle of inventing these stories: “. . . we believe that those tales are Beadle’s invention, . . .” (*Sounding Brass*, p. 264).

Although J. H. Beadle was very opposed to the Mormon Church, there is evidence that Mr. Beadle did not invent the stories. R. N. Baskin, who was mayor of Salt Lake City and a member of the supreme court of the State of Utah, made this statement in his book *Reminiscences Of Early Utah*:

One evening in 1872, Samuel Gilson, who discovered the gilsonite deposits in eastern Utah, came to my office and informed me that the United States marshal held a warrant for the arrest of Bill Hickman, and that he was hiding to avoid arrest by the marshal and escape assassination by members of the Danite organization of which he had formerly been an active member. That having piloted General Connor’s soldiers into Utah, and having severed his connection with that organization, his former Danite associates had become suspicious of him, and were seeking his life, and that he wanted to employ me as

his attorney. I most positively refused to become Hickman’s attorney. Mr. Gilson then stated that Hickman had expressed a desire to make a confession, and that even if I did not accept the offer of employment, that if I would agree to meet him he thought Hickman was in such a state of mind that he would tell me what he knew regarding the numerous murders which had been committed in the Territory. As I was desirous of ascertaining whether such an organization as the Danites or “Destroying Angels”—which was so much talked about and feared, especially by apostate Mormons—actually existed, and as Hickman—if it did exist—would know, I consented to meet him . . . Hickman, about eleven o’clock at night, in company with Mr. Gilson, came to my office. . . . I said to him that if, as generally asserted, he was or had been a member of such an organization, and had participated in the numerous murders which had been committed in the Territory, that the only atonement now within his power was to reveal the facts, as it might aid in preventing the commission of other like crimes. After deliberating for about a minute, he said that during his seclusion his mind had been greatly disturbed by the matter, and that he had finally concluded to reveal the facts to me, although in doing so he would acknowledge his own guilt. Procuring a pad and pencil I took down all that he said and also cross-examined him closely. We were together several hours. At that meeting he revealed most of the numerous crimes contained in his published confession, but in more minute detail. I told him that I wanted him to meet me again and repeat his statements. This he consented to do. Within two or three weeks thereafter I met him a second time and, as before, took down what he said and cross-examined him. My purpose in doing this was to test the truth of his confession, because if not true, his several statements would in all probability be inconsistent. At various times when I had leisure I critically examined and compared the statements, and while in the second one he mentioned two cases of murder which he had omitted in the first one, and in the second added some details which were not contained in the first, I failed to detect any contradictory statements. The statements of other persons made to me tended to corroborate his confessions. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R. N. Baskin, pp. 36-37)

On page 150 of the same book, Mr. Baskin stated:

The Danites were an organization in the Mormon church. Its existence was stated by Bill Hickman in his confession made to me. He gave me the names of more than a score of its active members, among whom were a number of reputed notorious Danite assassins. He stated that the members were bound by their covenants to execute the orders of the priesthood, and that when a direct order or intimation was given to “use up” anyone, it was always executed by one or more of the members, according to the circumstances of the case. That such an organization existed is conclusively shown by the numerous mysterious murders which were never investigated by the executive officers of the Territory, or any attempt made to prosecute the guilty parties. The Mormon sermons, the confessions of Hickman and Lee, and numerous other circumstances made plain its existence. Hickman confessed to me that he personally knew of thirteen persons having been murdered, some of them by him, and others by various Danites; that at one time he murdered a man by the name of Buck at the personal request of Brigham Young. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, p. 150)

On page 264 of his book, *Sounding Brass*, Dr. Hugh Nibley makes the following statement:

The patent absurdity of the “Confessions” becomes apparent on the most superficial investigation and grows with every monotonous episode.

. . . how could Beadle and everybody else back East know all about Hickman and his Danites for years before Hickman ever divulged his deep secrets?

R. N. Baskin shows, however, that Hickman’s crimes were well known at least 13 years before Hickman made his confession:

In the early days of my experience in Utah, I frequently had cases which required me to go to the city of Provo, and when attending court there I lodged at Mr. Bullock’s hotel. Having heard of the murder of Hartley, and that



his wife was a sister of Mr. Bullock, I asked him on one occasion, while stopping at his hotel, whether what I had heard respecting the murder of Hartley was true. He stated that Hartley had incurred the displeasure of Brigham Young, who at a public meeting had used strong language against Hartley, and had ordered him to leave the speakers stand; that on account of the charges made by Brigham, which Bullock said were not true, Hartley was put under the ban of the church, and decided to change his residence. He joined the company of Judge Appleby, and while leaving the Territory was **murdered by Hickman**. I asked Mr. Bullock if the matter had ever been investigated by the executive authorities, and he said it had not been, although it was generally known that Hickman had committed the crime. I also asked him why he had not instituted proceedings against Hickman. He shook his head significantly and replied, "Don't press me for an answer to that question."

The following account of the murder of Hartley, given by his wife **thirteen years before the confession of Hickman**, is contained in Mrs. Mary V. Smith's book entitled, "Fifteen Years Residence with the Mormons," pp. 309-310, . . . (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, pp. 152-153)

The fact that Mrs. Hartley told of the murder of her husband years before Hickman made his confession, and that Hosea Stout's diary confirms many of the details found in Hickman's confession, seems to prove that Hartley was murdered by orders of the Mormon leaders. We must agree with J. H. Beadle when he says that "those accustomed to judging the weight of evidence can come to but one conclusion: Jesse Hartley was murdered for apostasy, . . ." (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, Appendix C, pp. 204-205).

### Orrin Porter Rockwell

When Brigham Young said, "We have the meanest devils on the earth in our midst, and we intend to keep them, for we have use for them," he might also have had Orrin Porter Rockwell in mind. On June 11, 1878, the *Salt Lake Tribune* stated that it was estimated that Orrin Porter Rockwell had "participated in at least a hundred murders for the Church, none of which he ever divulged" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 11, 1878, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 9).

The Mormon writer Nicholas Van Alfen claimed that Rockwell had only killed when it was necessary for the sake of law and order:

He killed many men. But these cases were always in the performance of his duty as an officer. Notwithstanding the many attempts of Porter's critics to slander him, there is not a single proof of his ever having taken a life wantonly. (*Porter Rockwell—The Mormon Frontier Marshal*, 1964, p. 93)

In studying the life of Orrin Porter Rockwell we are very indebted to Harold Schindler, a Mormon writer who has had the courage to examine Rockwell's life in a scholarly and objective manner.

Just how many men Rockwell actually put to death may never be known; there is no doubt, however, that he did not hesitate to kill when he felt that it was necessary. Harold Schindler relates the following:

After consulting with several other elders in the posse, Rockwell decided to end the chase and return to Tooele, but first he intended to deal with the prisoners. Deeming it unwise to turn the four loose "to commit more depredations and perhaps shed the blood of some useful citizen . . . they were sacrificed to the natural instincts of self-defence." At a signal from Rockwell, the four Utes were shot to death, their bodies dumped into shallow graves scooped from the desert sand. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, University of Utah Press, 1966, p. 201)

The Mormon apologist Nicholas Van Alfen makes these comments regarding Rockwell:

Turning the other cheek had not gone into Porter's mental and emotional make up. The suffering, tears and cries of his people left him barren of any compassion for the rogue and the lawless. This affected him the rest of his life as a law man in Utah. . . .

Rockwell learned how to shoot with an unexcelled accuracy . . . In his mind every target was a formidable foe who was trying to beat him to the draw. He prepared himself well for Port lived to be an old man through a gun-fighting career that was second to none. (*Porter Rockwell—The Mormon Frontier Marshal*, pp. 17-18)

Nicholas Van Alfen even has to admit that Orrin Porter Rockwell sometimes took the law into his own hands:

One cannot resist the conclusion that Porter nourished a growing hatred and an attitude of revenge against the type of men that characterized lawlessness and brutality. He became a peril to them because at times he was **his own court, judge and executioner**. (*Ibid.*, pp. 47-48)

On page 65 of the same book, we find the following:

John F. Everet, an old timer of Springville, Utah, knew Rockwell . . . Mr. Everet praised Porter highly but criticized him because too often he did not bother with the courts. If a man stole a horse and had to be chased a hundred miles, it was **not** likely that the thief would be brought in alive.

On page 96 of the same book, Nicholas Van Alfen stated that "Porter always said that he never killed a man unless he deserved it."

According to Mr. Schindler's research, Orrin Porter Rockwell was born on June 28, 1813. He was one of the first to join the Mormon Church. In Missouri Rockwell joined the dreaded Danite band.

After the Mormons had been driven from Missouri, they were filled with hatred and ideas of revenge. Joseph Smith felt that "Lieutenant Governor Boggs" was chiefly responsible for driving the Mormons out of Missouri and at one time said he was worthy of death:

All earth and hell cannot deny that a baser knave, a greater traitor, and a more wholesale butcher, or murderer of mankind ever went untried, unpunished, and unhung—since hanging is the popular method of execution among the Gentiles in all countries professing Christianity, instead of **blood for blood**, according to the law of heaven. (*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 435)

On May 6, 1842, an attempt was made on the life of Lilburn W. Boggs. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

**Unfortunately** for Joseph, the Mormons and mankind generally, Boggs **recovered** despite three bullet wounds in the head and neck. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 1966, p. 171)

Many people believed that Joseph Smith had predicted Boggs' death. Harold Schindler stated:

About this time Joseph angrily prophesied that Lilburn Boggs would "die by violent hands within a year." And in a fit of pique he added that Governor Carlin would die in a ditch. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 72)

Anti-Mormon writers have always accused Orrin Porter Rockwell of shooting Boggs. The Mormon writer Harold Schindler has done a great deal of research on this matter, and although he does not definitely state that Rockwell was guilty of the attempted assassination, he does bring out the fact that Rockwell was in the area and that he was using an assumed name:

Therefore, in February of 1842 when Orrin Porter Rockwell gathered up his family to visit Independence so that Luana, eight months pregnant with their fourth child, could be with her parents, Bennett, so he says, was not surprised at Joseph's explanation that Rockwell had gone to "fulfill prophecy." Once in Independence Rockwell set out to find work . . . Since Jackson County settlers still harbored a hatred for Mormons, Rockwell used an assumed name while in the area; he called himself Brown. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell*, p. 73)

On pages 75 and 76 of the same book Mr. Schindler states:

Outside the house a crowd had quickly gathered at first report of the murder attempt and now numbered nearly two hundred persons; one of the spectators searching the spot where the gunman had stood found traces of



footprints in the mud, and in a partially-filled puddle he discovered a gun. Sheriff Reynolds studied the firearm carefully, . . . a storekeeper named Uhlinger recognized the weapon as one stolen from his shop.

“I thought the niggers had taken it, but that hired man of Ward’s—the one who used to work with the stallion—he came in to look at it just before it turned up missing!” the storekeeper said.

Grateful for a genuine lead, Reynolds began looking for the hired hand, “to ask some questions,” but the man was nowhere to be found. It was not long before the sheriff determined that Mr. Brown, the suspect, was Orrin Porter Rockwell.

On page 80 of the same book, Mr. Schindler states:

If Rockwell did fire the fateful shot, it would appear the decision was of his own making; he had no love for Boggs, and in Rockwell’s eyes the man had sinned against the church in ordering the expulsion of the Saints from Missouri. It also is possible Rockwell felt he was performing a religious duty as a member of the priesthood in fulfilling Joseph’s prophecy.

On May 28, 1842, the Mormon newspaper, *The Wasp*, published a communication signed by “Vortex.” In this article we find the following: “Boggs is undoubtedly killed, according to report, but who did the **noble deed** remains to be found out.”

It is interesting to note that even John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, felt that Joseph Smith was responsible for the attempted murder of Boggs:

As soon as the Lord gave Smith and the church favor in the eyes of the people among whom they lived, and began to prosper them and many began to gather to Nauvoo, Smith and the leaders began to exercise their hatred to those whom he called his enemies. He hired a man by the name of Porter Orin Rockwell (who was one of the Gadianton band of whom I heretofore spoke) to go and murder a man by name of L. W. Boggs who had been elected governor by the people of the state of Missouri; but was not governor at the time Smith sent him to commit this crime. Boggs resided at Independence, the place appointed for the land of Zion, yea, the New Jerusalem; so Rockwell went to Independence, and at night he went to the house of Boggs and shot him through the window; but he did not kill him, only wounded him severely, but was not sufficient testimony to condemn him, though it is a well-known fact that he was hired by Smith to kill Boggs. (*John Whitmer’s History*, chapter 21)

Joseph Smith held Orrin Porter Rockwell in full fellowship, and on one occasion he said that Rockwell “was an innocent and a noble child and my soul loves him” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 125).

Nicholas Van Alfen gives this interesting information: “Rockwell claimed throughout his life that Joseph Smith promised him if he would never cut his hair he would never die at the hands of his enemies” (*Porter Rockwell—The Mormon Frontier Marshal*, p. 41).

In 1845 Orrin Porter Rockwell found himself in trouble for shooting Frank Worrell. The Mormons admitted that Rockwell killed Worrell, but they claimed it was in self defense. Anti-Mormons, on the other hand, felt that Worrell was killed in a deliberate ambush (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, pp. 19-21).

This statement concerning Rockwell appeared in the *Quincy Whig*:

Rockwell’s career of crime is familiar to those who have heard or read of Mormon proceedings in Hancock. He was Joe Smith’s right hand man, and stood ready to execute any order of Joe’s however criminal. . . .

Rockwell has been a perfect desperado—reckless and ruffianly to the last extreme. A few days since one of the Higbees had occasion to visit Nauvoo on business. . . . Rockwell, hearing of his presence in the city, followed him about, threatening his life, firing pistols over his head etc., . . .

The day or two previous to his arrest, he was roaming about the streets of Nauvoo, with his weapons belted around him, swearing that the troops were now disbanded—that he intended to regulate the county, and openly boasted that he had killed Worrell, and that there were more in the county that he intended to serve in the same way. The fact is, the fellow had so long been suffered to run at large in violation of the law, that he began to think he could continue his career with impunity. (*Quincy Whig*, May 6, 1846, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell*, p. 153)

While it was obvious to the “Gentiles” that Rockwell was a murderer, the Mormons honored him and even initiated him into the secret “Council of Fifty” (*Quest For Empire*, pp. 223-225).

One of the cruelest deeds the Mormons engaged in was the Aiken massacre. Evidence shows that Rockwell was involved in this massacre. J. H. Beadle gave the following information concerning the Aiken massacre:

The party consisted of six men: . . . They left Sacramento early in May, 1857, going eastward to meet Johnston’s army, as was supposed. On reaching the Humboldt River they found the Indians very bad, and waited for a train of the Mormons from Carson, who were ordered home about that time. With them they completed the journey. John Pendleton, one of that Mormon party, in his testimony on the case says: “A better lot of boys I never saw. They were kind, polite, and brave; always ready to do anything needed on the road.”

The train traveled slowly, so the Aikin party left it a hundred miles out and came ahead, and on reaching Kaysville, twenty-five miles north of Salt Lake City, they were all arrested on the charge of being spies for the Government! . . . The Aikin party had stock, property, and money estimated at \$25,000. Nothing being proved against them they were told they should be “sent out of the Territory by the Southern route.” Four of them started, leaving Buck and one of the unknown men in the city. The party had for an escort, O. P. Rockwell, John Lot, \_\_\_\_\_ Miles, and one other. When they reached Nephi, one hundred miles south, Rockwell informed the Bishop, Bryant, that **his orders were to “have the men used up there.”** Bishop Bryant called a council at once, and the following men were selected to assist: J. Bigler (now a Bishop,) P. Pitchforth, his “first councillor,” John Kink, and \_\_\_\_\_ Pickton.

The doomed men were stopping at T. B. Foote’s, and some persons in the family afterwards testified to having heard the council that condemned them. The selected murderers, at 11 p.m., started from the Tithing House and got ahead of the Aikins’, who did not start till daylight. The latter reached the Sevier River, when Rockwell informed them they could find no other camp that day; they halted, when the other party approached and asked to camp with them, for which permission was granted. The weary men removed their arms and heavy clothing, and were soon lost in sleep—that sleep which for two of them was to have no waking on earth. All seemed fit for their damnable purpose, and yet the murderers hesitated. As near as can be determined, they still feared that all could not be done with perfect secrecy, and determined to use no firearms. With this view the escort and the party from Nephi attacked the sleeping men with clubs and the kingbolts of the wagons. Two died without a struggle. But John Aiken bounded to his feet, but slightly wounded, and sprang into the brush. A shot from the pistol of John Kink laid him senseless. ‘Colonel’ also reached the brush, receiving a shot in the shoulder from Port Rockwell, and believing the whole party had been attacked by banditti, he made his way back to Nephi. With almost superhuman strength he held out during the twenty-five miles, and the first bright rays of a Utah sun showed the man, who twenty-four hours before had left them handsome and vigorous in the pride of manhood, now ghastly pale and drenched with his own blood, staggering feebly along the streets of Nephi. He reached Bishop Foote’s, and his story elicited a well-feigned horror.

Meanwhile the murderers had gathered up the other

three and thrown them into the river, supposing all to be dead. But John Aiken revived and crawled out on the same side, and hiding in the brush, heard these terrible words:

“Are the damned Gentiles all dead, Port?”

“All but one—the son of a b— ran.”

Supposing himself to be meant, Aikin lay still till the Danites left, then, without hat, coat, or boots, on a November night, the ground covered with snow, he set out for Nephi. Who can imagine the feelings of the man? Unlike “Colonel” he knew too well who the murderers were, and believed himself the only survivor. To return to Nephi offered but slight hope, but it was the only hope, and incredible as it may appear he reached it next day. He sank helpless at the door of the first house he reached, but the words he heard infused new life into him. The woman, afterwards a witness, said to him, “Why, another of you ones got away from the robbers, and is at Brother Foote’s.”

“Thank God; it is my brother,” he said, and started on. The citizens tell with wonder that he ran the whole distance, his hair clotted with blood, reeling like a drunken man all the way. It was not his brother, but “Colonel.” . . .

Bishop Bryant came, extracted the balls, dressed the wounds, and advised the men to return, as soon as they were able, to Salt Lake City. . . . The murderers had returned, and a new plan was concocted. “Colonel” had saved his pistol and Aiken his watch, a gold one, worth at least \$250. When ready to leave they asked the bill, and were informed it was \$30. They promised to send it from the city, and were told that “would not do.” Aiken then said, “Here is my watch and my partner’s pistol—take your choice.” Foote took the pistol. When he handed it to him, Aikin said, “There, take my best friend. But God knows it will do us no good.” Then to his partner, with tears streaming from his eyes, “Prepare for death, Colonel, we will never get out of this valley alive.”

According to the main witness, a woman of Nephi, all regarded them as doomed. They had got four miles on the road, when their driver, a Mormon named Wolf, stopped the wagon near an old cabin: informed them he must water his horses; unhitched them, and moved away. Two men then stepped from the cabin, and fired with double-barreled guns; Aikin and “Colonel” were both shot through the head, and fell dead from the wagon. Their bodies were then loaded with stone and put in one of those “bottomless springs”—so called—common in that part of Utah. . . .

Meanwhile Rockwell and party had reached the city, taken Buck and the other man, and started southward, plying them with liquor. It is probable that Buck only feigned drunkenness; but the other man was insensible by the time they reached the Point of the Mountain. There it was decided to “use them up,” and they were attacked with slungshots and billies. The other man was instantly killed. Buck leaped from the wagon, outran his pursuers, their shots missing him, swam the Jordan, and came down it on the west side. He reached the city and related all that occurred, which created quite a stir. Hickman was then sent for to “finish the job,” which he did, as related in the text. (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, Appendix F, pp. 206-210)

There can be no doubt that the Mormons did take the Aiken party as prisoners and murder them as related by Beadle. Under the date of November 3, 1857, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary: “Cal mail came and **six Cal prisoners taken** at Box Elder supposed **spies**” (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 644).

On Nov. 9, 1857, Hosea Stout recorded that he was “guarding the prisoners from Cal.” On November 20, 1857, Stout made this very revealing entry in his diary:

**O. P. Rockwell** with 3 or four others started with **4 of the prisoners**, which we had been guarding for some days, South to escort them through the settlements to Cal via South route The other two are going to be permitted to go at large and remain till spring and the guard dismissed. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 645)

The Mormon writer Harold Schindler has done a great deal of research concerning the Aiken massacre. On pages 272-278 of his book, Mr. Schindler gives this information:

All six men of the Aiken Party rode with Rockwell’s escort as far as Lehi, where Chapman and Jones, who preferred to remain behind, took their leave. . . . Escorting the two Aikens, Tuck Wright, and Colonel Eichard were Rockwell, Sylvanus Collett, and two others, witnesses said. . . .

Twenty years later, when Sylvanus Collett was on trial for his life (charged with the murder of John Aiken), two Mormons, Joseph Skeen and his son, William, both took the witness stand and testified that Collett had told them the whole story of the Aiken Party. . . . Troubled by the gossip, Skeen asked Collett about it and was told “that he [Collett] had been an escort to the Aiken party from the north, they having been delivered over to Rockwell . . . and himself, with the order to make away with them.”

The Skeens, father and son, agreed in substance that Collett gave this account of what transpired after the eight-man party left Nephi:

Because the Californians were large and strong, a second group of men had been sent from Nephi . . .

After dinner . . . someone shouted that Indians were attacking. The four men who had been sent in advance to act as reinforcements created a confusion to distract the Californians, and at a signal (here the Skeens were in conflict, the father testifying Collett gave the sign, the son saying it was Rockwell) each of the four men in the escort, having selected a victim in advance, slipped a bar of iron from his sleeve and struck his man on the head. “. . . Collett missed (his) man,” William Skeen told the court. In fact, he said, Collett was being badly beaten until Rockwell pulled a revolver and, firing across the campfire, shot Collett’s man in the back. The wounded Californian lurched, fell into the brush, and escaped in the darkness. The bodies of the two Aikens and the colonel were thrown into the river; Tom Aiken and Eichard were dead, but the icy water apparently revived John Aiken, who crawled to shore and made his way to Nephi. . . . Mrs. Frances Cazier, who had watched the drama with interest, noticed Rockwell and three others enter town after dark. Next morning she was standing in the doorway of her home adjacent to the Tithing Office and saw Rockwell sitting inside with several other men. At Collett’s trial she testified she heard a voice say: “Boys, you’ve made a bad job of it; two got away. Nephi won’t be trusted with another job.”

Fourteen-year-old Alice Lamb listened to a conversation between several Nephi residents in which the return of Aiken and Wright was discussed and a decision made to lure the two men to another spot and “there to make away with them.” . . . Guy Foote and Reuben Down had occasion to pass the Tithing Office corral; there they saw horses and pack animals belonging to the Aiken Party.

Four or five days after the two survivors had made their surprise appearance in Nephi, they felt able to travel . . . Shortly before they rode out of the settlement, Rockwell and several men were seen heading north.

The events of the next few hours remain much of a mystery, but William Skeen swore that Collett had boasted of ambushing Wright and Aiken at a place called Willow Creek, eight miles from Nephi. The buggy had stopped for water when the door to a nearby header’s shack flew open and a couple of double-barreled shotguns poked out and fired, killing the two men instantly. The bodies were weighted with rocks and thrown in the deep springs bubbling four miles away. . . .

Before long, Aiken Party property was turning up everywhere. Guy Foote saw one of his friends walking around in John Aiken’s coat, with what appeared to be amended bullet hole in the back. . . . As Rockwell and his men rode back to Great Salt Lake City, they did not go unnoticed. In Provo, Richard Ivie marked the iron grey mule now in possession of the four Mormons as the same animal he had admired in the Aiken Party. George Murdock in Lehi recognized an iron grey mule and a roan pony

in the Rockwell outfit as Aiken stock.

The rest of the story is a puzzle, but the known facts would indicate that as Rockwell and his companions continued toward Great Salt Lake City, they were joined, for one reason or another, by A. J. “Honesty” Jones. Perhaps he, too, recognized the mule or some other Aiken gear. Near Point of the Mountain an attempt was made on his life, but Jones was able to escape with only bruises. He made it across the Jordan River and back to Great Salt Lake City, where he began “telling all that happened, which is making a big stink!”

Bill Hickman, fresh from a murder himself, enters the picture at this point. Told that “the boys have made a bad job of trying to put a man away.” Hickman says he was ordered to find Jones and “use him up.” (*Orrin Porter Rockwell*, pp. 272-278)

In his confessions Bill Hickman wrote:

After being at home some time, word was sent to me to have my boys look for a man that had got away from a party at what was called the Point of the Mountain, . . . two hours later a messenger came from the city and told me I was wanted at Brigham Young’s office immediately. I mounted my horse and was in town in an hour, and went to Young’s office. He asked me if I “had seen the boys?” I asked him what boys? and he answered, “Geo, Grant and William Kimball.” I told him I had not. I then told him I had got word to come to his office, and wished to know what was wanting. He answered: “The boys have made a bad job of trying to put a man out of the way. They all got drunk, bruised up a fellow, and he got away from them at the Point of the Mountain, came back to this city, and is telling all that happened, which is making a big stink.” He said I must get him out of the way and use him up. He told me to go and find the boys, meaning Generals Grant and Kimball, they both being acting generals in the Utah militia at that time, and arrange things with them, so as to have him taken care of.

I found them, and they told me O. P. Rockwell, with a party, had made a bad job and wanted help, **and I had been sent for to wind it up**. Said they: “Did Brigham tell you what was up?” I told them he did, and had sent me to arrange things. They told me they had things fixed; that when the party, to which this man belonged, first came into the Territory, they had all stopped twelve miles north of the city, and remained several weeks in the neighborhood where George Dalton lived; that Dalton was in town, and they had got him to see this man (whose name I never heard, only he was called Buck), and take him home with him, for he had confidence in Dalton. They said Dalton understood it, and they were waiting for me to come and meet him on the road. They then hunted up Dalton, and told him they had things all right now. Dalton was to leave town a little before sundown, and pass the Hot Springs three miles north of the city, and take the lower road on which there was not much travel, and I was to meet him. I was to know his team because both of his horses were white, and he was to drive very fast.

All being arranged, and the sun about an hour high. I got my horse, and the question was then asked how many men I wanted to go with me. I told them I did not want anyone. They said I must have somebody, and I told them then I would take a man that was standing by, by the name of Meacham. They got him a horse, and we went to the place appointed, and just at dark the wagon came. We called to it to halt. The man, Buck, got a shot through the head, and was put across the fence in a ditch. A rag was hung on a brush to know the place.

We returned to the city to Gen. Grant’s, as per agreement, and found him at home with Gen. Kimball, O. P. Rockwell, and somebody else whose name I do not recollect now. They asked if all was right, and I told them it was. They got spades, and we all went back, deepened the ditch, put him in and buried him, returned to Grant’s, took some whisky, and separated for the night. The next day Kimball and I went to **Brigham Young’s**, told him that Buck was taken care of, and there would be no more stink about his stories. He said **he was glad of it**. Buck was the last one of the Aiken’s party, of whom there has been considerable said. (*Brigham’s Destroying Angel*, pp. 127-130)

Less than two years after the Aiken massacre the U.S. marshal P. K. Dotson held a warrant for Orrin Porter Rockwell’s arrest. Dotson found it impossible to make the arrest, and Orrin Porter Rockwell retained his freedom for many years. He was in full fellowship with the church during this period, and on June 1, 1873, he was called on a mission to Grass Valley (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 356). Finally, on September 29, 1877, he was arrested for his part in the Aiken massacre. Under the date of September 29, 1877, we find this statement in Jenson’s *Church Chronology*:

O. Porter Rockwell was arrested and imprisoned in Salt Lake City, being charged with murder, said to have been committed about twenty years before. Oct. 5th, he was admitted to bail in the sum of \$15,000. (*Church Chronology*, p. 100)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for September 30, 1877, reported:

Another one of “our best society,” O. P. Rockwell, was jugged yesterday. This man has been one of the chief murderers of the Mormon Church, opening his career of blood in Nauvoo, under the regime of the Prophet. He was indicted a day or two ago by the grand jury of the First District Court, for participation in the horribly atrocious murder of the Aiken party, in 1858, on the Sevier. He was arrested, yesterday, by the United States marshal, in this city, and sent to the penitentiary for safekeeping. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 30, 1877, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell*, p. 360)

Rockwell was 64 years old at the time he was arrested for his part in the Aiken massacre. On June 9, 1878, Orrin Porter Rockwell died, and therefore he was never brought to justice. On June 11, 1878, the *Salt Lake Tribune* carried these statements concerning Rockwell:

Porter Rockwell is another of the long list of Mormon criminals whose deeds of treachery and blood have reddened the soil of Utah, and who has paid no forfeit to offended law. . . . Brutal in his instincts, lawless in his habits, and a fanatical devotee of the Prophet, the commands of this gloomy despot he received as the will of the Lord, and with the ferocity borne of mistaken zeal, he grew to believe that the most acceptable service he could render the Almighty, was, as Lear expresses it, to “kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!” He killed unsuspecting travelers, whose booty was coveted by his prophet-master. He killed fellow Saints who held secrets that menaced the safety of their fellow criminals in the priesthood. He killed Apostates who dared to wag their tongues about the wrongs they had endured. . . . The Danite Rockwell retired from the avenging business, and for some years past has been extensively engaged in raising horses and cattle. But the recollection of his evil deeds haunted him, and conscience preyed upon his soul like the undying worm. To gain escape from this fiery torment he sought the intoxicating bowl, and whenever he appeared in the streets of Salt Lake, it was generally in the character of a vociferating maniac.

He died in time to escape the hand of the law. Being indicted in the First District for participating in the Aiken murder, District Attorney [Philip T.] Van Zile was gathering together a mass of evidence which must have convicted him of the crime charged, and brought him to the same fate as was visited upon the “butcher Lee.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, June 11, 1878, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell*, pp. 363-364)

From the evidence that Harold Schindler has furnished there can be little doubt that Orrin Porter Rockwell was a murderer. Even Thomas G. Alexander, of the Brigham Young University, had to admit that Schindler’s “evidence that Rockwell may have been responsible for the murders for which he stood indicted at the time of his death (pages 273-279) appears fairly reliable” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Autumn 1967, p. 101).





## 29. Temple Work

In order to really understand present-day Mormonism and the hold it has upon its people it is necessary to know about the work that goes on in Mormon temples. The ceremonies that are performed in these temples are secret, and only “worthy” members of the Mormon Church may participate in them.

### Baptism for the Dead

The Mormon doctrine of baptism for the dead was first practiced in Nauvoo, Illinois. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

Joseph Smith himself . . . went into the Mississippi River one Sunday night after meeting, and baptized a hundred. I baptized another hundred. The next man, a few rods from me, baptized another hundred. We were strung up and down the Mississippi, **baptizing for our dead**. But there was no recorder, we attended to this ordinance without waiting to have a proper record made. But the Lord told Joseph that he must have recorders present at these baptisms—men who could see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and record these things. Of course, **we had to do the work over again**. Nevertheless, that does not say the work was not of God. (*The Deseret Weekly*, vol. 42:554, April 25, 1891, as quoted in *Temples of the Most High*, by N. B. Lundwall, Salt Lake City, 1962, p. 69)

On May 2, 1843, Charlotte Haven wrote a letter in which she stated:

. . . we spied quite a crowd of people, and soon perceived there was a baptism. Two elders stood knee-deep in the icy cold water, and immersed one after another as fast as they could come down the bank. We soon observed that some of them went in and were plunged several times. We were told that they were baptized for the dead who had not had an opportunity of adopting the doctrines of the Latter Day Saints. So these poor mortals in ice-cold water were releasing their ancestors and relatives from purgatory! We drew a little nearer and heard several names repeated by the elders as the victims were doused, and you can imagine our surprise when the name **George Washington** was called. So after these fifty years he is out of purgatory and on his way to the “celestial” heaven! (*Overland Monthly*, December 1890, pp. 629-30)

Many of the baptisms for the dead which were performed in Joseph Smith’s day had to be done over. Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, stated:

Joseph in his life time did **not** receive every thing connected with the doctrine of redemption, . . .

I have said that a man cannot be baptized for a woman, nor a woman for a man, and it be valid. . . . Well then, what has been our course on former occasions? Why, here go our beloved sisters and they are baptized in the river or the font for their uncles, for their fathers, for their grandfathers and great grandfathers. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 6, p. 121)

On April 9, 1857, Wilford Woodruff made these comments concerning this matter:

When that was first revealed, . . . we began to be baptized for our dead. A man would be baptized for both male and female. . . . I . . . was baptized for all my dead relatives I could think of, both male and

female, as did others; but, afterwards, we obtained more light upon the subject, and President Young taught the people that men should attend to those ordinances for the male portion of their dead friends, and females for females. . . . How did we feel when we first heard the living could be baptized for the dead? We all went to work at it as fast as we had an opportunity, and were baptized for everybody we could think of, without respect to sex. . . . by-and-by, it was revealed, through the servants of the Lord, that females should be baptised for females, and males for males; but the full particulars of this order was not revealed till after the days of Joseph: . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 84-85)

The early Mormon leaders seem to have been very confused concerning baptism for the dead. Brigham Young once stated:

Hundreds and thousands, I suppose, were baptized before any record was kept at all, and they were baptized over, and a record kept . . . the Lord did not reveal everything at once; but I need not dwell on this any longer. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, p. 241)

The Mormon leaders teach that the spirits of people who have died cannot enter the kingdom of heaven until a Mormon is baptized for them by proxy. They admit, however, that there is a possibility that some of the spirits may not receive the work which they do for them. Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, said:

Perhaps my father may not receive the Gospel. If he don’t, my baptism will not do him any good. . . . You might as well go and be baptized for a devil as for a man who will not receive the Gospel in the spirit world. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 90)

Some people have wondered why these baptisms, if they are really necessary, could not be performed in heaven. President Joseph Fielding Smith tries to make it appear that this would be impossible: “It is easy to understand how they in person could believe in Christ and even obtain the spirit of repentance; but **water is an element of this world**, and how could spirits be baptized in it, or receive the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost? The only way it can be done is vicariously, someone who is living acting as a substitute for the dead” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 141). Joseph Fielding Smith’s argument is not too convincing, for he states that the souls of fish “lived before they were placed naturally in this earth,” and the “fishes of the sea” will be “recreated, or renewed, through the resurrection, for they too are living souls” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 63, 74). Since Joseph Fielding Smith maintains that the souls of fish are “in the similitude of their bodies,” we would assume that there would have to be something for them to swim in.

Daniel H. Wells, who was a member of the First Presidency, gave another reason why baptisms could not be performed in heaven: “You **cannot grapple a spirit to baptize it**, neither can you perform the sealing ordinances in the spirit, . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, p. 240)

We find this information about baptizing the dead in Joseph Smith’s *History*:

Chrysostum says that the Marchionites

practiced baptism for their dead. “After a catechumen was dead, they had a living man under the bed of the deceased; then coming to the dead man, they asked him whether he would receive baptism, and he making no answer, the other answered for him, and said that he would be baptized in his stead; and so they baptized the living for the dead.” The church of course at that time was **degenerate**, and the particular form might be incorrect, but the thing is sufficiently plain in the Scriptures, hence Paul, in speaking of the doctrine, says, “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:29). (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 599)

Bible scholars are divided as to the meaning of the verse which Joseph Smith quotes. Some claim that it means one thing, and others believe that it means something else. Mormons, of course, believe that it applies to temple work, where a living person is baptized in behalf of someone that has died. Now, even if this verse does apply to a living person being baptized for someone else, as the Mormons maintain, this does not prove that faithful Christians were practicing it. Paul does not say that “we” are baptized for the dead, but rather that “they” are baptized for the dead. The use of the word “they” instead of the word “we” could make a great deal of difference in the meaning of the statement. If a Protestant made the statement, “Why do **they** then pray for the dead, if the dead rise not at all,” it would not mean that he was endorsing the Catholic doctrine of prayers for the dead. However, if a person made the statement, “Why do **we** then pray for the dead, if the dead rise not at all,” we would assume that he believed in prayers for the dead.

A good discussion of 1 Corinthians 15:29 is found in the pamphlet *Baptism for the Dead*:

A careful reading of this epistle shows that the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthian Saints using the words “I,” “we,” “ye,” “you,” when referring to them and/or himself all the way through his message; but when he mentions baptism for the dead, he changes to “they.” “What shall they do?” “Why are they then baptized for the dead?” In the verses following, he returns to the use of “we” and “you.” Thus he seems to disassociate himself and the righteous Saints from the methods used by those groups who at that time were practicing baptism for the dead.

The Apostle Paul did not urge his hearers to practice the principle, nor did he command it. He merely used the case as an illustration. Paul did not worship the “unknown God” of the pagans because he found an altar to the pagan unknown god (Acts 17:23) . . . There is no mention of baptism for the dead in the Bible up until Paul—and no mention afterward. Paul, as well as the other apostles, rather than endorsing baptism for the dead as then practiced, seems to have exercised a counteracting influence upon this ordinance, for it was perpetuated only among heretics.

The Bible contains no specific authorization of this doctrine. Christ does not mention it, nor do any of the apostles, save Paul; who makes only an indirect reference to it. (*Baptism for the Dead*, by Charles R. Hield and Russell F. Ralston, 1951, pp. 23-24)

The fact that Christ never mentioned baptism for the dead is strong evidence that no such doctrine existed in the early Christian church.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt admitted that the Bible does not contain any information as to how baptism for the dead should be performed. His excuse for the Bible not containing this information was that it was probably lost or taken out of the Bible. He stated:

This doctrine of baptism for the dead must have been well understood by them, . . . Now when, and in what manner was this doctrine communicated to them? It may have been fully developed to them in the epistle which he says that he had previously written to them. This doctrine may have been as important as baptism to the living. Does the written or unwritten word of God with which Christendom are acquainted, inform them anything about how this ceremony is to be performed? Does it inform them who is to officiate?

Who is the candidate in behalf of the dead? What classes of the dead are to be benefited by it? Does scripture or tradition inform us in what particular baptism for the dead will affect them in the resurrection? Does it inform us whether baptism for the dead can be administered in all places, or only in a baptismal font, in a temple consecrated for that purpose? **All these important questions remain unanswered by scripture** and tradition. (*Orson Pratt's Works*, 1891 edition, p. 205)

It is interesting to note that in trying to establish the doctrine of baptism for the dead, Joseph Smith contradicted his own “Inspired Version” of the Bible. Hebrews 11:40 of the King James Version, which is often used by Mormons to prove that work for the dead is necessary, reads as follows: “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Joseph Smith, however, changed this verse to read as follows in the Inspired Revision of the Bible: “God having provided some better things for them through their sufferings, for without **sufferings** they could not be made perfect.”

Now, in section 128 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Joseph Smith had to ignore his own rendition of this verse in trying to establish the doctrine of baptism for the dead. He quoted the King James Version instead of his “inspired” rendition. In verse 15 he said: “. . . these are principles in relation to the dead and the living . . . their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as Paul says concerning the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.” In verse 18 he said: “. . . what is that subject? It is the baptism for the dead. For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect.” Joseph Smith certainly contradicted himself with regard to Hebrews 11:40.

## Endless Genealogies

Baptism for the dead is now performed only in temples. The Mormon people are very zealous about this work for the dead, for they believe they are saving their ancestors. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, stated: “. . . we are the only people that know how to save our progenitors, . . . we in fact are the **saviours of the world**, if they ever are saved; . . .” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 163). Wilford Woodruff, who became the fourth President, felt that he had saved John Wesley, Columbus, and all of the Presidents of the United States except three:

The dead will be after you, they will seek after you as they have after us in St. George. They called upon us, knowing that we held the keys and power to redeem them.

I will here say, before closing, that two weeks before I left St. George, the spirits of the dead gathered around me, wanting to know why we did not redeem them. . . . These were the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and they waited on me for two days and two nights. . . . I straightway went into the baptismal font and called upon brother McCallister to baptize me for the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and fifty other eminent men, making one hundred in all, including **John Wesley, Columbus**, and others; I then baptized him for **every President of the United States**, except three; and when their cause is just, somebody will do the work for them. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, p. 229)

The Mormons are now spending millions of dollars doing genealogical research in order to find the names of those who have died so that they can do proxy baptism for them. Bruce R. McConkie, who is a member of the First Council of the Seventy, made this statement concerning this matter:

Before vicarious ordinances of salvation and exaltation may be performed for those who have died . . . 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. Much of the genealogical source material of

various nations of the earth has been or is being microfilmed by this society; **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*, 1966, pp. 308-309)

Heber J. Grant, the seventh President of the Church, once stated:

"I am deeply interested in genealogical work. . . . I have in my employ a sister who devotes **all her time** to the preparation of genealogical records. Last year I expended in the neighborhood of \$200.00 per month during the entire year for genealogical research work pertaining to the families to which I belong in direct descent and through marriage." (*Temple Mormonism*, New York, 1931, p. 10)

The *Deseret News* told of a woman who searched 15 years to find the names of some of her ancestors:

"You may hunt for years before you find what you're looking for," Mrs. Triptow said, "then you might discover it all at once."

She proved it one day last month, when in one minute she found the names of four new ancestors for whom she had **searched 15 years**. She spotted their names and christening dates in the Bedlington (England) parish register printout at the Genealogical Society library. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, April 23, 1966, p. 14)

Wallace Turner gives this information concerning genealogical research:

This microfilming of records is a tremendous work, growing in scope continually, operated entirely for the benefit of the ancestor tracing that leads to the vicarious Temple ceremonies. As of July 1, 1965, the microfilm division had a total of 406,682 rolls of microfilm of 100 feet each. There were records from all over the world. Just consider that even from the Bahamas they have 608 rolls containing about 780,000 separate pages of records. The total microfilm load included 579,679,800 pages of documents. There were more than 5 billion names in the files. . . .

The church puts about \$4 million a year into the Genealogical Society. It has 575 employees and is run by a board which includes two apostles. The microfilm unit sends crews all over the world to locate and photograph records. . . . The negative microfilms are stored in a great vault system dug out of the rocks of Cottonwood Canyon in the Wasatch Mountains southeast of Salt Lake City. This underground storage system was produced by the church at a cost of \$2.5 million. It has six vaults, which each hold a million rolls of film. As of July 1, 1965, the church had just over 400,000 rolls, not enough to half fill one vault. During 1964, the microfilming units worked in fourteen countries. (*The Mormon Establishment*, pp. 81-82)

Robert Mullen gives the following information about the storage vaults and the genealogical work done by the church:

You see three huge banklike vault doors. One, you are told, weighs fifteen tons and could withstand almost any blast. Each of these vault doors leads to a 350-foot long room, extending even farther back into the granite mountain. These immense rooms, also lined with softly painted steel and floored and lighted like the most modern offices, are connected with three cross extensions of similar design. . . .

The vaults have their own self-contained power plant, their own emergency supplies, fresh air filters, and other equipment to endure even a severe atomic attack, which one can only suppose was at least at the back of the minds of designers and builders. But the vaults are not reserved for emergency use; they are in daily service as the principal storage area for the 250 million or more feet of microfilm in the Church's genealogical library. . . . The most recent acquisition, for example, are microfilms of every birth and death in New Zealand since records were kept. . . .

Today genealogical work is a favorite occupation with many of the Church members. On a normal business day in Salt Lake City you will find perhaps one hundred men and women entering the centrally located genealogical headquarters and peering into the big reading machines on which microfilms are projected. Others will be consulting Church experts, furnishing the family names and other material that can be fed into the information retrieval computers.

(*The Latter-day Saints: The Mormons Yesterday and Today*, New York, 1966, pp. 193-195)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards boasts that the Mormon Church "has one of the largest and best genealogical libraries in the world. . . . It is safe to predict that in the not too far distant future, the Church Genealogical Library will not only be the best in the world but will also be a repository of most all other genealogical libraries" (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 1957 edition, p. 192; 1979 edition, p. 187).

Many people have wondered why the Mormon Church spends so much time and money searching for the names of the dead when there are so many people starving to death. It would seem far better to spend this money and time on the living and let the Lord take care of the dead. The Mormon leaders admit that they will never be able to find all of the names until the Lord gives them during the millennium. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

This work will obviously have to continue throughout the thousand years of the millennium. . . . At present, we are dependent upon the written records that have been kept. But during the millennium we will have direct communication with the heavens, when all the names and information concerning those who are ready and worthy of baptism will be revealed. (*Ibid.*, 1957 edition, p. 178; 1979 edition, pp. 173-171)

Since the Mormon leaders believe that the Lord will have to provide many of the names anyway, would it not be better to spend this time and money helping the living instead of searching for the names of the dead? Because of this emphasis on work for the dead, one Mormon has compared the church to the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians, of course, spent a fantastic amount of time and money building pyramids and doing other work for their dead.

The Book of Mormon says that the false churches "rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries" (2 Nephi 28:13), yet the Mormon Church is spending millions of dollars building beautiful temples. The Salt Lake Temple, for instance, cost between 3 and 4 million dollars and took almost 40 years to build. According to figures given to N. B. Lundwall by the Church Historian's Office, the church has spent \$16,925,000.00 on Temples alone, and these figures do not include the temples built in Ogden, Provo and Oakland. If we added the millions of dollars spent for genealogical research the figures would amount to a great deal more. Thus it does appear that the Mormons are similar to the ancient Egyptians in their attitudes toward the dead. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, has made these statements:

. . . the greatest commandment given us, and made obligatory, is the temple work in our own behalf and in behalf of our dead. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 149)

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, "The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to **seek after our dead**." (*Ibid.*, p. 146)

The reader will remember that Jesus never even mentioned the doctrine of baptism for the dead. In Mark 12:29-31 we find:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

There are two scriptures written by Paul which have been used against the genealogical work done by members of the Mormon Church:

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)

## Elijah the Prophet

In Malachi 4:5-6 we read the following:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

These verses are very important to the Mormons, for it is claimed that Elijah the Prophet appeared in the Kirtland Temple and opened the “door of salvation” for those who are dead, thus fulfilling this prophecy. In the Introduction to vol. 2 of the *History of the Church* the following appears: “The work done by Elijah was to open the door of salvation for the dead.” The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards states:

To which church in all the world today can one go, other than The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and be told of Elijah’s coming in fulfillment of this prophecy? His coming is of the utmost importance in the sight of God . . .

When the keys of this dispensation for the turning of the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, had been committed, by Elijah, into the hands of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, they proceeded to explain the new and strange doctrine of baptism for the dead to their associates and the membership of the Church. They made it plain that the children here upon the earth can be baptized for their loved ones who have passed away without enjoying this privilege. The knowledge of this great truth has caused the “heart of the children” to turn “to their fathers,” and the children to seek out their genealogy so they can be baptized for their kindred dead. (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 1957 ed., pp. 169, 171; 1979 ed., pp. 165, 167)

Upon careful examination we find that verses 5 and 6 of the 4th chapter of Malachi could not apply to an appearance of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple because the Bible says that this prophecy was fulfilled in Christ’s day. In fact, Jesus himself said that it was fulfilled. In order to understand the words of Jesus we must understand that the name Elias is the Greek word for the Hebrew name Elijah. Any good dictionary has this information in it, but a person does not have to consult a dictionary to find this information. The Bible itself proves this to be true. James tells us that Elias prayed and it rained not for the space of three years and six months (James 5:17), but 1 Kings 17:1 makes it clear that it was Elijah, thus proving that Elijah and Elias are two names for the same person. Elijah is the Old Testament name and Elias is the New Testament name, just the same as Noe is the New Testament name for Noah of the Old Testament (see 1 Peter 3:20). Therefore, any time Elijah is mentioned in the New Testament he is called Elias. With this thought in mind we can see that the prophecy of the coming of Elijah was fulfilled in John the Baptist. Jesus said:

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

And if ye will receive it, **this is Elias** [or Elijah], which was to come. (Matthew 11:12-14)

Matthew 17:10-13 makes it even clearer that the prophecy concerning the coming of Elijah has already been fulfilled in John the Baptist:

And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things.

But I say unto you, that **Elias** [or Elijah] **is come already, and they knew him not**, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed, Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

Then the disciples understood that **he spake unto them of John the Baptist**.

Verse 6 of the 4th chapter of Malachi contains this information concerning Elijah: “And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”

The Mormon leaders claim that this prophecy was fulfilled in their temple work; however, the Bible makes it clear that this prophecy has been fulfilled by John the Baptist. In Luke 1:13 and 17 we read:

But the angel said unto him, . . . thou shalt call his name John. . . .

And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of **Elias** [or Elijah], **to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children**, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Now that we know that Elias is the New Testament name for Elijah, we can certainly see that Joseph Smith made a serious mistake when he claimed that he saw both Elias and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 110:12-13 we read:

After this, **Elias** appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, . . .

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for **Elijah** the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, . . .

It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith made the same mistake in Section 27 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, for he spoke of Elias and Elijah as two separate persons. Joseph Smith also made the same mistake concerning the Prophet Isaiah. Esaias is the New Testament name for Isaiah; however, Joseph Smith spoke of Isaiah and Esaias as two separate people (see *Doctrine and Covenants* 76:100).

## All in Vain?

Perhaps the most embarrassing thing to the Mormon Church concerning the doctrine of baptism for the dead is the Book of Mormon itself. The Book of Mormon is supposed to contain the “fulness of the everlasting Gospel.” In the *Doctrine and Covenants* 42:12 we read:

And again, the elders, priests, and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, **which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel**.

Joseph Smith said the angel told him that “the **fulness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it** [the Book of Mormon], as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants;” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith—History 1:34).

Even though the Book of Mormon is supposed to contain the fulness of the gospel, it never mentions the doctrine of baptism for the dead, **not even once!** The word “baptism” appears 25 times in the Book of Mormon. The word “baptize” appears 28 times. The word “baptized” appears 85 times, and the word “baptizing” appears 6 times, but the doctrine of baptism for the dead is **not** even mentioned **once**.

The excuse that the doctrine of baptism for the dead was removed from the Bible certainly would not prove true in the case of the Book of Mormon. The Catholics never had the Book of Mormon and therefore they could not have removed it.

Actually, the Book of Mormon condemns the very ideas that lead to the practice of baptism for the dead. It plainly indicates that there is no chance for a person to repent after death if he has known the gospel and has rejected it. In Alma 34:33-35 we read:

And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for **after this day of life**, which is given us to prepare for

eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be **no** labor performed.

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

For behold, if ye have **procrastinated** the day of your repentance even until **death**, behold, ye **have** become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he **doth seal** you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord **hath withdrawn** from you, and hath **no** place in you, and the devil **hath all power over you**; and **this is the final state of the wicked**. (Book of Mormon, Alma 34:33-35)

Thus we can plainly see from these words that are found in the Book of Mormon that those who rejected the gospel in this life will never have another chance to receive it. Therefore, baptism would avail them nothing. Those who have received the gospel in this life need no work done for them. This leaves only little children and those who have never had a chance to accept the gospel. The Book of Mormon states that little children are saved without baptism: “Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell.” (Moroni 8:13)

The Book of Mormon also teaches that those who have died without the law need no baptism:

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**— (Moroni 8:22)

Therefore, according to the Book of Mormon, there is no class of people that baptism for the dead could help. Those who have not had the law need no baptism, therefore, it would be a waste of time to search out their genealogies and be baptized for them. Those who have heard and rejected the gospel do not have another chance for repentance, therefore, baptism for the dead could not help them. There is no one, then, that baptism for the dead could help. Millions of dollars that could be used to help and save the living are spent in doing work for the dead, which, according to the Book of Mormon, is **all in vain**.

Certainly the fact that the Book of Mormon does not mention baptism for the dead should prove to a Mormon that it is a false doctrine. Truly, it is going beyond the teachings of Christ. Since the Book of Mormon claims to contain the fulness of the gospel and does not even mention baptism for the dead we can conclude that it is a false doctrine. When a glass is full of water it can contain no more, and since baptism for the dead is not found in what purports to be the “fulness of the gospel” we can only conclude that it is no part of the gospel. In the Book of Mormon we read:

And whoso shall **declare more** or less than this, and establish it for **my doctrine**, the same cometh of evil, and is **not** built upon my rock; . . . and the gates of hell stand open to receive such when the floods come and the winds beat upon them. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 11:40)

## Temple Marriage

The Mormon Church teaches that it is necessary for a person to be married or sealed in the Temple so that he can obtain the highest exaltation in the hereafter. This work is done for both the living and the dead. The doctrine of Temple Marriage comes from Section 132 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. This is a revelation given to Joseph Smith on July 12, 1843. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, made these statements:

If you want salvation in the fullest, that is exaltation in the kingdom of God, so that you may become his sons and his daughters, you have

got to go into the temple of the Lord and receive these holy ordinances which belong to that house, which cannot be had elsewhere. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 44)

It fills my heart with sadness when I see in the paper the name of a daughter or a son of members of this Church, and discover that she or he is going to have a ceremony and be married outside of the temple of the Lord, because I realize what it means, **that they are cutting themselves off from exaltation in the kingdom of God**.

**Sorrow in resurrection if no eternal marriage.** These young people who seem to be so happy now, when they rise in the resurrection—and find themselves in the condition in which they will find themselves—then there will be **weeping**, and **wailing**, and **gnashing of teeth**, and **bitterness of soul**; . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 60)

On page 61 of the same book, the following statement appears: “**Civil marriage makes servants in eternity**.” On page 62, this statement appears: “**Celestial marriage makes Gods in eternity**.”

The Mormon leaders teach that those who marry in the temple will have children forever. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, explains:

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.” (*Doctrine & Covenants* 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.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 238)

President Joseph Fielding Smith states: “What is eternal life? It is to have ‘a continuation of the seeds forever and ever’” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 9). On page 73 of the same volume, President Smith says: “Restrictions will be placed upon those who enter the terrestrial and testial kingdoms, and even those in the celestial kingdom who do not get the exaltation; **changes** will be made in their bodies to suit their condition; and there will be no marrying or giving in marriage, nor living together of men and women, because of these restrictions.”

Mormon theology teaches that even God Himself has a wife and that in the pre-existence we lived as His sons and daughters. Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy makes this statement:

Jesus is man’s spiritual brother. We dwelt with Him in the spirit world as members of that large society of eternal intelligences, which included **our heavenly parents** . . . (*The Gospel Through the Ages*, 1958, p. 21)

The Mormon authorities teach that it is impossible for a person to receive the highest exaltation without temple marriage. Milton R. Hunter remarked:

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*, p. 119)

Non-Mormon writers have stated that the Apostle Paul was probably not married, but Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, states: “Paul himself was married. Of this there is no question” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 119). Some of the early Mormon leaders taught that Jesus was married, but there is not much said on this subject today.

If the Mormon doctrine of “sealing” were true we would expect to find evidence that Jesus was married in the temple. No such evidence has been found. Dr. Hugh Nibley states:

5. Before deciding whether Jesus was a polygamist we would have to know whether he was married. If he was that information has been withheld. Some

of the recently discovered early Christian writings from Egypt imply very clearly that he was married, but of course they don't prove it, since their authority has yet to be determined. I know of no official teaching of the Church to the effect that Jesus was a polygamist. There are all sorts of things we don't know about Jesus, and this is one of them. (Letter by Hugh Nibley to Morris Reynolds, May 12, 1966)

If the doctrine of eternal marriage was known by the early church, we would expect to find it mentioned many times throughout the Bible. Instead, however, we do not find it mentioned **once** in the entire Bible. In fact, Jesus seems to have taught just the opposite:

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. (Luke 20:34-36)

While Mormon apologists have a hard time explaining the fact that the Bible does not support the doctrine of temple marriage, they are faced with an even greater problem when they turn to the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon, which is supposed to contain the “fulness of the gospel,” does not contain even one passage to support the doctrine of temple marriage!

President Joseph Fielding Smith feels that the early Christians “received their endowments,” but he admits that they did not have a temple:

The saints of the primitive Christian Church did not have access to a temple. The temple in Jerusalem was the only temple, and it had fallen into the hands of unbelievers—wicked men—and therefore those members of the Church in that dispensation could not perform this labor for dead in the temple. Therefore all ordinances they performed for the dead had to be performed elsewhere. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 169)

The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards frankly admits that Temple Marriage did not come from the Bible:

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*, 1966, p. 195)

Temple Marriage or sealing was, like many other doctrines, not part of the original Mormon faith. The first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, published in 1835, condemned such a teaching. On page 251 of the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, we read as follows:

1 . . . we believe, that **all** marriages in this church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, should be solemnized in a **public** meeting, or feast, prepared for that purpose: and that the solemnization should be performed by a presiding high priest, high priest, bishop, elder, or priest, not even prohibiting those persons who are desirous to get married, by other authority. . . .

4 All legal contracts of marriage made **before** a person is baptized into this church, should be held **sacred and fulfilled**.

This section on marriage was so diametrically opposed to the later teachings of the church, that it finally had to be completely removed from the *Doctrine and Covenants*. It was removed from the 1876 edition when the revelation on plural marriage and sealing was put in. Joseph Fielding Smith makes these statements concerning the removal of the section on marriage:

At this conference two other articles were also received, read, approved, and ordered to be printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, one on **marriage** and the other on laws and government. These two articles appeared in each edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* from the first edition in 1835, until 1876. . . .

**Why article on marriage was deleted.** In the days of Nauvoo, the Lord gave Joseph Smith a revelation on marriage; that revelation appears under date of July 12, 1843. . . . It would not have been consistent to have allowed that article on marriage to stay in when it contradicted the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, so they took it out, and very properly. That is a matter of history that we ought to be familiar with.

**False teachings of article on marriage.** I want to read from this article on marriage to show you that it is not a revelation and could not be: “According to the custom of all civilized nations, marriage is regulated by laws and ceremonies; therefore, we believe that all marriages in this Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints should be solemnized in a public meeting or feast prepared for that purpose,”—(I do not believe that at all. We solemnize marriages in the temple of the Lord, at an altar. We do not have a crowd, and it is not a feast.)—“And that the solemnization should be performed by a presiding high priest, high priest, bishop, elder, or priest, not even prohibiting those persons who are desirous to get married, of being married by other authority.”

**I do not believe that.** I believe every marriage in this Church should be performed by a high priest who is appointed by the one who holds the keys to perform that ceremony for time and eternity, at the altar in the house of the Lord, and it ought not to be performed anywhere else. . . .

So it would be inconsistent, I say, to keep that article in here, when the revelation known as section 132 came to the Prophet Joseph Smith and was added to the revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, pp. 194-197)

## Connected With Polygamy

The revelation which contains the information concerning Temple Marriage is also the revelation which contains the teaching of polygamy—i.e., Section 132 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Therefore, polygamy and Temple Marriage stand or fall together. Charles Penrose, who was later sustained as First Counselor in the First Presidency, made this perfectly clear in a conference at Centerville, Utah:

Elder Charles W. Penrose spoke a short time . . . He showed that the revelation that had been the subject of attention was [the] only one published on Celestial Marriage, and if the doctrine of plural marriage was repudiated so must the glorious principle of marriage for eternity, **the two being indissolubly interwoven with each other**. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 45, p. 454)

This statement by Charles Penrose certainly makes it clear that a person cannot believe in the doctrine of Temple Marriage without also believing in polygamy. The following appeared in the *Millennial Star*, vol. 15, page 226: “We cannot be married to our husbands for eternity, without subscribing to the **law that admits a plurality of wives**.”

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

. . . if **plurality of marriage is not true** or in other words, if a man has no divine right to marry two wives or more in this world, **then marriage for eternity is not true**, and your faith is all vain, and all the sealing ordinances and powers, pertaining to marriages for eternity **are vain, worthless, good for nothing; for as sure as one is true the other also must be true**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 21, p. 296)

While the Mormon people no longer are allowed to practice polygamy, they have not repudiated the doctrine. They still teach that polygamy is practiced in heaven. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart makes it very clear that plural marriage is still an “integral part of LDS scripture.” In his book *Brigham Young and His Wives*, Copyright 1961, Mr. 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 scriptures 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 of the Council of the Twelve, 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 eternity. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 14)

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, makes this comment concerning his “wives”:

I get a great deal of comfort out of the thought that if I am faithful and worthy of an exaltation, my father will be my father, . . . 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. That helps to keep me sober. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 67)

While Mormon men are allowed more than one wife in heaven, a woman can have but one husband. President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

When a man and a woman are married in the temple for time and all eternity, and then the man dies and the woman marries another man, she can be married to him for **time only**.

When a man marries a woman who was married previously to her husband in the temple but who has not died, he does so, or should, with his eyes open. If the children are born to this woman and her “time” husband, he has **no claim** upon those children. They go with the mother. This is the law. Certainly a man cannot in reason expect to take another man’s wife, after that man is dead, and rear a family by her and then claim the children.

If he wants a family of his own, then he should marry a wife that he can have in eternity. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, pp. 78-79)

At one time Brigham Young became so zealous to establish polygamy that he declared that a man who would not enter into polygamy would have his wife taken from him in the resurrection and given to another:

Now, where a man in this church says, “I don’t want but **one wife**, I will live my religion with **one**,” he will perhaps be saved in the Celestial kingdom; but **when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all**. He has had a talent that he has hid up. He will come forward and say, “Here is that which thou gavest me, I have not wasted it, and here is the **one** talent,” and he will not enjoy it, but it will be taken and given to those who have improved the talents they received, and he will find himself **without any wife, and he will remain single forever and ever**. . . . I recollect a sister conversing with Joseph Smith on this subject. She told him: “Now don’t talk to me; when I get into the celestial kingdom, if I ever do get there, I shall request the privilege of being a ministering angel; that is the labor that I wish to perform. I don’t want any companion in that world; and if the Lord will make me a ministering angel, it is all I want.” Joseph said, “Sister, you talk very foolishly, you do not know what you will want.” He then said to me: “Here, Brother Brigham, you seal this lady to me.” I sealed her to him. This was my own sister according to the flesh. Now, sisters, do not say, “I do not want a husband when I get up in the resurrection.” . . . If in the resurrection you really want to be single and alone, and live so forever and ever, and be made servants, while others receive the highest order of intelligence and are bringing worlds into existence, you can have the privilege. They who will be **exalted** cannot perform all the **labor**, they must have **servants** and **you can be servants to them**. (*Deseret News*, September 17, 1873)

### Sealing in Spite of Sin

The *Doctrine and Covenants* 132:26 clearly teaches that after a man is sealed in the temple, he can commit any sin except murder, and still come forth in the first resurrection to enter into **exaltation**.

The only stipulation being that he must be destroyed in the flesh and turned over to the buffetings of Satan. However, after this is over he will rise in the first resurrection to his exaltation. Verse 26 reads as follows:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man marry a wife according to my word, and they are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, according to mine appointment, and he or she shall commit **any sin or transgression** of the new and everlasting covenant whatever, and **all manner of blasphemies**, and if they commit no murder wherein they shed innocent blood, **yet they shall come forth in the first resurrection, and enter into their exaltation**; but they shall be destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God.

Joseph Smith told William Clayton that “**nothing but the unpardonable sin can prevent you from inheriting eternal life for you are sealed up by the power of the priesthood unto eternal life**, having taken the step necessary for that purpose . . . The unpardonable sin is to shed innocent blood, or be accessory thereto” (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 391).

The Apostle Orson Pratt said that “the Saint who has been sealed unto eternal life and falls into transgression and does **not repent, but dies in his sin**, will be afflicted and tormented after he leaves this vale of tears until the day of redemption; **but having been sealed with the spirit of promise** through the ordinances of the house of God, **those things which have been sealed upon his head will be realized by him in the morning of the resurrection**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 260).

To say that once a person has received certain temple ceremonies he can live like he pleases and yet receive salvation is not only shocking to the moral sense, but also contrary to the teachings of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. In the Book of Mormon we read:

And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can **no more return**, because of the justice of the Father. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 27:17)

And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their **faithfulness unto the end**. (*Ibid.*, 3 Nephi 27:19)

In direct contradiction to these teachings the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt said:

If we transgress, we shall have to suffer for that transgression here in the flesh; and after we lay our bodies down, we shall suffer in the spirit-world, until we have suffered enough for our sins, unless we have shed innocent blood. . . . if we should be cut off in the flesh and **sent down to be punished** in the spirit-world, and there be buffeted by those spirits, and still retain our memories, we can say these sufferings will not endure for ever, **but we shall enjoy all that has been put upon our heads**, and, through the Priesthood, and signs and tokens that have been revealed, **come forth in the first resurrection, and pass by the sentinels and the Gods that stand to keep the way to eternal lives. And if there be thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, we shall come in possession of them, for this is the promise of the Almighty**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 106)

### A Secret Ceremony

While the revelation commanding Temple Mormonism is printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the ritual itself is supposed to be kept secret. Nevertheless, a number of Mormons became alienated from the Mormon Church and exposed the ceremony. Several of these accounts have been printed. Because the ritual is kept secret many

false impressions and charges of gross immorality have been circulated. On February 18, 1846, the *Warsaw Signal* charged that those who participated in the ritual were “in a state of nudity” throughout the ceremony. In response to this article a woman who had been through the endowments wrote a letter to the editor in which she stated that the ceremony had been misrepresented:

Mr. Sharp: —Dear Sir: —I discover by your paper, in what you have published in regard to the Mormon endowments, . . . that you have been wrongly informed . . .

I went into this pretended holy operation, . . . We were first received past the Guard into a private room...this was the room of preparation or purification—We were divested of all our apparel, and in a state of perfect nudity we were washed from head to foot,—a blanket was then thrown about our persons, and then commencing at the head we were anointed from head to foot with sweet oil scented (I think) with lavender. We were then clothed in white robes. All this was done by sisters in the church—none others were present—it is false to say that men and women are admitted together in an indecent manner. We were then conducted into a room called the Garden of Eden; . . . After a considerable ceremony, which I do not recollect much of, . . . a very dandy-like fellow appeared with a black cap on, that had a long tail attached to it; he . . . induced some of our sisters to eat of the “forbidden fruit.” Soon after the voice of the Lord appeared again in the garden; . . . The fellow in the black cap presents himself before the Lord... The Lord pronounces a curse upon him—he gets down upon his belly and crawls off. . . . We were then presented with aprons, . . . we were passed into another room, . . . This was called the Terrestrial Kingdom: . . . After a considerable parade and ceremony, we passed into another room, or Celestial Kingdom. Here I saw . . . Brigham Young, with a white crown upon his head, and as I have since been told, representing God himself. We passed this room without much ceremony into another. . . . we took upon ourselves oaths and obligations not to reveal the secrets of the priesthood. . . . In one place I was presented with a new name, which I was not to reveal to any living creature, save the man to whom I should be sealed for eternity, . . . and from all that I can gather, all the females had the same name given them, but we are not allowed to reveal it to each other, . . . I have forgotten a part of the penalties. In one place something was spoken to me which I do not recollect—the meaning was “marrow in the bone;” the token was a firm hold of the hand, pressing the finger nails firmly into the wrist of the right hand. . . .

Now, sir, this is the substance of the Mormon endowment. . . . Yours, EMELINE.  
(*Warsaw Signal*, April 15, 1846, p. 2)

Increase McGee Van Dusen and his wife exposed the temple ritual in 1847. Their account was reprinted many times. Many other accounts were printed during the nineteenth century. Wesley P. Walters has compiled a list of published accounts of the temple ceremonies which we have printed in *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pp. 170-172.

Just after the turn of the century many Mormons were questioned concerning the temple ritual in the “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.” This testimony was printed by the United States Government in four volumes. We will have more to say about this later. On February 12, 1906, the *Salt Lake Tribune* published the temple ceremony. In 1931 W. M. Paden published a pamphlet entitled, *Temple Mormonism—Its Evolution, Ritual and Meaning*. This is supposed to be one of the most accurate accounts of the ceremony. In the last few years John L. Smith and William J. Whalen have published accounts of the ritual.

Actually, we can get some idea of what goes on in the Temple simply by searching through Mormon publications. The fact that the Mormons receive secret words, signs and grips in the Temple which they feel are necessary for a person to gain exaltation in Heaven is obvious from several statements made by the Mormon

leaders. According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith himself made this statement:

Sunday, May 1, 1842.—I preached in the grove, on the keys of the kingdom, charity, &c. The keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed. . . . There are signs in heaven, earth and hell; the Elders must know them all, to be endowed with power, to finish their work and prevent imposition. The devil knows many signs, but does not know the sign of the Son of Man, or Jesus. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 608)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the House of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the **key words, the signs and tokens**, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 31)

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

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... 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. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1960, vol. 2, p. 40)

The fact that there are washings and anointings is proven by a statement Brigham Young made on December 26, 1845:

Elders Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt and I were present in the Temple this morning . . . Every man that comes in, is washed and anointed by good men . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 552-53)

Alvin R. Dyer, who served in the First Presidency under David O. McKay, stated that “a new name” is given to those who go through the endowment ceremony:

I call your attention now to the washing and anointing that you received in the Temple. . . . When you went into the washing and anointing room where you were washed and anointed with water and oil, you were given a new name, and you were promised that someday you would be called up to be a king and priest; or a queen and priestess. Don't ever suppose that that is for this life. It is not. It is for the next life, and the Lord is preparing today the rulers that will be administrators of these degrees of Glory after the Spirit World. (Speech by Alvin R. Dyer, Missionary Conference, Oslo, Norway, March 18, 1961)

One of the most revealing statements by Brigham Young about the temple endowment was recorded in the diary of L. John Nuttall:

When we got our washings and anointing under the hands of the Prophet Joseph at Nauvoo, we had only one room to work in, with the exception of a little side room or office where we were washed and anointed, had our garment placed upon us and received our new name; and after he had performed these ceremonies, he gave the key-words, signs, tokens, and penalties. Then after, we went into the large room over the store in Nauvoo, Joseph Smith divided up the room the best that he could, hung up the veil, marked it, gave us our instructions as we passed along from one department to another, giving us signs, tokens, penalties, with the key-words pertaining to those signs. And after we had got through, Brother Joseph turned to me and said, “Brother Brigham, this is not arranged right, but we have done the best we could under the circumstances in which we are placed, and I want you to take this matter in hand and organize and systematize all these ceremonies with the signs, tokens, penalties, and key-words.” I did so and each time I got something more

so that when we went through the Temple at Nauvoo I understood and knew how to place them there. We had our ceremonies pretty correct. (Statement by Brigham Young, recorded in the "Diary of L. John Nuttall," February 7, 1877, as quoted in *God, Man, and the Universe*, by Hyrum L. Andrus, 1968, p. 334)

As we carefully examine this statement we find that Brigham Young mentioned washings, anointings, garments, the new name, key-words, signs, tokens and penalties. He also stated that there was a "veil" with certain marks on it.

According to a "Price List Issued by The General Board of Relief Society" on June 1, 1968, those who desired to go through the Temple must have the following "Articles for Temple Wear":

MEN			WOMEN		
Robe	Garments	Trousers	Robe	Garments	Dress
Cap	(old style)	Shirt	Veil	(old style)	Slip
Apron	Shoes or heavy	Tie and Belt	Apron	Shoes or heavy	Hose
Shield	moccasins	Hose	Shield	moccasins	

Those who have been through the Temple are required to wear "garments" for the rest of their lives, although most Mormons do not wear the "old style" garments except in the Temple. William J. Whalen says:

The devout Mormon who has received his "endowments" in the temple will wear sacred temple undergarments at all times. Resembling a union suit, now abbreviated at the knees, the undergarments are worn by both men and women, awake and sleeping. It is said that older Mormons refuse to take off these garments completely even while taking a bath; they will hang one leg out of the tub so that they will never lose contact with the garments. Mystic signs are embroidered on them to remind the wearers of their temple obligations. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, 1964, pp. 18-19)

On page 168 of the same book, William J. Whalen says that "the garment was a long union suit of muslin or linen with the specified cabalistic marks. It has been abbreviated in recent years especially in the interests of feminine fashions. The full-length garment is still worn in the temple."

The fact that the garments have been abbreviated is very interesting, for the early Mormon leaders taught that they could **not** be changed. Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement before the changes were made:

The Lord has given unto us **garments** of the holy priesthood, and you know what that means. And yet there are those of us who **mutilate** them, in order that we may follow the foolish, vain and (permit me to say) indecent practices of the world. In order that such people may imitate the fashions, they will not hesitate to **mutilate** that which should be held by them the most **sacred** of all things in the world, next to their own virtue, next to their own purity of life. They should hold these things that God has given unto them **sacred, unchanged and unaltered** from the very pattern in which God gave them. Let us have the moral courage to stand against the opinions of fashion, and especially where fashion compels us to break a covenant and so commit a **grievous sin**. (*The Improvement Era*, vol. 9:813, as quoted in *Temples of the Most High*, p. 276)

The following statement by a woman who had been through the endowment ritual was reprinted in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on February 12, 1906:

She [the temple worker] then told me to put on my garments. These are made in one piece. On the right breast is a square, on the left a compass, in the center a small hole, and on the knee a large hole, which is called the "stone." We were told that as long as we kept them on no harm could befall us, and that when we changed them we were not to take them all off at once but slip out a limb at a time and immediately dive into the clean ones. The neck was **never to be cut low**, or the sleeves **short**, as that would be patterning after the fashion of the gentiles.

In 1918 the First Presidency of the Church sent a message to the Bishops in which the following appears:

FIRST: The garments worn by those who receive endowments must be white, and of the approved pattern; they must **not be altered or mutilated**, and are to be worn as intended, **down to the wrist and ankles, and around the neck**.

Please inform all to whom you issue recommends that these requirements are imperative, . . . The Saints should know that the pattern of endowment garments was revealed from heaven, and that the blessings promised in connection with wearing them will not be realized if any unauthorized change is made in their form, or in the manner of wearing them. (*Messages of the First Presidency*, by J.R. Clark, 1971, vol. 5, p. 110)

Although the Mormon leaders vigorously maintained that the "garments" must be "worn as intended, down to the wrist and ankles, and around the neck," and that they could not be altered from "the very pattern in which God gave them," women's fashions caused the arms and legs to be shortened and the neck line to be lowered. The old style which is worn in the temple still comes down to the wrists and the ankles. On June 14, 1923, the First Presidency of the Mormon Church sent out a message which contained the following statements:

Dear Brethren:

For some time past the First Presidency and Council of Twelve have had under consideration the propriety of permitting certain modifications in the temple garment, with the following result:

After careful and prayerful consideration it was unanimously decided that the following modifications may be permitted, and a garment of the following style be worn by those Church members who wish to adopt it, namely:

- (1) Sleeve to elbow.
- (2) Leg just below knee.
- (3) Buttons instead of strings.
- (4) Collar eliminated.
- (5) Crotch closed.

It may be observed that no fixed pattern of the temple garment has ever been given, and that the present style of garment differs very materially from that in use in the early history of the Church, at which time a garment without collar and with buttons was frequently used.

It is the mind of the First Presidency and Council of Twelve that this modified garment may be used by those who desire to adopt it, without violating any covenant they make in the House of the Lord, and with a clear conscience, . . .

It should be clearly understood that this modified garment does not supercede the approved garment now in use, that either of these patterns may be worn, as Church members prefer, without being considered unorthodox, and those using either will not be out of harmony with the order of the Church. . . .

Will you kindly advise the Bishops of your Stake of these changes, being careful to give the matter no unnecessary publicity.

This letter is not to pass from your hands, nor are copies to be furnished to any other person.

Your Brethren in the Gospel,

[s] H J Grant  
Charles W. Penrose  
A. W. Ivins  
First Presidency

Note:

We send you this copy of a letter addressed to Stake Presidents for your personal information, and to be used by you in connection with the instructions contained in it. (Letter by the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, dated June 14, 1923, typed copy)

Such a change could not be made without the gentiles noticing it. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Coming not as an order, nor as a rule to be rigidly enforced, but rather permissive in character, is a recent



outgiving of the first presidency. . . . It concerns the garments worn by members of the church who have been married in the temple, . . .

While minor modifications of the temple garment, it is said, have been made at various times during past years, the latest order in permission is regarded by younger members of the church as most liberal and acceptable. Among the older membership the optional change is variously received. Some of the pioneer stock look upon any deviation from the old order as a **departure** from what they had always regarded as an inviolable rule. Others of long standing in the church accept the change as a progressive move . . .

In the old days the temple garment was made of plain, unbleached cotton cloth. Unbleached linen was as far afield in “finery” as the devotee was permitted to go. No buttons were used on the garment. Tape tie-strings took their place. The garment itself was uncomfortably large and baggy. But despite these imperfections, the old-style garment is faithfully adhered to by many of the older and sincerely devout members of the church. These regard the garment as a **safeguard against disease and bodily harm**, and they believe that to alter either the texture of cloth or style, or to abandon the garment altogether would bring evil upon them.

One good woman of long membership in the church, hearing of the change that has recently come about, went to the church offices and uttered **fervid objection**. “I shall **not alter my garments, even if President Grant has ordered me to do so**. My garments now are made as they were when I was married in the endowment house, long before the temple was built. The pattern was revealed to the Prophet Joseph and Brother Grant has **no right to change it**,” she said.

Explanation was made that the first presidency had merely issued permission to those who so desired to make the modifying change; that any member of the church who preferred to adhere to the original style was at perfect liberty to do so.

President Charles W. Penrose says that modification of the garment is elective with each individual member of the church who has gone through the temple. The change in style is permitted for various good reasons, chief among which are promotion of freedom of movement in the body and cleanliness. Formerly the sleeves were long, reaching **to the wrists**. While doing housework the women would **roll up the sleeves**. If sleeves were to be rolled up they might as well be made short in the first place for convenience, it was argued. Permission to abbreviate is now given, but it is not an order . . .

Encasing the lower limbs the old-style garment reaches to **the ankles** and is looked upon by young members as baggy, uncomfortable and ungainly. The young of the gentler sex complained that to wear the old style with the new and finer hosiery gave the limbs a knotty appearance. It was embarrassing in view of the generally accepted sanitary shorter skirt. Permission is therefore granted by the first presidency **to shorten the lower garment**. Also buttons are permitted to take the place of the tie-strings.

Young men of the church, especially those who take exercise or play games at gymnasiums favor the shorter garment. The permission granted is hailed by them as a most acceptable and progressive one. Altogether, and except in few instances, the permissive modification is welcomed as a sanitary move and a change looking to the comfort and health of those who wear temple garments.

Instead of the old style, coarse, unbleached, irritating material of which temple garments were once made, the finer knitted goods, and even silks, are now used. These materials and modified styles are officially **approved**, but such alterations are optional with each individual, and by no means compulsory, church officials desire it understood. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, June 4, 1923)

Since 1923 the temple garment has been abbreviated even more. The sleeves no longer come down to the elbow, nor do the legs hang down over the knee. The Mormon leaders now seem to put more emphasis on the importance of the marks in the garment rather than the garment itself. On August 31, 1964, the

First Presidency of the Mormon Church sent the following letter to Presidents of Stakes and Bishops of Wards:

Dear Brethren:

The calling of men into military training renders it desirable to reaffirm certain observations heretofore made in the matter of wearing the temple garment.

1. The covenants taken in the temple and attached to the wearing of garments contemplate that they will be worn at all times. . . .

2. In the early days of the Church the Lord announced that where men prevented his Saints from carrying out the commandments he had given them, the Lord would relieve the Saints from rendering obedience to the commandment, and would visit the iniquity and transgression involved in such disobedience upon the heads of those who “hindered” his work. . . .

3. Where the military regulations are of a character that “hinders,” that is, makes impossible the wearing of the regulation garments, . . . effort should be made to wear underclothing that will approach as near as may be the normal garment.

Where military regulations require the wearing of two-piece underwear, such underwear should be properly marked, as if the articles were of the normal pattern. If circumstances are such that different underwear may be turned back to the wearer from that which he sends to the laundry, then the marks should be placed on small pieces of cloth and sewed upon the underwear while being worn, then removed when the underwear is sent to the laundry, and reseed upon the underwear returned.

The wearing of the normal garment should be resumed at the earliest possible moment.

4. Every effort should be made to protect the garments from the gaze and raillery of scoffers. . . . If the scoffing became unbearable and the wearer should decide that the Lord would consider he was really “hindered” by the scoffers from wearing the garments, and if he should therefore lay them aside, then the wearer should resume the wearing of the normal garment at the earliest possible moment. . . . The wearing of the garment is the subject of direct covenant between the Lord and the covenant maker, who must determine to what extent he will keep his covenants. To break our covenants is to lose the protection and blessings promised from obedience thereto.

Sincerely yours,

[Signed] David O. McKay  
Hugh B. Brown  
N. Eldon Tanner  
The First Presidency

The Presiding Bishopric of the Church sent the following to Bishops and Stake Presidents:

#### Removal or Exposure of Temple Garments

The following letter was sent to bishops August 23, 1955. It is reproduced here for the information of new bishops and for more convenient reference.

Dear Brethren:

The First Presidency have suggested that we communicate with you on the subject of this letter.

It is being observed that some Latter-day Saint men and women, some of whom are presiding officers and teachers in both stake and ward positions, are removing their temple garments to wear abbreviated clothing in varying degrees when working around their homes, when traveling by auto, or camping out-of-doors. In some instances, brethren who have been through the temple are removing their shirts while mowing the lawns and performing other out-door responsibilities, thus exposing the upper garment to full view.

Such removal of the temple garment, or exposure to more or less public view, is not in keeping with its significance or its sacred purpose.

It is suggested you use your influence in encouraging Latter-day Saints to avoid these practices. . . .

Faithfully your brethren,  
 THE PRESIDING BISHOPRIC  
 (Signed) Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin  
 Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson  
 Bishop Carl W. Buehner

(Letter from The Presiding Bishopric, photographically reprinted in *I Visited the Temple*, by John L. Smith, 1966, p. 28)

Before a person can go through the endowment ritual he must have a "Temple Recommend." Below the reader will see a photograph of the "Recommend." In order to obtain this "Recommend" the applicant must be in good standing in the Mormon Church. He is supposed to be questioned by the Bishop. Below the reader will find instructions concerning this matter which were sent to "Bishops of Wards and Presidents of Stakes" by the First Presidency.

The Mormon leaders sometimes claim that "every member" of the Church can go through the temple if they live worthy lives.

This, of course, is not true, for Negroes cannot receive their endowments in the temple regardless of how they live.

As we indicated earlier, a number of accounts of the temple ritual have been published. A few years ago we reprinted W. M. Paden's *Temple Mormonism*. This account of the temple ceremony was originally printed in 1931. While Paden's work is essentially accurate, some changes have been made in the ceremony over the years. Since we wanted to publish the most accurate account possible, we had a couple who have done work for the dead and have been through the temple about fifty times revise Paden's work. After this a man who has been through the temple about 120 times agreed to help us. He has brought the ceremony up to date. Although the account does not include every word spoken during the ceremony, he feels that it contains all of the essential elements and that they are accurate. We published this account in 1969 in our book *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1. Since even active Mormons, who are familiar with the temple ritual, have admitted that this account is very accurate we are reprinting it in the next chapter of this book—a few minor errors which appeared in the first printing have been corrected.

A photograph of a "Temple Recommend."  
 (Courtesy, James D. Wardle)

TEMPLE RECOMMEND		TEMPLE RECOMMEND	
Issued to _____ (Please print full name)		Issued to _____ (Please print full name)	
Ward or Branch _____	Stake or Mission _____	Ward or Branch _____	Stake or mission _____
Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Priesthood _____	Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Priesthood _____
Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widow <input type="checkbox"/> Widower <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>		Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widow <input type="checkbox"/> Widower <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>	
The bishop or branch president will initial in his handwriting the ordinances authorized		Date of birth _____	
All ordinances for the dead; also witnessing marriages or sealings _____	Licensed marriage _____	Place of birth _____ City _____ County _____ State or Country _____	
Own endowment _____	Sealing after civil marriage _____	Date of baptism _____	
Baptism for the dead by those over 21 years of age _____	Sealing to parents _____	If previously endowed give date _____ Temple _____	
Signatures:		Father's full name _____	
Applicant _____		Mother's full maiden name _____	
Bishop or branch president _____		Full name of husband or wife, or groom or bride to be _____	
Stake or mission president _____		Date of civil marriage _____	
Dated: _____	Note: This recommend expires April 30 next	Place of civil marriage _____	
		(For temple use only)	
		Licensed marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Own endowment <input type="checkbox"/> Civil marriage <input type="checkbox"/>	
		To be sealed only <input type="checkbox"/>	

To Bishops of Wards and Presidents of Stakes:

Dear Brethren:

Recent experiences emphasize the need of greater care and attention being exercised in the issuing of recommends to the Temple. Applicants in too many cases seem to be more appreciative of going through the House of the Lord than deeply conscious of the obligations they take upon themselves by so doing.

Enclosed herewith is a copy of a recommendation for the new Temple Recommend. It includes everything which was in the old recommend and a few additional questions.

We wish particularly to call your attention to the instructions printed thereon. You will note that the obligation of the personal interview of the applicant by the Bishop will now take the place of the "statement to be filled in by the applicant" as heretofore practiced.

Therefore, in your careful interrogation of the applicant, you will please keep in mind the following standards and principles of the Church, and others which are equally essential to worthiness to go through the Temple of the Most High:

1. Are you morally clean and worthy to enter the temple?
2. Will you and do you sustain the General Authorities of the Church, and will you live in accordance with the accepted rules and doctrines of the Church?
- 2a. Do you have any connection, in sympathy or otherwise, with any of the apostate groups or individuals who are running counter to the accepted rules and doctrines of the Church?
3. Are you a full tithe payer?
- 3a. Are you exempt from paying tithes?
4. Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?
5. Do you always wear the regulation garments?
6. Will you earnestly strive to do your duty in the Church, to attend your sacrament, priesthood, and other meetings, and to obey the rules, laws, and commandments of the Gospel?
7. Have you ever been denied a recommend to any Temple? If so, ascertain date of refusal, name of Bishop, Ward, Stake and obtain clearance from previous Bishop before issuing recommend.
8. Have you ever been divorced?

The Bishop is the "common judge in Israel" and upon him and his counselors rests the great responsibility of encouraging the membership of the Ward so to live as to be worthy of the blessings of the Temple.

As indicated on this new form, the President of the Stake will continue as heretofore to pass upon the recommendations of the Bishop.

Ever praying the Lord to guide you and inspire you in this important phase of your duties as a Bishop, we remain

Sincerely yours,

*David O. McKay*  
*Henry A. Moore*  
*Hugh B. Brown*

DIRECTIONS TO BISHOPS AND BRANCH PRESIDENTS

The recommend in this book is valid for all the Temples of the Church, and for all Ordinances. When issuing a Recommend for all ordinances for the dead only, please use only the left-hand side of the recommend. However, when the applicant is recommended for Own Endowment, Marriage, Sealing after Civil Marriage or Sealing to Parents, then both sides of this Recommend must be completed in full.

Make the recommend in triplicate. Deliver the white and buff copies to applicant to take to Stake President for his signature, retain pink copy in the book. The applicant must deliver the white and buff copies to the first temple he enters after obtaining this recommend: the white copy will be retained by the temple and will subsequently be filed in the temple in the district in which the applicant holds Church membership; the buff copy will be stamped and returned to the applicant. THE BUFF COPY, PROPERLY STAMPED, WILL THEN ADMIT THE APPLICANT TO ANY TEMPLE IN THE CHURCH.

A photograph of instructions sent from the First Presidency of the Church to Bishops of Wards and Presidents of Stakes.  
 (Courtesy, James D. Wardle)

## More Changes in Temple Garments

On page 463 of this book we have a photograph of the temple garment. It came down to the wrists and ankles of those who wore it. At the time we published the 1972 edition of this book, a member was required to wear the full-length style when attending to the temple ritual but could wear an abbreviated style the rest of the time. On November 10, 1975, however, the First Presidency of the Church sent a letter to “All Temple Presidents” in which a change was made so that the abbreviated garment could be worn in the endowment ceremony:

In the future, while involved in temple ordinances, patrons will have the option of wearing either the “approved style” garment (short sleeve and knee length) or the garment with the long sleeve and long leg.

Patrons receiving their initiatory ordinances may be clothed in their own “approved style” garment.

It is suggested that temple presidents not purchase any more of the long-sleeve, long-leg garments for rental purposes.

This may be announced to all temple workers and posted on the bulletin boards in the locker rooms. Notice is going forward to Stake, Mission, and District Presidents suggesting that they notify Bishops, Branch Presidents and other priesthood leaders. No other announcement or publicity is desired.

The suggestion that “temple presidents not purchase any more of the long-sleeve, long-leg garments for rental purposes” leads to the conclusion that Mormon leaders are embarrassed by the “old style” garments and want to gradually phase them out.

In 1979, the Mormon leaders made still another change in the garments. The First Presidency of the Church instructed as follows in a letter dated December 15, 1979:

After due consideration the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve have approved and authorized the Beehive Clothing Mills to manufacture two-piece garments for both men and women. These garments will be in addition to the one-piece garments. . . . The total price for both pieces will be about the same as the price for the one-piece garment.

## Change in Temple Recommend

On page 461 of this book we have a photograph of a “Temple Recommend.” According to the Mormon writer Carlfred Broderick, “the brethren have added a significant [sic] new question in the temple recommend interview: “Is there anything unholy, unnatural or worthy of repentance in your intimate relationship with your spouse?” (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1980, p. 70).

## Blacks Now Admitted

On page 461 we stated that blacks “cannot receive their endowments in the temple regardless of how they live.” President Spencer W. Kimball’s revelation concerning blacks holding the priesthood has changed the situation so that they can now go through the temple.

## Eternal Life Only for Those Who Go Through the Temple

The Bible clearly states that “whosoever believeth in him [Jesus] should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15). President Spencer W. Kimball, on the other hand, claims that eternal life only comes through temple marriage:

Only through celestial marriage can one find the strait way, the narrow path. Eternal life cannot be had in any other way. The Lord was very specific and very definite in the matter of marriage. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, November 12, 1977)

## President Lee Looked Forward to Plural Marriage

On page 457 of this book, we pointed out that after the death of his first wife Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Church, was married to another woman for eternity. President Smith claimed that “my wives will be mine in eternity.” Harold B. Lee, the eleventh President of the Church, also remarried after his wife’s death and was planning on living plural marriage in heaven. President Lee wrote a poem in which he reflected:

My lovely Joan was sent to me;  
So Joan joins Fern  
That three might be, more fitted for eternity.  
“O Heavenly Father, my thanks to thee”  
(*Deseret News 1974 Church Almanac*, p. 17)

## Ancestral Worship?

On page 453 we pointed out that the Mormon Church spends millions of dollars doing work for the dead. This obsession with the dead approaches very close to ancestral worship. Adney Y. Komatsu, a member of the First Quorum of Seventy in the Mormon Church, made this statement in the 146th General Conference of the church:

May I share with you this afternoon an experience that happened to a young couple who were members of the Church in Japan. . . . the couple joined with others in seeking out their ancestors and in planning to have the temple work done for them. The girl searched diligently through shrines, cemeteries, and government record offices, and was able to gather seventy-seven names. . . . As this young couple joined their family members...they displayed their book of remembrance. . . . They discussed with those relatives assembled their ancestral lines and the importance of completing the genealogical research. It was difficult for their nonmember families to understand the reasons for a Christian church teaching principles such as “ancestral worship,” for this was a Buddhist teaching and tradition. . . . Through genealogical research and through doing temple work for their progenitors, and especially with a temple now becoming available in Tokyo, members can so live that the gospel will yet be embraced by many more in the Orient. (*The Ensign*, May 1976, p. 102)

The Mormon Church has continued to spend vast sums of money on temples since we printed the 1972 edition of this book. On August 31, 1974, the *Salt Lake Tribune* gave this information about a temple built in Washington, D.C.:

. . . it is indeed marble, 288 feet high, \$15 million worth, and that makes the new Washington Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints not only one of the most architecturally amazing but also one of the most expensive church edifices to rise in recent years. . . . It is the 16th temple to be built by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . .

Using figures printed in the *Deseret News 1980 Church Almanac*, we find that the church has spent approximately \$86,000,000 on temples. Some of the temples, of course, would cost a great deal more to build today—e.g., the Salt Lake Temple is listed as follows: “Total cost of building and grounds by 1893—\$3,469,118.” The Logan Temple is given a cost of only \$660,749, but we know that “between \$7 and \$8 million” was spent for renovation (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1979). It should also be noted that no cost is listed for the Mexico City Temple, and on April 3, 1980, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Wednesday announced plans to build seven



new temples. . . . in Atlanta, Ga.; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Sydney, Australia; Santiago, Chile; Papeete, Tahiti; Nukunono, Tonga, and Apia, Western Samoa.

Just one year following this announcement (April 2, 1981) the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

Plans for nine temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be built on five continents were announced Wednesday by the First Presidency. . . .

The temples will be in Chicago, Ill.; Dallas, Texas; Guatemala City, Guatemala; Lima, Peru; Frankfurt, Germany; Stockholm, Sweden; Seoul, Korea; Manila, Philippines; and Johannesburg, South Africa. . . .

At the press conference it was announced the temples, when completed, will increase the total number of temples worldwide to 37.

The Jordan River temple was dedicated in 1981. According to the *Deseret News 1981 Church Almanac*, page 282, this temple cost “Approximately \$14,594,000.” As we think of the many millions of dollars that the church is spending on these temples—used mainly to do work for the dead—we cannot help but remember again the Book of Mormon’s claim that it is the false churches that “rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries” (2 Nephi 28:13).



# 30. The Temple Ceremony

## By A Temple Worker (1969 Version)

\*\*\*NOTE ADDED OCTOBER 1990: On May 3, 1990, the *New York Times* made the startling announcement that the Mormon Church had changed some of its secret temple ceremony. The penalties, which played such a prominent part in the version printed below, have now been completely removed and other important changes have been made. In a new book entitled *Evolution of the Mormon Temple Ceremony: 1842-1990*, we give the complete text of the recently revised “endowment ceremony” and also show all the changes that have been made in the ritual.

In order for a member of the L.D.S. Church to enter the temple a “Temple Recommend” must be obtained. This is received by being interviewed and having the “Temple Recommend” signed by the applicant’s Bishop or Branch President and one of the Stake or Mission Presidency.

When arriving at the temple the “recommend” is shown to the attendant at the recommend desk, who checks it to make sure that it is signed correctly. He then stamps the recommend with the date that the recommend expires.

The first ceremony in the temple is that of Baptism for the Dead.

### Baptism for the Dead

Brother (or Sister) \_\_\_\_\_, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you, for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Next comes the Confirmation for the Dead.

### Confirmation for the Dead

Brother (or Sister) \_\_\_\_\_, in the name of Jesus Christ, we lay our hands upon your head for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead, and confirm you a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and say unto you: Receive the Holy Ghost. Amen.

In the Salt Lake Temple there is also the Reconfirmation for the Dead.

### Reconfirmation [Salt Lake Temple]

Brother (or Sister) \_\_\_\_\_, in the name of Jesus Christ, we lay our hands upon your head for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead, and confirm you a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and say unto you: Receive the Holy Ghost, and confirm upon you all your former Church and Temple blessings. Amen.

After the Baptism and Confirmation for the Dead are done, the person who is doing work for the dead is ready to be washed with water, anointed with oil and clothed in the garment of the Holy Priesthood. This is the beginning of the Endowment Ceremony.

### Washing & Anointing Room for Men

For the men who go to the temple, they go to the dressing room for men known as the Washing and Anointing Room. This dressing room for men is separate from the dressing room for women. In the dressing room the man who is going through the

temple for his own endowment removes all of his clothing, which he puts into a private locker. He then puts on a white piece of cloth, with a hole in the center for his head. This hangs down over the front and back of the man, but is open at the sides. This is called a shield. He goes to the area where the washings and anointings take place. If he is doing work for the dead he is ordained an Elder for the dead person.

### Ordination for the Dead

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority we lay our hands upon your head and confer upon you the Melchizedek Priesthood and ordain you an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead, and seal upon you every grace, gift and authority appertaining to this office in the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, for and in his behalf, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

If the man is going through the temple for his own endowment he is already an Elder. He is then directed to a booth where he waits to be washed. The temple worker there holds out his hand to take the garment the man is holding, and the man enters the booth to be washed with water.

The temple worker puts his right hand under running water and proceeds to wash the individual’s body. As he recites the ceremony the temple worker touches each part of the body mentioned in the ceremony with his fingers or hand.

### Washing — of Men

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority, I wash you preparatory to your receiving your anointings (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead), that you may become clean from the blood and sins of this generation. I wash your head, that your brain and your intellect may be clear and active; your ears, that you may hear the word of the Lord; your eyes, that you may see clearly and discern between truth and error; your nose, that you may smell; your lips that you may never speak guile; your neck, that it may bear up your head properly; your shoulders, that they may bear the burdens that shall be placed thereon; your back, that there may be marrow in the bones and in the spine; your breast, that it may be the receptacle of pure and virtuous principles; your vitals and bowels, that they may be healthy and strong and perform their proper functions; your arms and hands, that they may be strong and wield the sword of justice in defense of truth and virtue; your loins, that you may be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, that you may have joy in your posterity; your legs and feet, that you may run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

The washing is then confirmed.



**James D. Wardle in Temple Clothing**



**Temple Garment**

Note: In 1975 LDS Church leaders changed the regulations so that a garment with “short sleeve and knee length” could be worn in the temple. It appears that the “long-sleeve, long-leg garment” will eventually be phased out (see page 461-A of this book).



**James D. Wardle Demonstrates Penalties**  
(Penalties were removed in 1990.)



### Confirmation of Washing — of Men

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority, we lay our hands upon your head (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead), and seal upon you this washing, that you may become clean from the blood and sins of this generation, through your faithfulness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Next he enters another part of the booth where there is a stool on which he sits while another temple worker dips out of a horn some oil and proceeds to anoint the individual's body.

### Anointing — of Men

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority, I pour this holy anointing oil upon your head (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead), and anoint you preparatory to your becoming a king and a priest unto the Most High God, hereafter to rule and reign in the House of Israel forever. I anoint your head that your brain and your intellect may be clear and active; your ears, that you may hear the word of the Lord; your eyes, that you may see clearly and discern between truth and error; your nose, that you may smell; your lips, that you may never speak guile; your neck, that it may bear up your head properly; your shoulders, that they may bear the burdens that shall be placed thereon; your back, that there may be marrow in the bones and in the spine; your breast, that it may be the receptacle of pure and virtuous principles; your vitals and bowels, that they may be healthy and strong and perform their proper functions; your arms and hands, that they may be strong and wield the sword of justice in defense of truth and virtue; your loins, that you may be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, that you may have joy in your posterity; your legs and feet that you may run and not be weary and walk and not faint.

The anointing is then confirmed and sealed.

### Confirmation of Anointing — of Men

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority we lay our hands upon your head (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead), and confirm upon you this anointing, wherewith you have been anointed in the Temple of our God preparatory to becoming a king and a priest unto the Most High God hereafter to rule and reign in the House of Israel forever; and seal upon you all the blessings hereunto appertaining, through your faithfulness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

He now enters to be clothed with the garment that he brought with him.

### Clothing — of Men

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority, I place this garment upon you (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead) which you must wear throughout your life. It represents the garment given to Adam when he was found naked in the Garden of Eden, is called the Garment of the Holy Priesthood. Inasmuch as you do not defile it, but are true and faithful to your covenants, it will be a shield and a protection to you against the power of the destroyer until you have finished your work on the earth. With this Garment I give you a new name, which you should always remember, and which you must keep sacred, and never reveal except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The name is "\_\_\_\_\_."

He then goes back to his locker, removes his shield, and puts on his white clothing, which he rented or brought with him. This includes white shirt, trousers, belt, socks, tie and moccasins. This

is put over the garment. He then carries in his hand the temple clothing which he will put on later in the ceremony.

The women have been going through similar proceedings in a different area. In the dressing room for women, the women put on over the garment a white slip, dress, hose and moccasins.

For those who come to do work for the dead, and the washing, anointing and clothing have already been done, they are given a little slip of paper with the birth date and name of the person who has died.

The new name is given to those who are getting their own endowment, also if a person is going through the complete endowment for a dead person.

After being dressed in white clothing the men and women receive a new name for the dead. To the men it is said to them as follows:

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, having authority, I give you a new name for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_, who is dead, which name you should always remember, and which you must keep sacred and never reveal except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The new name is: \_\_\_\_\_.

The brethren and sisters then go to the Creation Room. The men all sit on one side of the room and the women sit together on the opposite side.

### Creation Room

Brethren and Sisters:

All of the brethren in this company should have been ordained, and each of the brethren and sisters should have been washed, anointed and clothed in a garment of the Holy Priesthood, and should have received a new name. If any one of you has forgotten the new name, or has not received all of these ordinances in connection with this company, please stand.

LECTURER: Brethren, you have been washed and pronounced clean, or that through your faithfulness, you may become clean from the blood and sins of this generation. You have been anointed to become hereafter kings and priests unto the Most High God, to rule and reign in the House of Israel forever.

Sisters, you have been washed and anointed to become queens and priestesses to your husbands.

Brethren and Sisters, if you are true and faithful, the day will come when you will be chosen, called up and anointed kings and queens, priests and priestesses, whereas you are now anointed only to become such. The realization of these blessings depends upon your faithfulness.

You have had a garment placed upon you, which, you were informed, represents the garment given to Adam when he was found naked in the Garden of Eden, and which is called the Garment of the Holy Priesthood. This you were instructed to wear throughout your life. You were informed that it will be a shield and a protection to you if you are true and faithful to your covenants.

You have had a new name given unto you, which you were told never to divulge nor forget. This new name is a keyword which you will be required to give at a certain place in the temple today.

These Endowments are to prepare you for exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.

If you proceed and receive your full Endowments, you will be required to take upon yourselves sacred obligations, the violation of which will bring upon you the judgment of God; for God will not be mocked. If

any of you desire to withdraw rather than accept these obligations, of your own free will and choice, you may now make it known by raising your hands. Brethren and Sisters, as you sit here, you will hear the voices of three persons who represent Elohim, Jehovah and Michael. Elohim will command Jehovah and Michael to go down and organize a world. You will be told of the six creative periods. They will also tell of the organization of man in their own likeness and image, male and female. However, man will not be seen until after he becomes mortal. Now, kindly give your attention.

### The Creation — First Day

ELOHIM: Jehovah, Michael, See yonder is matter unorganized. Go ye down and organize it into a world like unto the other worlds that we have heretofore organized. When you have finished, call your labors the First Day and bring me word.

JEHOVAH: We will go down.

MICHAEL: We will go down.

JEHOVAH: Michael, see, here is matter unorganized, we will organize it into a world like unto the other worlds that we have heretofore formed, we will call our labors the First Day and return and report.

MICHAEL: We will return and report our labors of the First Day, Jehovah.

JEHOVAH: Elohim, we have been down as thou hast commanded and have organized a world like unto the other worlds that we have heretofore formed and we have called our labors the First Day.

### Second Day

ELOHIM: It is well. Jehovah, Michael, return again to the world that you have organized and divide the waters, the great waters call ye seas and the dry land call ye earth, form mountains and hills, great rivers and small streams to beautify and give variety to the face of the earth and call your labors the Second Day and return and report.

JEHOVAH: We will return to the earth that we have organized.

MICHAEL: We will return, Jehovah.

JEHOVAH: Michael, let us divide the great waters, and call it seas and the dry land we will call earth, we will form mountains and hills, great rivers and small streams to beautify and give variety to the face of the earth and we will call our labors the Second Day and return and report.

MICHAEL: We will return and report our labors of the Second Day, Jehovah.

JEHOVAH: Elohim, we have been down as thou hast commanded, we have divided the great waters and called it seas and the dry land we have called earth, we have formed mountains and hills, great rivers and small streams to beautify and give variety to the face of the earth. We have called our labors the Second Day. This is our report.

### Third Day

ELOHIM: It is well, Jehovah, Michael, go down again. Divide the light from the darkness, call the light day and the darkness night. Cause the lights in the firmament to appear. The greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. Cause the stars also to appear, to give light to the earth the same as with other worlds we have heretofore formed. When you have done this, call your labors the third day, and return and report.

JEHOVAH: We will go down.

MICHAEL: We will go down.

JEHOVAH: Michael, we will divide the light from the darkness. We will call the light day, and the darkness night. We will cause the lights in the firmament to appear. The greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. We will cause the stars also to appear, to give light to the earth, the same as with other worlds we have heretofore formed. We will call our labors the Third Day, and return and report.

MICHAEL: We will return and report our labors of the Third Day, Jehovah.

(Elohim, Jehovah and Michael continue with the work of the creative periods of the 4th, 5th and 6th Days.)

### Creation of Adam and Eve

ELOHIM: Jehovah, see, the earth which we have formed, there is no man to till and take care of it. We will form man in our own likeness and image.

JEHOVAH: We will do so, Elohim.

ELOHIM: Brethren and Sisters, this is Michael, who helped form the earth. When he awakes from the sleep which we have caused to come upon him he will be known as Adam and having forgotten everything, will become as a little child. Adam, awake! Jehovah, is it good for man to be alone?

JEHOVAH: It is not good for man to be alone, Elohim.

ELOHIM: We will cause a deep sleep to come upon this man whom we have formed and make for him a woman to be a companion and a helpmeet for him. Brethren, close your eyes as if you were asleep. Adam, awake and arise. All the brethren will please arise. Adam, see the woman which we have formed to be a companion and an helpmeet for you. What will you call her?

ADAM: Eve.

ELOHIM: Why will you call her Eve?

ADAM: Because she is the Mother of all living.

ELOHIM: That is right, Adam. She is the Mother of all living. We will plant a garden eastward in Eden, and there we will put the man whom we have formed. Jehovah, introduce Adam into the garden.

JEHOVAH: It shall be done, Elohim.

ELOHIM: The brethren will now follow Adam and the sisters will follow Eve, and we will introduce you into the Garden.

### The Garden of Eden

ELOHIM: Adam, see this garden which we have planted for you. Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it. Nevertheless, thou mayst choose for thyself. But remember that I forbid it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Now be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and have joy in your posterity. Now remember this commandment and go to dress this garden and keep it. We will go away, but we will return and give you further instructions.

ADAM: Let your minds be calm. We shall be visited soon.

LUCIFER: Well, Adam, you have a new world.

ADAM: A new world?

LUCIFER: Yes, a new world, patterned after the old one where we used to live.

ADAM: I know nothing of any other world.

LUCIFER: Oh, I see, your eyes are not yet opened. You must eat some of the fruit of this tree. Adam, here is some of the fruit of that tree. It will make you wise.

ADAM: I will not partake of it.

LUCIFER: Oh, you will not! Well, we shall see! Eve, here is some of the fruit of that tree, it will make you wise. It is delicious to the taste and very desirable.



EVE: Who are you?

LUCIFER: I am your brother.

EVE: You, my brother, and come here to tempt me to disobey Father?

LUCIFER: I have said nothing about Father. Eve, here is some of the fruit of that tree. It will make you wise.

EVE: But Father said that in the day we ate thereof we should surely die.

LUCIFER: Ye shall not surely die but shall be as the gods; ye shall know good from evil, virtue from vice, light from darkness, health from sickness, pleasure from pain. And thus your eyes shall be opened and you will have knowledge.

EVE: Is there no other way?

LUCIFER: There is no other way.

EVE: Then I will partake.

LUCIFER: That is right. Now go and get Adam to partake.

EVE: Adam, here is some of the fruit of that tree; it is delicious to the taste and very desirable.

ADAM: Eve, do you know what fruit that is? I shall not partake. Do you not know that Father commanded us not to eat of the fruit of that tree?

EVE: Do you intend to obey all of Father's commandments?

ADAM: Yes, all of them.

EVE: Do you not recollect that Father commanded us to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth? Now I have partaken of the forbidden fruit, and shall be cast out, while you will be left a lone man in the Garden of Eden.

ADAM: Eve, I see that it must be so. I will partake that man might be.

LUCIFER: Yes, that is right.

EVE: I know thee now. Thou art Lucifer, who was cast out of Father's presence for rebellion.

LUCIFER: Oh, I see you are beginning to get your eyes open.

ADAM: What apron is that you are wearing?

LUCIFER: This is an emblem of my power and priesthoods.

ADAM: Priesthoods?

LUCIFER: Yes, priesthoods.

ELOHIM: Jehovah, let us go down and see the man Adam in the Garden of Eden.

JEHOVAH: We will go down. Elohim.

ADAM: I hear someone coming.

LUCIFER: See, you are naked. Take some fig leaves and make you aprons. Father will see your nakedness. Quick, hide.

ADAM: Brethren and Sisters, put on your aprons.

ELOHIM: Adam! Adam! Adam, where art thou?

ADAM: I heard thy voice and I hid myself because I was naked.

ELOHIM: Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee thou shouldst not partake?

ADAM: The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat.

ELOHIM: Eve, what is this that thou hast done?

EVE: The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.

ELOHIM: Lucifer! Lucifer, what hast thou been doing here?

LUCIFER: Oh, the same thing that has been done in other worlds.

ELOHIM: And what is that?

LUCIFER: I gave them some of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to them.

ELOHIM: Lucifer, because thou hast done this thou shalt be cursed above all the beasts of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

LUCIFER: If thou curseth me for doing the same thing that has been done in other worlds I will take the spirits that follow me and they shall possess the bodies thou createst for Adam and Eve.

ELOHIM: I will put enmity between thee and the seed of the woman, thou mayst have power to bruise his heel, but he shall have power to crush thy head. Depart. Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of Satan and hast eaten of the fruit whereof I commanded thee thou shouldst not eat, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children. Nevertheless thou mayst be saved in child-bearing. Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee. Adam, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the fruit of the tree, cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground from whence thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Jehovah, let cherubim with a flaming sword be placed to guard the way of the tree of life, lest Adam put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever in his sins.

JEHOVAH: It shall be done, Elohim. Let cherubim and a flaming sword be placed to guard the way of the tree of life, lest Adam put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever in his sins. It is done, Elohim.

## The Law of Obedience

ELOHIM: Eve, because thou wast the first to partake of the forbidden fruit, if you will covenant that you will keep the law of your husband, etc. . . . Adam, if you will covenant that you will obey the law of Elohim, we will give unto you the law of obedience and sacrifice and we will provide a Saviour for you that you may come back into our presence, and with us partake of eternal life and exaltation.

EVE: Adam, I now covenant to obey your law as you obey our Father.

ADAM: Elohim, I now covenant that from this time forth I will obey your law and keep your commandments.

ELOHIM: It is well, Adam. Jehovah, inasmuch as Adam and Eve have discovered their nakedness, make coats of skins for them.

JEHOVAH: It shall be done, Elohim. Brethren and Sisters, the garment that was placed upon you in the washing room was to cover your nakedness and represents the coat of skins spoken of. Anciently it was made of skins. With this garment you received your new name. It is done, Elohim.

ELOHIM: We will now put the sisters under covenant to obey the law of their husbands. Sisters, arise, raise your right hand to the square. Each of you do covenant and promise that you will obey the law of your husband and abide by his council in righteousness. Each of you bow your head and say yes.

SISTERS: Yes.

ELOHIM: That will do. Brethren, arise. You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will obey the law of God and keep His commandments. Each of you bow your head and say yes.

BRETHREN: Yes.

ELOHIM: That will do.

## Law of Sacrifice

ELOHIM: When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden he built an altar and offered sacrifices, and

after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake saying: This thing is a similitude of the Sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore. The posterity of Adam down to Moses and from Moses to Jesus Christ offered up the first fruits of the field and the firstlings of the flock, which continued unto the death of Jesus Christ. Which ended sacrifice by the shedding of blood. A couple will now come to the altar. Brethren and Sisters, this couple at the altar represent all of you as if at the altar, and you must remember that you are under the same obligations that they will be. We are instructed to give unto you the law of sacrifice as contained in the Old and New Testaments, which is that you do sacrifice all that you have, including your own lives, if necessary, for the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth. All arise. Each of you bring your right arm to the square. You and each of you do covenant and promise before God, angels, and these witnesses at this altar that you will keep the law of sacrifice as contained in the Old and New Testaments, which has been explained to you. Each of you bow your head and say yes.

BRETHREN & SISTERS: Yes.

ELOHIM: That will do.

### First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood

We are required to give unto you the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood. Before doing this, however, we desire to impress upon your minds the sacred character of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign and penalty, together with that of all the other Tokens of the Holy Priesthood, with their accompanying names, signs and penalties, which you will receive in the temple this day. They are most sacred and are guarded by solemn covenants and obligations of secrecy to the effect that under no condition, even at the peril of your life, will you ever divulge them, except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The representation of the penalties indicates different ways in which life may be taken.

The First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood is given by clasping the right hands together and by placing the joint of the thumb over the first knuckle of the hand, in this manner.

Adam, we give unto you the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood. We desire all to receive it. All arise.

If any of you have not received this Token, please raise your hand.

The name of this Token is the new name that you received in the washing and anointing room. If any of you have forgotten your new name, please stand.

The sign of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right arm to the square the palm of the hand to the front, the fingers close together and the thumb extended. This is the sign. The execution of the penalty is represented by placing the thumb under the left ear, the palm of the hand down, and by drawing the thumb quickly across the throat, to the right ear, and dropping the hand to the side.

If I were going through the temple today either for myself or for the dead, and had been given John as my new name, I would say, after making the sign, I, John, do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign and penalty, rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

All arise.

The sign of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right arm to the square; the palm of the hand to the front, the fingers close together and the thumb extended. This is the sign.

Now repeat in your minds after me the words of the covenant, at the same time representing the execution of the penalty.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (think of the new name) do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

That will do.

(If any of the brethren or sisters make a mistake in the execution of the penalty, the execution of the penalty is done over.)

It is necessary to repeat the sign and the execution of the penalty. The sign of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right arm to the square, the palm of the hand to the front, the fingers close together, and the thumb extended. This is the sign. It is not necessary to repeat again the words of the covenant in representing the execution of the penalty, but let the name of the token pass through your mind. The execution of the penalty is represented by placing the thumb under the left ear, the palm of the hand down, and by drawing the thumb quickly across the throat to the right ear, and dropping the hand to the side.

ELOHIM: Jehovah, see that Adam is driven out of this beautiful garden into the lone and dreary world, where he may learn by his own experience the good from the evil.

JEHOVAH: It shall be done, Elohim. The brethren will follow Adam and the sisters will follow Eve into the Lone and Dreary World.

ADAM: The first two rows of brethren and sisters please stand.

### The Lone and Dreary World

ADAM: Brethren and Sisters, this room represents the Telestial Kingdom, or the world in which we now live. When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden, he built an altar and offered prayer and these are the words he uttered:

O God, hear the words of my mouth!

O God, hear the words of my mouth!

O God, hear the words of my mouth!

LUCIFER: I hear you. What is it you want?

ADAM: Who are you?

LUCIFER: The god of this world. What is it you want?

ADAM: I was calling upon Father.

LUCIFER: Oh, I see, you want religion. I'll have some preachers along presently.

PREACHER: You have a fine congregation here.

LUCIFER: Oh, are you a preacher?

PREACHER: Yes.

LUCIFER: Have you ever been to college and been trained for the ministry?

PREACHER: Why, certainly. A man cannot preach unless he has been trained for the ministry.

LUCIFER: Well, do you preach the orthodox religion?

PREACHER: Yes, that is what I preach.

LUCIFER: Well, if you'll preach your orthodox religion to this people and convert them, I'll give you—let me see—five thousand a year.

PREACHER: Well, you know that five thousand is a small sum when you take into consideration the great amount we have to pay to learn to preach.

LUCIFER: If you succeed I will raise your salary.

PREACHER: I'll do my best. Good morning, sir.

ADAM: Good morning.

PREACHER: I understand you are looking for religion?

ADAM: I was calling upon Father.

PREACHER: I'm glad to hear you were calling upon Father. Let us now sing a hymn:

When I can read my title clear,  
In mansions in the sky,  
I'll bid farewell to all my fears,  
And wipe my weeping eyes.

Do you believe in a God who is without body, parts or passions, who sits on the top of a topless throne, whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere; who fills the universe and yet is so small that He can dwell in your heart? Do you believe in this Great Being?

ADAM: No, I cannot comprehend such a Being.

PREACHER: That is the beauty of it. Perhaps you believe in hell, that great bottomless pit which is full of fire and brimstone, into which the wicked are cast and where they are continually burning and yet are never consumed?

ADAM: No, I do not believe in any such place.

PREACHER: I am sorry for you.

LUCIFER: I am sorry, very, very sorry. What is it you want?

ADAM: I am waiting for messengers from Father.

(Instructions from Elohim are given to Jehovah, and from Jehovah to Peter, James and John.)

PETER: Good morning. What are you doing here?

LUCIFER: Teaching religion.

PETER: What is it you preach?

LUCIFER: We teach the philosophies of men, mingled with Scripture.

PETER: And how is it accepted by this congregation?

LUCIFER: Oh, very well with all except this man (Adam) he doesn't believe anything we preach.

PETER: Good morning, sir. What do you think of the preaching of this gentleman?

ADAM: I cannot comprehend it.

PETER: Can you give us some idea concerning it.

ADAM: He tells of a God who is without body, parts or passions, and of a hell without a bottom, into which the wicked are cast and where they are continually burning and yet never consumed. I do not believe in any such doctrine. I am waiting for messengers from Father.

PETER: That is right. We commend you for your integrity. Good day. We will probably visit you again soon.

LUCIFER: Now is the great day of my power. I reign from the rivers to the end of the earth. There is none who dares make afraid.

PREACHER: Shall we ever have any apostles or prophets?

LUCIFER: No, but there may be some who will profess revelation or apostleship. Just test them by asking them to perform a great miracle, such as cutting off an arm or some other member of the body and restoring it so that the people may know they come with power. (Peter, James and John return and report to Jehovah, and Jehovah reports to Elohim. Instructions from Elohim are given to Jehovah, and from Jehovah to Peter, James and John.)

PETER: I am Peter.

JAMES: I am James.

JOHN: I am John.

LUCIFER: Yes, I thought I knew you. Do you know who these men are? They claim to be apostles. Test them.

PREACHER: Are you the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ?

PETER: We are.

PREACHER: Why, he said we should have no more apostles and if any should come professing to be such I was to ask them to cut off an arm or some other member of the body and restore it, so that the people may know they come with power.

PETER: We do not satisfy man's curiosity in that manner. It is a wicked and an adulterous generation that seeketh for a sign. Do you know who that man is? Why, that is Lucifer!

PREACHER: What! the Devil?

PETER: Yes, I believe that is one of his names. I would advise you to have a settlement with him and get out of his employ.

PREACHER: But if I leave his employ, what will become of me?

PETER: We will preach the gospel unto you with the rest of Adam's posterity.

PREACHER: That is good. I would like to have a settlement.

LUCIFER: I am willing to keep my word and fulfill my part of the agreement. I promised to pay you if you would convert this people, but they have nearly converted you. You can get out of my kingdom. I want no such men in it.

PETER: (to Adam) Have you any tokens or signs?

LUCIFER: Have you any money?

PETER: We have enough for our needs.

LUCIFER: You can buy anything in this world for money.

PETER: (to Adam) Do you sell your tokens or signs for money? You have them, I presume?

ADAM: I have them, but I do not sell them for money. I am waiting for messengers from Father.

LUCIFER: I have something to say concerning this people. If they do not live up to every covenant they make at these altars in this temple this day, they will be in my power.

PETER: Satan, we command thee to depart.

LUCIFER: By what authority?

PETER: (right arm to the square) In the name of Jesus Christ our Master.

Adam, we are true messengers from Father.

ADAM: How shall I know that you are true messengers?

PETER: By our giving unto you the token and sign given you in the Garden of Eden.

ADAM: (taking Peter by the right hand) What is that?

PETER: The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood.

ADAM: Has it a name?

PETER: It has.

ADAM: Will you give it to me?

PETER: I can not, for it is the new name, but this is the sign. (right arm elevated to the square) And this is the execution of the penalty. (Thumb of right hand across the throat)

ADAM: Brethren and Sister, these are true messengers from Father. I exhort you to give strict heed to their counsel and teachings and they will lead you in the ways of life and salvation.

## The Law of the Gospel

PETER: A couple will now come to the altar. Brethren and Sisters, this couple at the altar represent all of you as if at the altar, and you must remember that you are under the same obligations that they will be. We are instructed to give unto you the Law of the Gospel,



also a charge to avoid all lightmindedness, loud laughter, evil speaking of the Lord's Anointed, the taking of the name of God in vain and every other unholy and impure practice. All arise. Each of you bring your right arm to the square. You and each of you do covenant and promise before God, angels and these witnesses at this altar that you will keep the Law of the Gospel as it has been explained to you. Each of you bow your heads and say yes.

BRETHREN & SISTERS: Yes.

### The Robes of the Holy Priesthood

PETER: We are instructed to clothe you in the robes of the Holy Priesthood. Place the robe on the left shoulder, place the cap with the bow over the right ear, replace the apron, tie the girdle with the bow on the right side and put on the moccasins. Those who are wearing slippers and intend using them as moccasins will please remove them from their feet and put them on as part of the temple clothing.

You may now proceed to clothe.

### Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood

PETER: A couple will now come to the altar. We are instructed to give unto you the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Before doing this, however, we desire to impress upon your minds the sacred character of the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. They are most sacred and are guarded by solemn covenants and obligations of secrecy to the effect that under no condition, even at the peril of your life will you ever divulge them, except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The representation of the penalty indicates different ways in which life may be taken.

The Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood is given by clasping the right hands together and by placing the joint of the thumb between the first and second knuckles of the hand, in this manner.

Adam, we give unto you the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood.

We desire all to receive it. All arise. If any of you have not received this token, please raise your hand.

The name of this token is your own first given name if you are going through the temple for yourself, or the first given name of the person for whom you are officiating.

PETER: The sign of the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right hand in front of you, with the hand in cupping shape, the right arm forming a square, the left arm being raised to the square. This is the sign. The execution of the penalty is represented by placing the right hand on the left breast, drawing the hand quickly across the body and dropping the hands to the sides.

If I were going through the temple for the first time this day for my own endowments—my first given name being Thomas—I would say: I, Thomas, do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

All arise.

The sign of the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right hand in front of you, with the hand in cupping shape, the left arm being raised to the square. This is the sign.

Now repeat in your minds after me the words of the covenant, at the same time representing the execution of the penalty.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (think of the first given name), do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the second token of the Aaronic

Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

That will do.

(If one of the brethren or sisters makes a mistake in the execution of the penalty, the execution of the penalty is repeated.)

Brethren and Sisters, it is necessary to repeat the sign and the execution of the penalty. The sign of the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood is made by bringing the right hand in front of you, with the hand in cupping shape, the right arm, forming a square, and the left arm being raised to the square. This is the sign. It is not necessary to repeat again the words of the covenant in representing the execution of the penalty, but let the name of the token pass through your mind. The execution of the penalty is represented by placing the right hand on the left breast, drawing the hand quickly across the body, and dropping the hands to the sides.

(Peter, James and John return and report to Jehovah, and Jehovah reports to Elohim. Instructions from Elohim are given to Jehovah, and from Jehovah to Peter, James and John.)

PETER: We have been instructed to have you place your robe on the right shoulder, preparatory to receiving the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and entering into the Terrestrial World. You may now do so. The brethren will follow Adam and the sisters will follow Eve into the room representing the Terrestrial World.

### The Terrestrial World

#### Law of Chastity

PETER: A couple will now come to the altar. We are instructed to give unto you the Law of Chastity. To the sisters it is that no one of you will have sexual intercourse with any of the sons of Adam, except your legal and lawful husband. To the brethren it is that no one of you will have sexual intercourse with any of the daughters of Eve, except your legal and lawful wife.

Sisters, please arise. Each of you bring your right hand to the square. You and each of you do covenant and promise before God, angels and these witnesses at this altar that you will keep the Law of Chastity, as it has been explained to you. Each of you bow your head and say yes.

SISTERS: Yes.

PETER: That will do.

Brethren, arise. Each of you bring your right hand to the square. You and each of you do covenant and promise before God, angels and these witnesses at this altar that you will keep the Law of Chastity as it has been explained to you. Each of you bow your head and say yes.

BRETHREN: Yes.

PETER: That will do.

### First Token of the Melchizedek or the Sign of the Nail

PETER: We are instructed to give unto you the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail. This is done by bringing your right hand forward in a vertical position, fingers close together, thumb extended. And the person given the token places the tip of his forefinger in the center of the palm and the thumb on the back of the hand, in this manner. We desire all to receive it. All arise.

If any of you have not received this token, please

raise your hand.

The sign of the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail is made by bringing the left hand in front of you with the hand in cupping shape, the left arm forming a square, the right hand is also brought forward, the fingers close together, and the thumb is placed over the left hip. This is the sign. The execution of the penalty is represented by drawing the thumb quickly across the body and dropping the hands to the side.

The name of this token is The Son, meaning the Son of God.

If I were going through the temple today either for myself or for the dead, I would say, after making the sign, I covenant in the name of the Son that I will never reveal the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

All arise.

Each of you make the sign of the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail by bringing the left hand in front of you with the hand in cupping shape, the left arm forming a square, the right hand is also brought forward, the palm down, the fingers close together and the thumb extended and the thumb is placed over the left hip. This is the sign.

Now repeat in your minds after me the words of the covenant at the same time representing the execution of the penalty.

I covenant in the name of the Son that I will never reveal the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.

That will do.

(If any of the brethren or sisters makes a mistake in the execution of the penalty, the execution of the penalty is repeated.)

Brethren and Sisters, it is necessary to repeat the sign and the execution of the penalty. The sign of the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, or sign of the nail, is made by bringing the left hand in front of you with the hand in cupping shape, the left arm forming a square; the right hand is also brought forward the palm down, the fingers close together, the thumb extended, and the thumb is placed over the left hip.

This is the sign. It is not necessary to repeat again the words of the covenant in representing the execution of the penalty, but let the name of the token pass through your mind. The execution of the penalty is represented by drawing the thumb quickly across the body and dropping the hands to the sides.

PETER: We will return and report.

(Peter, James and John return and report to Jehovah, and Jehovah reports to Elohim. Instructions from Elohim are given to Jehovah and from Jehovah to Peter, James and John.)

### Law of Consecration

PETER: A couple will now come to the altar. We are instructed to give unto you the Law of Consecration as contained in the book of *Doctrine and Covenants*; this I will explain, it is that you do consecrate yourselves, your time, talents and everything with which the Lord has blessed you or with which he may bless you to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth and for the establishment of Zion.

All arise. Each of you bring your right arm to the square.

You and each of you do covenant and promise before God, angels and these witnesses at this altar that you will keep the Law of Consecration as contained in this the book of *Doctrine and Covenants*, which is that you do consecrate yourselves, your time, talents and everything with which the Lord has blessed you or with which he

may bless you to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth and for the establishment of Zion.

Each of you bow your head and say yes.

BRETHREN & SISTERS: Yes.

### Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood

#### The Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail

PETER: We are instructed to give unto you the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail, and to instruct you in the true order of prayer and to give you further instructions preparatory to going through the veil.

The second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail is given by clasping the right hands together and by interlocking the little finger and by placing the forefinger of the right hand on the center of the wrist, in this manner. We desire all to receive it. All arise.

If any of you have not received it, please raise your hand.

The name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarch Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail will not be given you at this stage of the endowment, but will be given later on.

The sign is made by raising both hands high above the head and by lowering your hands to the side, saying:

Pay lay ale

Pay lay ale

Pay lay ale

When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden he built an altar and offered prayer and these are the words he used, repeated three times.

We desire all to receive it. All arise. Each of you make the sign of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarch Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail by raising both hands high above the head and by lowering your hands to the side.

BRETHREN & SISTERS:

Pay lay ale

Pay lay ale

Pay lay ale

PETER: That will do.

There is no penalty mentioned for this token, but you must remember that you are under just as strict an obligation to secrecy for this token and sign as you are for all the other tokens and signs of the Holy Priesthood which you have received in the temple this day, etc.

A lecture will next be given, which summarizes the instructions, ordinances and covenants, and also the tokens with their key words, signs and penalties, pertaining to the endowment which you have thus far received. You should try to remember and keep in mind all that you have heard and seen and may yet hear and see in this House. The purpose of this lecture is to assist you to remember that which has been taught you this day. You must keep in mind that you are under a solemn obligation never to speak, outside of the temples of the Lord, of the things you see and hear in this sacred place.

### Lecture Before the Veil

LECTURER: Brethren and Sisters, these endowments as herein administered, long withheld from the children of men, pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times and have been revealed to prepare the people for exaltation.

(The Lecturer explains to the brethren and sisters

what they have gone through, from the Washing and Anointing Room to the time they receive this lecture. He mentions that they have received the keys of the Priesthood contained in these endowments.)

These are what are termed the mysteries of Godliness and they will enable you to understand the expression of Jesus made prior to his betrayal—This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. May God bless you all. Amen.

### The Prayer Circle

PETER: We will now teach you the true order of prayer. We would like the witnesses to come forward and stand at the head of the altar and six other couples to come forward and form a circle around the altar.

John will instruct and lead the circle.

JOHN: If any of you have unkind feelings towards any member of this circle you are invited to withdraw, that the Spirit of the Lord may not be restrained. In this circle we are required to make all the signs and tokens of the Holy Priesthood.

(The signs and tokens of the Holy Priesthood are offered up, after which the couples form the true order of prayer and John kneels at the altar for prayer.)

PETER: The Sisters will unveil their faces and the Brethren and Sisters in the circle will return to their seats.

### The Veil of the Temple

PETER: We will now uncover the Veil.

Brethren and Sisters, this is the Veil of the temple. It is necessary to explain the marks on the Veil. These four marks are the marks of the Holy Priesthood and corresponding marks are found on your individual garment. This is the mark of the square.

(Peter explains that the meaning of this mark is to be a reminder of the covenants that were entered into this day.)

This is the mark of the compass. . . . That all truth is circumscribed into one great whole, and that desires, appetites and passions are to be kept within the bounds the Lord has established.

This is the navel mark. It is placed on the right side of the garment, over the navel, and is a reminder of the constant need of nourishment to body and spirit.

This is the knee mark. It is placed in the leg of the garment, over the knee cap, and indicates that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ.

These other three marks are for convenience, for working at the veil.

Through this one the person representing the Lord puts his right hand to test our knowledge of the tokens of the Holy Priesthood; through this one he asks us certain questions, and through this one we give our answers.

Since all of you will have to go through the veil, we will show you how this is done.

The worker gives three taps with the mallet.

(Peter shows the brethren and sisters how this is done.)

### The Five Points of Fellowship

LORD: What is that?

PETER: (acting as Adam) The second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail.

LORD: Has it a name?

PETER: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

PETER: I cannot. I have not yet received it. For this purpose I have come to converse with the Lord through the veil.

LORD: You shall receive it upon the five points of fellowship through the veil.

PETER: (The five points of fellowship are: inside of right foot by the side of right foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back and mouth to ear.)

(Peter, James and John return and report to Jehovah, and Jehovah reports to Elohim. Instructions from Elohim are given to Jehovah and from Jehovah to Peter, James and John.)

PETER: Brethren and Sisters, we are instructed to introduce you at the Veil, where you will receive the name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail, preparatory to your entering into the presence of the Lord.

Will the Veil workers please take their places at the Veil.

### Ceremony at the Veil

(The worker gives three taps with the mallet.)

LORD: What is wanted?

WORKER: Adam, having been true and faithful, desires to converse with the Lord through the veil (for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead).

LORD: Present him at the veil and his request shall be granted. What is that?

ADAM: The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood.

LORD: Has it a name?

ADAM: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

ADAM: I will, through the veil (gives new name).

LORD: What is that?

ADAM: The second token of the Aaronic Priesthood.

LORD: Has it a name?

ADAM: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

ADAM: I will, through the veil (first given name).

LORD: What is that?

ADAM: The first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, or sign of the nail.

LORD: Has it a name?

ADAM: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

ADAM: I will through the veil (The Son).

LORD: What is that?

ADAM: The second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, The Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail.

LORD: Has it a name?

ADAM: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

ADAM: I cannot. I have not yet received it. For this purpose I have come to converse with the Lord through the veil.

LORD: You shall receive it upon the five points of fellowship, through the veil.

This is the name of the token— Health in the navel, marrow in the bones, strength in the loins and in the sinews, power in the priesthood be upon me and upon my posterity through all generations of time and throughout all eternity.

What is that?

ADAM: The second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail.

LORD: Has it a name?



ADAM: It has.

LORD: Will you give it to me?

ADAM: I will, upon the five points of fellowship through the veil—Health in the navel, marrow in the bones, strength in the loins and in the sinews, power in the priesthood be upon me and upon my posterity through all generations of time and throughout all eternity.

LORD: That is correct.

(The worker gives three taps with the mallet.)

LORD: What is wanted?

WORKER: Adam, having conversed with the Lord through the veil, desires now to enter his presence.

LORD: Let him enter.

(Adam is admitted into the Celestial Room.)

## The Marriage Ceremony

(The right hands are clasped in the Patriarchal grip, while the parties kneel at the altar.)

Do you Brother \_\_\_\_\_ (acting as proxy for \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead), take Sister \_\_\_\_\_ (acting as proxy for \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead) by the right hand and receive her unto yourself to be your lawful and wedded wife for time and for all eternity, with a covenant and promise that you will observe and keep all the laws, rites and ordinances pertaining to this Holy Order of Matrimony in the new and everlasting Covenant, and this you do in the presence of God, angels and these witnesses of your own free will be choice?

BROTHER: Yes.

Do you Sister \_\_\_\_\_ (acting as proxy for \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead) take Brother \_\_\_\_\_ (acting as proxy for \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead) by the right hand and give yourself to him to be his lawful and wedded wife, and for him to be your lawful and wedded husband, for time and for all eternity, with a covenant and promise that you will observe and keep all the laws, rites and ordinances pertaining to this Holy Order of Matrimony in the new and everlasting Covenant;

and this you do in the presence of God, angels and these witnesses of your own free will and choice?

SISTER: Yes.

By virtue of the Holy Priesthood and the authority vested in me, I pronounce you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ legally and lawfully husband and wife for time and for all eternity, and I seal upon you the blessings of the holy resurrection with power to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection clothed with glory, immortality and eternal lives, and seal upon you the blessings of kingdoms, thrones, principalities, powers, dominions and exaltations, with all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and say unto you, be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, that you may have joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. All these blessings, together with all the blessings appertaining unto the new and everlasting covenant. I seal upon you by virtue of the Holy Priesthood, through your faithfulness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. \*

[The parties then kiss each other, which ends the ceremony.]

## Sealing of Children to Parents Ceremony

(Brother or Sister \_\_\_\_\_ you being proxy for \_\_\_\_\_ who is dead)

By the authority of the Holy Priesthood, I seal you \_\_\_\_\_ (acting as proxy for and in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_) to your father \_\_\_\_\_ and to your mother \_\_\_\_\_, for time and all eternity, as an heir (or heirs) (with all the children) as though you were born in the new and everlasting covenant, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

## The Second Anointing

[This is the highest ceremony in the temple. It is not performed in all temples.]

\* **FOOTNOTE:** It should be noted that the wording of the marriage ceremony is still very similar to that given by the Apostle Orson Pratt in 1853 (see *The Seer*, pages 31-32). Pratt apparently believed that he was doing the church a service by publishing this part of the ceremony. Brigham Young, on the other hand, was very disturbed about the matter: "I have prayed fervently when Orson published the sealing ordinance that it might be forgotten" ("Minutes of Meeting at Historian's Office, April 4, 1860," Brigham Young Collection, LDS Archives, as cited by Gary James Bergera in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1980, p. 27).

## 31. Changes in the Temple Ceremony

The fact that changes have been made in the Mormon temple ceremony can be demonstrated by comparing earlier accounts with the one published in this book. Some of these changes were made after the turn of the century.

### Bloody Oaths

Ebenezer Robinson, who had been the editor of the *Times and Seasons*, made this statement concerning the endowment ritual:

Here was instituted, undoubtedly the order of things which represented the scenes in the Garden of Eden, which was called in Nauvoo, the “Holy Order,” a secret organization. The terrible oaths and covenants taken by those who entered there were known only to those who took them, as one of the members said to me, “I could tell you many things, but if I should, my life would pay the forfeiture.” (*The Return*, vol. 2, pp. 346-348, typed copy, p. 153)

These oaths have been greatly modified since Joseph Smith’s time. The changes were probably made within the last thirty or forty years. Below are comparisons of the oaths as they were published in *Temple Mormonism* in 1931 with the way they are given today. The first oath we will deal with was printed as follows in 1931:

“We, and each of us, covenant and promise that we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the first token of the Aaronic priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so; we agree that our **throats be cut from ear to ear and our tongues torn out by their roots.**” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 18)

This oath has been changed as follows (see page 468 of this book):

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (think of the new name) do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken. [1968 version]

The second oath was printed as follows by Paden in 1931:

“We and each of us do covenant and promise that we will not reveal the secrets of this, the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign, grip or penalty. Should we do so, we agree to **have our breasts cut open and our hearts and vitals torn from our bodies and given to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.**” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

This has been changed as follows ( see page 470 of this book):

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (think of the first given name), do covenant and promise that I will never reveal the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign and penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken. [1968 version]

The third oath was printed as follows in the book *Temple Mormonism*:

“We and each of us do covenant and promise that we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so, we agree that **our bodies be cut asunder in the midst and all our bowels gush out.**” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

This oath now reads as follows (see page 471 of this book):

I covenant in the name of the Son that I will never reveal the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood or sign of the nail, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken. [1968 version]

To the early Mormon people these oaths were a very serious matter. In a discourse delivered December 13, 1857, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, stated:

Judas lost that saving principle, and they took him and **killed him**. . . . they actually **kicked him until his bowels came out**.

“I will suffer **my bowels to be taken out** before I will forfeit the covenant I have made with Him and my brethren.” Do you understand me? Judas was like salt that had lost its saving principles —good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. . . . It is so with you, ye Elders of Israel, when you forfeit your covenants. . . . I know the day is right at hand when men will forfeit their Priesthood and turn against the covenants they have made, and they will **be destroyed as Judas was.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 125-126)

On another occasion Heber C. Kimball stated: “. . . for if men turn traitors to God and His servants, their **blood will surely be shed**, or else they will be damned, and that too according to their covenants” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 375).

Jedediah M. Grant, second counselor to Brigham Young, said: “I would ask how many covenant breakers there are in this city . . . I believe that there are a great many; and if they are covenant breakers **we need a place designated, where we can shed their blood**” (*Deseret News*, vol. 6, p. 235; reprinted in *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, pp. 49-51). At another time Jedediah M. Grant stated:

Do you think it would be any sin to **kill me** if I were to break my covenants? . . . Do you believe you would kill me if I broke the covenants of God, and you had the Spirit of God? Yes; and the more Spirit of God I had, the more I should strive to **save your soul by spilling your blood**, when you had committed sin that could not be remitted by baptism. (*Deseret News*, July 27, 1854)

For many similar statements by the early Mormon leaders the reader should see pages 398-404 of this volume.

A person can only begin to imagine how serious these oaths must have been to the Mormon people when the doctrine of “Blood Atonement” was practiced. Now that the oaths have been modified and the practice of “Blood

Atonement” abandoned, the Mormon leaders do not have as much control over their people.

### Oath of Vengeance

One of the oaths was the source of so much trouble that the Mormon leaders finally removed it entirely from the endowment ritual. This oath was printed in *Temple Mormonism* as follows:

“You and each of you do solemnly promise and vow that you will pray, and never cease to pray, and never cease to importune high heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets on this nation, and that you will teach this to your children and your children’s children unto the third and fourth generation.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 21)

A great deal of testimony has been given concerning this oath, and although all of the witnesses did not agree as to its exact wording, there can be little doubt that such an oath was administered to the Mormon people after Joseph Smith’s death.

According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith wanted his brother Hyrum to live so that he could “avenge” his blood:

... I said to the company present, “I wish I could get Hyrum out of the way, so that he may live to **avenge my blood**, and I will stay with you and see it out.” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 520)

I told Stephen Markam that if I and Hyrum were ever taken again we should be massacred, or I was not a prophet of God. I want Hyrum to live to **avenge my blood**, but he is determined not to leave me. (*Ibid.*, p. 546)

John D. Lee related that the following occurred after Joseph Smith’s death:

... Brigham raised his hand and said, “I swear by the eternal Heavens that I have unsheathed my sword, and I will never return it until the blood of the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum, and those who were slain in Missouri, is avenged. This whole nation is guilty of shedding their blood, by assenting to the deed, and holding its peace.” “Now,” said he, “betray me, any of you who dare to do so!” Furthermore, every one who had passed through their endowments, in the Temple, were placed under the most sacred obligations to **avenge the blood of the Prophet**, whenever an opportunity offered, and to teach their children to do the same, thus making the entire Mormon people sworn and avowed enemies of the American nation. (*The Confessions of John D. Lee*, photo-reprint of the 1880 edition, p. 160)

Some Mormon apologists have maintained that there was no “oath of vengeance” in the temple ceremony, but the “Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon” makes it very plain that there was such an oath. Under the date of December 6, 1889, the Apostle Cannon recorded the following in his diary:

About 4:30 p.m. this meeting adjourned and was followed by a meeting of Presidents Woodruff, Cannon and Smith and Bros. Lyman and Grant. . . . In speaking of the recent examination before Judge Anderson Father said that he understood when he had **his endowments in Nauvoo that he took an oath against the murderers of the Prophet Joseph** as well as other prophets, and if he had ever met any of those who had taken a hand in that massacre he would undoubtedly have attempted to **avenge the blood of the martyrs**. The Prophet charged Stephen Markham to avenge his blood should he be slain: after the Prophet’s death Bro. Markham attempted to tell this to an assembly of the Saints, but Willard Richards pulled him down from the stand, as he feared the effect on the enraged people. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” December 6, 1889, pp. 205-206)

The Apostle Cannon went on to relate that Joseph F. Smith was about to murder a man with his pocket knife if he even expressed approval of Joseph Smith’s death (see page 403 of this book).

Allen Joseph Stout seemed to have the “oath of vengeance” in mind when he made this statement concerning the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith:

But I there and then resolved in my mind that I would never let

an opportunity slip unimproved of **avenging their blood** upon the head of the enemies of the church of Jesus Christ. I felt as though I could not live; I knew not how to contain myself, and when I see one of the men who persuaded them to give up to be tried, I feel like cutting their throats yet. And I hope to live to **avenge** their blood; but if I do not **I will teach my children and children’s children to the fourth generation** as long as there is one descendant of the murderers upon the earth. (“Journal of Allen Joseph Stout,” pp. 13-14, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell—Man of God, Son of Thunder*, by Harold Schindler, p. 137)

Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, said that “the whole people of the United States are under condemnation. They consented to the death of Joseph, Hyrum, David, Parley, and lots of men, women, and children” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 253). The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde said that “The blood of Joseph and Hyrum was shed. . . . Has the nation atoned for that blood? No. . . . they have drawn upon themselves the anger of God; and that blood has to be **atoned** for, . . .” (*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 154). As late as October, 1885, the Apostle F. D. Richards said: “But, ah! the terrible fact exists that the blood of the prophets is upon this nation, . . .” (*Ibid.*, vol. 26, p. 345).

Just after the turn of the century the Mormon leaders found themselves in serious trouble because of the “Oath of Vengeance.” They were questioned at great length concerning this oath in the “Reed Smoot Case.” The “Oath of Vengeance” remained in the temple ceremony, however, even after the “Reed Smoot Case” was printed, for Stanley S. Ivins told us that he took it in 1914. It must have been removed sometime between then and 1937, for Francis M. Darter made this complaint in a lecture delivered February 28, 1937:

The Law and prayer of Retribution, or divine judgment, against those who persecute the Saints, has been entirely removed from Temple services. . . . The reason why it was taken out, says one Apostle, was because it was offensive to the young people. (*Celestial Marriage*, by Francis M. Darter, 1937, p. 60)

### Other Changes

Because the practice of polygamy was abandoned a number of changes had to be made in the temple ceremony. For instance, when the men took the “Law of Chastity” in earlier times they agreed that they would “not have sexual intercourse with any other than your lawful wife or **wives**, . . .” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 12, 1906). The words “or **wives**” have now been deleted.

In 1853, the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt told how the first wife gave her husband a second wife in the endowment ceremony:

The wife stands on the left hand of her husband, while the bride stands on her left. The President, then, puts this question to the wife: “Are you willing to give this woman to your husband to be his lawful and wedded wife for time and for all eternity? If you are, you will manifest it by placing her right hand within the right hand of your husband.” The right hands of the bridegroom and bride, being thus joined, the wife takes her husband by the left arm, as if in the attitude of walking: . . . (*The Seer*, February 1853, p. 31)

This portion of the ceremony has, of course, been completely deleted since the practice of polygamy was abandoned.

The account of the temple ceremony printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on February 12, 1906, states that the Devil offered the preacher “four thousand dollars a year.” The preacher’s salary has now been raised to five thousand dollars. This raise, however, is not sufficient to preserve the original meaning of the ceremony. In 1906 four thousand dollars was a great deal of money. This part of the ceremony was evidently intended to give the Mormon people the impression that ministers are servants of the Devil and that they receive a great deal of



money for their services. (It should be remembered that the Mormons claim that they do not have a paid ministry.) Today, many Mormons make well over five thousand dollars a year. Therefore, the ceremony does not give the same impression that it did in 1906. If the salary were raised to fifteen or twenty thousand dollars it would be more consistent with the idea which was originally intended.

The washing and anointing ceremonies seem to be more refined than they were in former times. A woman who had been through the endowment ritual before the turn of the century gave this account:

One of the women, an officiating high priestess, told me to come behind the curtain . . . I went, and after I was undressed. I had to step into a long bath, about half full of water, when another woman proceeded to wash me. I objected strongly to this part of the business, but she told me to show a more humble spirit. However, when she got down to my feet, she let me go, and I was turned over to . . . Bathsheba Smith . . . She looked thoroughly like business.

Another woman was standing beside her with a large wooden spoon and some green olive oil in a cow's horn. This woman poured the oil out of the spoon into Bathsheba's hand, who immediately put it on my head, ears, eyes, mouth, and every part of my body, and as she greased me, she muttered a kind of prayer over each member of my body: My head, that I might have knowledge of the truths of God: my eyes, that I might see the glories of the kingdom, my mouth, that I might at all times speak the truth, my arms, that they might be strong in the defense of the gospel, my bosom—here I must ask my readers not to think I want to tell this part of the story, but I do want people to know the truth, and how disgusting and indelicate this thing is. Mormon people deny many of these things, . . . but I solemnly assert that these things do exist. To continue: My bosom, that I might nourish the children whom I might raise by my husband. . . . and another part of my body that I might raise up a goodly seed, that they might be pillars of strength to the upbuilding and strengthening of God's kingdom upon the earth. And so she got down to my feet, when she hoped they might be swift in the paths of righteousness and truth. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 12, 1906)

For information on two other changes in the temple ceremony see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, p. 138).

### Testimony on Ceremony

On at least three different occasions Mormons or those who had formerly been Mormons were called upon to give testimony concerning the temple ceremony. Since this testimony throws important light on the ceremony before it was changed we will present some of it in this chapter.

Just after the turn of the century, the Mormon Apostle Reed Smoot was elected to serve in the United States Senate. Many people claimed that the Mormon leaders were still teaching polygamy and that the temple ceremony contained an oath against the Government of the United States. An investigation was made, and the testimony was published by the Government Printing Office. The first volume was printed in 1904 and the last appeared in 1906.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made these comments in his testimony:

The CHAIRMAN. Can you tell the committee any portion of that ceremony?

Mr. ROBERTS. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. It was then a secret?

Mr. ROBERTS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. . . . Ought sacred things to be kept from the world?

Mr. ROBERTS. I think some sacred things ought to be. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 741-743)

Angus M. Cannon, who was a Patriarch in the Mormon Church, made the following statements in his testimony:

The CHAIRMAN. Could you state the ceremony?

Mr. CANNON. I would not like to.

The CHAIRMAN. What objection is there to making that public?

Mr. CANNON. Because it is sacred.

The CHAIRMAN. . . . Do you promise specifically not to reveal what occurs in the endowment house?

Mr. CANNON. I would rather not tell what occurs there. . . . (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 791-92)

J. H. Wallis, Sr., testified that he had been through the temple about 20 times. He gave the following information in his testimony:

Mr. WALLIS. The obligations of priesthood were taken, the two with the Aaronic priesthood and two with the Melchisedec. Would you like me to give the details of it?

Mr. TAYLER. Go on.

Mr. WALLIS. (standing). "You, and each of you, do solemnly promise and vow that I will not reveal this the first token of the Aaronic priesthood with its accompanying name, sign, and penalty. Should I do so"—this is the sign [indicating]—"I agree that my throat be cut from ear to ear and my tongue torn out by its roots from my mouth." . . .

Mr. TAYLER. That is called the Aaronic?

Mr. WALLIS. That is called the first token of the Aaronic priesthood. The second token of the Aaronic priesthood.—its sign is that [indicating], and the obligation commences the same, only that "I agree to have my breast cut asunder and my heart and vitals torn from my body."

Then the first token of the Melchisedec priesthood is this [indicating]; is this square [indicating], and about the same words, only that "I agree to have my body cut asunder in the midst and all my bowels gushed out." The second token of the Melchisedec priesthood there is no penalty to, but the sign is the crucifixion sign, and the words accompanying that are "Pale, hail, hail." I do not know what it means. . . .

Mr. TAYLER. At any other stage of that ceremony is there an obligation?

Mr. WALLIS. Yes, sir. . . . There are vows—the "vow of the sacrifices" is one—where we vow conjointly to give all our substance and all we might ever become possessed of to the support of the Church . . .

Mr. TAYLER. What other vow?

Mr. WALLIS. Another is called the "vow of chastity," by which we all vowed we would have no connection with any of the other sex unless they were given to us by the priesthood; and another vow was what we used to call the "oath of vengeance." . . .

Mr. TAYLER. Stand up, if it will help you, and give us the words, if you can.

Mr. WALLIS (standing up). "That you and each of you do promise and vow that you will never cease to importune high heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets upon the nations of the earth or the inhabitants of the earth." (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 77-79)

The next day Mr. Wallis corrected his testimony concerning the "oath of vengeance":

Mr. WALLIS. In repeating the obligation of vengeance I find I made a mistake; I was wrong. It should have been "upon this nation." I had it "upon the inhabitants of the earth." It was a mistake on my part. (*Ibid.*, pp. 148-149)

August W. Lundstrom made these statements in his testimony:

Mr. TAYLER. How many times did you take or hear the obligation of sacrifice and the obligation of retribution?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. Six times.

. . . .

Mr. TAYLER. Can you give us the obligation of retribution?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. I can.

Mr. TAYLER. You may give that.

Mr. LUNDSTROM. "We and each of us solemnly covenant and promise that we shall ask God to avenge the blood of Joseph Smith upon this nation." There is something more added, but that is all I can remember verbatim. That is the essential part.

Mr. TAYLER. What was there left of it? What else?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. It was in regard to teaching our children and children's children to the last generation to the same effect.

Mr. TAYLER. You were, you have stated, at one time a priest and councilor to what—to the stake president?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. No, sir; councilor to the bishop. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 151-153)

On December 15, 1904, August W. Lundstrom was recalled to the stand. In this testimony he stated:

Mr. LUNDSTROM. The penalty for revealing the tokens and violating any of the covenants are as follows: The first one is to have the throat cut from ear to ear. That is, we make the request there. I, August, ask that if I ever violate the covenant I entered into this day or reveal these tokens, that my throat be cut from ear to ear.

The CHAIRMAN. Go on. Give the others.

Mr. LUNDSTROM. Another is that I make the request that if I violate the covenant or reveal the tokens that I have my breast cut asunder and my vitals torn out. And the third is that my body be cut asunder and my entrails gushed out, making the same request every time. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 160-162)

August W. Lundstrom also gave this testimony:

Mr. LUNDSTROM. There are certain marks on the garment, as it is called—the garment of the holy priesthood.

The CHAIRMAN. What are those marks?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. There are the marks of the holy priesthood . . .

The CHAIRMAN. Would you state about on what portion of the garment these marks appear?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. There is a mark on the right and on the left breast one in front of the navel, and one on the right knee.

The CHAIRMAN. What are the marks? What is the nature of them, as to whether they are rents in the garment?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. The knee mark and the mark in front of the navel is like an ordinary buttonhole; but the mark on the left breast is like a pair of compasses and on the right breast it is like a square.

The CHAIRMAN. Are these garments worn by all who take the obligation?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. Yes, sir; they always wear it.

Senator DUBOIS. Do you mean by that that you shall never take them off?

Mr. LUNDSTROM. Not any longer time than necessary to change and put on clean ones. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 181-183)

Mrs. Annie Elliot made these statements in her testimony:

Mr. TAYLER. Then what is the next thing that you remember about that?

Mrs. ELLIOTT. It was where we took the oaths then, which I think it is very embarrassing for me to say them.

Mr. TAYLER. Tell us what you remember.

Mrs. ELLIOTT. One, I remember, they told me to pray and never cease to pray to get revenge on the blood of the prophets on this nation, and also teach it to my children and children's children.

Mr. TAYLER. Was there any other obligation?

. . . .

Mrs. ELLIOTT. Well, it was that if I ever revealed anything what was done in there, I was to have my throat cut from ear to ear and tear out my tongue by the roots. That was one of them.

Mr. TAYLER. Anything else that you remember?

Mrs. ELLIOTT. Yes; there is some more.

Mr. TAYLER. State them, if you can.

Mrs. ELLIOTT. I do not feel like I can. I think it was at that time too serious, and I have always thought I would put it away and never mention it, and it seems like it is hard for me to do it. Of course, if I have to, I can.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, witness, it is hard and difficult, but state it in your own way the substance of what you remember.

Mrs. ELLIOTT. Well, it was also at a certain place that if I revealed anything my breast would be cut open and my vitals would be torn out, and another place that my abdomen would be torn open and the entrails squirt out.

Mr. TAYLER. Do you remember anything of an obligation or oath of sacrifice, Mrs. Elliott?

Mrs. ELLIOTT. Yes, sir; that we was to sacrifice all we owned if it was called for.

Mr. TAYLER. To what?

Mrs. ELLIOTT. To the church. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 189-190)

Hugh M. Dougall made these statements in his testimony:

Mr. WORTHINGTON. I want to ask you whether you, or any of those who went through with you, to your knowledge, were called upon to agree to what I now read, or to it in substance.

"That you, and each of you, do promise and vow that you will never cease to importune High Heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets upon this nation."

Mr. DOUGALL. No, sir.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. Did anything like that occur?

Mr. DOUGALL. Well, as I remember, there is something that might possibly have resembled that.

The CHAIRMAN. We can not hear the witness.

Mr. DOUGALL. There was something, as I remember, that might have led one to believe that such a thing was being done. As I remember it, they importuned Heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets and the martyrs on this generation, I think.

. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. How long did it take to perform the ceremony?

Mr. DOUGALL. It took from probably early in the morning till about 4 o'clock . . .

The CHAIRMAN. A very lengthy ceremony?

Mr. DOUGALL. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you tell the committee what it was?

Mr. DOUGALL. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Why not?

Mr. DOUGALL. Conscientious scruples. I have promised secrecy. I have kept it for forty years or more, and feel under moral obligation to keep it.

The CHAIRMAN. Were you sworn to secrecy?

Mr. DOUGALL. I think so. As I remember it, I was. I think so.

. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. Was there any penalty attached if you did reveal it?

Mr. DOUGALL. I think there was.

. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. Was it a severe penalty?

Mr. DOUGALL. As my memory goes, I think it was.

The CHAIRMAN. Was it a penalty of death?

Mr. DOUGALL. I do not think that I care about answering any more questions on that point, Senator. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, pp. 759, 762-764)

Alonzo Arthur Noon gave testimony on Jan. 14, 1905. In his testimony we find the following:

The CHAIRMAN. Then you regarded the organization at that time as a secret organization, of course?

Mr. NOON. I did.

The CHAIRMAN. Was there any penalty attached to the disclosure of the ceremony?

Mr. NOON. Yes; there was a penalty.

The CHAIRMAN. Was it a severe penalty?

Mr. NOON. Fairly severe. . . .

The CHAIRMAN. . . . Was it a penalty of expulsion?

Mr. NOON. I believe that is a question I would refuse to answer.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you say as to the penalty being the tearing out of the tongue or the tearing open of the breasts and taking out the vitals? What do you say about that?

Mr. NOON. I answer the same as the other—that is, I would refuse to answer it.

The CHAIRMAN. You decline to answer it?

Mr. NOON. I decline to answer. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 2, p. 779)

Walter M. Wolfe, who had been “professor of geology” at “Brigham Young College,” made these statements:

Mr. CARLISLE. How many times have you passed through the Endowment House?

Mr. WOLFE. Not less than twelve.

. . . .

Mr. WOLFE. The law of vengeance is this: “You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will pray, and never cease to pray, Almighty God to avenge the blood of the prophets upon this nation, and that you will teach the same to your children and your children’s children unto the third and fourth generations.” At the conclusion the speaker says: “All bow your heads and say yes.”

Mr. CARLISLE. Was that done?

Mr. WOLFE. It was done.

Senator OVERMAN. Was that done every time or just one time?

Mr. WOLFE. It was done every time I went through.

Senator OVERMAN. That was twelve times?

Mr. WOLFE. Yes, sir.

Mr. CARLISLE. . . . was any ceremony of anointing gone through?

Mr. WOLFE. Yes, sir.

Mr. CARLISLE. What is done in that ceremony?

Mr. WOLFE. Those who participate in it are washed. The different parts of the body, from the head to the feet, are washed, and blessings are pronounced with the washing, and the anointing is done with oil from the head to the feet, and the blessing is pronounced with that. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 6-7)

In his testimony, William Jones Thomas made this statement concerning the “Oath of Vengeance”:

Mr. THOMAS. It was, in substance, that I would seek to avenge the blood of the prophet Joseph Smith upon this nation, and teach my children the same unto the third and fourth generations, as near as I can remember. That was the substance of it. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 68-69)

Even though several witnesses claimed that there was no “oath of vengeance” in the temple ceremony, the Committee on Privileges and Elections” (except for a minority who issued a separate report) felt that the testimony given by the rest of the witnesses was strong enough to prove the existence of such an oath. The following appeared in the report issued by that committee:

In the protest signed and verified by the oath of Mr. Leilich it is claimed that Mr. Smoot has taken an oath as an apostle of the Mormon Church which is of such a nature as to render him incompetent to hold the office of Senator. From the testimony taken it appears that Mr. Smoot has taken an obligation which is prescribed by the Mormon Church and administered to those who go through a ceremony known as “taking the endowments.” It was testified by a number of witnesses who were examined during the investigation that one part of this obligation is expressed in substantially these words:

You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will pray and never cease to pray Almighty God to avenge the blood of the prophets upon this nation, and that you will teach the same to your children and to your children’s children unto the third and fourth generation.

. . . .  
The evidence showing that such an obligation is taken is further supported by proof that during the endowment ceremonies a prayer is offered asking God to avenge the blood of Joseph Smith upon this nation, . . .

That an obligation of vengeance is part of the endowment ceremony is further attested by the fact that shortly after testimony had been given on that subject before the committee, Bishop Daniel Connelly of the Mormon Church denounced the witnesses who had given this testimony as traitors who had broken their oaths to the church.

The fact that an oath of vengeance is part of the endowment ceremonies and the nature and character of such oath was judicially determined in the third judicial court of Utah in the year 1889 in the matter of the application of John Moore and others to become citizens of the United States. . . .

The obligation hereinbefore set forth is an oath of disloyalty to the Government which the rules of the Mormon Church require, or at least encourage, every member of that organization to take.

It is in harmony with the views and conduct of the leaders of the Mormon people in former days, when they openly defied the Government of the United States, . . . It may be that many of those who take this obligation do so without realizing its treasonable import; but the fact that the first presidency and twelve apostles retain an obligation of that nature in the ceremonies of the church shows that at heart they are hostile to this nation and disloyal to its Government. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 495-497)

In 1889 John Moore and W. J. Edgar were denied citizenship because they were members of the Mormon Church and had taken the oaths in the Endowment House. In the “Opinion and Decision of the Court” we read:

Objection was made, however, to the admission of John Moore and William J. Edgar upon the ground that they were members of the Mormon Church, and also because they had gone through the Endowment House of that church and there had taken an oath or obligation incompatible with the oath of citizenship they would be required to take if admitted. . . .

Those objecting to the right of these applicants to be admitted to citizenship introduced eleven witnesses, who had been members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, commonly called the Mormon Church. Several of these witnesses had held the position of bishop in the church and all had gone through the endowment house and participated in its ceremonies. . . . That these ceremonies occupy the greater part of a day, and include the taking of an oath, obligation, or covenant by all who receive their endowments that they will avenge the blood of the prophets, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, upon the Government of the United States and will enjoin this obligation upon their children unto the third and fourth generations; that they will obey the priesthood in all things, and will never reveal the secrets of the endowment house under the penalty of having their throats cut from ear to ear, their bowels torn out, and their hearts cut out of their bodies.

The right arm is anointed that it may be strong to avenge the blood of the prophets. . . . The evidence established beyond any reasonable doubt that the endowment ceremonies are inconsistent with the oath an applicant for citizenship is required to take, and that the oaths, obligations, or covenants there made or entered into are incompatible with the obligations and duties of citizens of the United States. The applications of John Moore and Walter J. Edgar, both of whom were shown on the former examination to be members of the Mormon Church, and to have gone through the endowment house, are therefore denied.



(Opinion of Judge Anderson, rendered in the third judicial court at Salt Lake City, Utah, November 30, 1899, as quoted in *The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 4, pp. 341-343)

Some of the testimony given in 1889 was actually printed in the Mormon-owned *Deseret News*. John Bond made these statements in his testimony:

Court—Let the witness state what transpired.

The witness Bond testified — I went through several rooms; in room 5 I took what I call an obligation, named the Aaronic Priesthood, which confined me to obey every doctrine of the Church, especially against the government of the United States. The penalty was that I was to have my throat cut and my tongue torn out. Then I was required to take an oath that I would avenge the blood of Joseph Smith on this nation, and teach my children and my children's children to the latest generation. The penalty was to have my heart and bowels torn out. Another obligation was to obey the Priesthood in all things. Wilford Woodruff put me through this ceremony and married me. I was sorry I took the oath, and resigned from the Church the next year. . . . There were about 50 other persons there who went through the same ceremony there were two polygamists; my wife was asked if she would allow her husband to take more wives than one; a vote was taken and all responded "aye;" we took obligations not to divulge these ceremonies, and penalties were attached which I do not remember. . . . I took an obligation to avenge the blood of the Prophets on the United States. I took the obligation to go into polygamy. (*Deseret Evening News*, November 14, 1889)

Martin D. Wardell made these statements in his testimony:

. . . in 1863 or 1864 I went through the Endowment House; I went through a second time about a year later; I took an oath that we would avenge the blood of Joseph Smith on this nation, from the President down; they put the lock on to us with an oath that if we revealed any of the secrets we would have our throats cut and our bowels torn out; we were asked to take an oath to obey the Church in all matters, . . . (*Deseret Evening News*, November 14, 1889)

Andrew Cahoon made these statements:

. . . I was a Bishop 18 years; was one when I left the Church; I received my Endowments 44 years ago, and am familiar with the ceremony so far as my memory goes; never officiated; got my endowments in 1845 or 1846; I took obligations there—everyone has to; there are oaths administered there; they relate to obeying the Priesthood, and to avenge the blood of the Prophets; this was understood to mean Joseph and Hyrum; the blood was to be avenged on any who were guilty of shedding the blood, or consenting to it; there was also a covenant to yield implicit obedience, at all times to the Priesthood; the penalty was death for revealing any of the secrets; I did not understand how the penalty was to be inflicted; the understanding was that if a man apostatized and divulged the secrets he should meet the death penalty; there was something about the throat being cut, and being disemboweled; the right hand was also forfeited; one of the penalties was for disobedience to the Priesthood. (*Deseret Evening News*, November 14, 1889)

James McGuffie made these statements in his testimony:

. . . I went through only once . . . They then required us to take an oath, and to teach our children and our children's children to do all we could to uproot the American government, because they had not punished the murderers of Joseph Smith. We took an oath that we would obey the Priesthood in all things; we were citizens of the Kingdom of God, and were to be enemies of the government of the United States, because they did not avenge the blood of Joseph and Hyrum. The penalties were to have our throats cut, and our hearts and bowels torn out. The penalty was death. That was told to us, and we believed it would be done. (*Deseret Evening News*, November 14, 1889)

R. N. Baskin quotes the following from the testimony of Dr. Heber John Richards:

Q. Did you take any obligation under penalty? I wish you would state it in substance.

A. I couldn't do it — I couldn't do it if I was willing, and I don't feel willing to.

Q. Well, doctor, it has been stated upon the witness stand that if a man apostatized from the church, the duty of those who had been through the endowment house, was to go and murder or kill him. Did you hear anything of that sort?

A. No, sir. I can explain to you, what I understood by that was simply this: That after I had become a member of the church, if I then fell away, I could get remission if I went voluntarily and asked for the atonement of my blood, but not without it; it must come by my desire, the same as baptism does. If I was taken out and baptized against my will, it would do me no good; and if I was killed against my will it would do me no good.

Q. And it would be appropriate when they made the request for some brother to shed his blood?

A. Yes, some person who was authorized to do so.

Q. And it wouldn't be murder?

A. It wouldn't be murder—it would be murder probably in the eyes of the law, but not in the eyes of the church.

Q. And that was taught?

A. That was taught. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, pp. 97-98)

Just before the turn of the century, a dispute arose concerning some property in Independence, Missouri. Joseph Smith had stated that a temple should be built there. Both the Church of Christ and the Reorganized LDS Church claimed the property and the issue was finally settled in court. Mormon leaders and others who had been through the temple ceremony were called upon to give testimony. Mercy Rachel Thompson made these statements in her testimony:

Q.—Did they anoint the whole body with oil, or just the head?

A.—Well, now you are asking these questions, and I have answered them as far as I can, but that is a question I do not feel I am called on to answer, but I did not take an oath not to tell it at any time. . . . I decline to answer the question whether in taking endowments we anointed the body with oil. I did not take any obligation not to reveal that, but I decline to answer it because I do not feel disposed to tell you. It is something you have no business to ask me, and I do not feel like telling you. . . . the endowments in Nauvoo and in Salt Lake City were the same, but I decline to tell you how they were given in Salt Lake. . . . I saw the caps and moccasins that were worn by the ladies in Nauvoo while they were taking endowments there. I will not look at the pictures in Exhibit D to see if it is a representation of the caps and moccasins. I will not look at it, because I am afraid to look at it, and I do not want to look at it, because if it is true, it is something we never dared to draw or make any representation of, because it is sacred, and the Lord would never allow any such things to be without manifesting his displeasure or anger. (*The Temple Lot Case*, Lamoni, Iowa, 1893, pp. 354, 355, 357)

John Hawley made these statements in his testimony:

I went to Salt Lake City in 1856, . . . they gave the endowments of washing and anointing, and then there was an oath taken in Utah to avenge the blood of the prophet. . . . I remember the leaves there on the apron and the form of the apron, I remember that very well. . . .

In taking the endowments at Salt Lake there was an oath required, and the oath that was required was to avenge the blood or death of the prophet. . . . We were made to swear to avenge the death of Joseph Smith the martyr, together with that of his brother Hyrum, on this American nation, and that we would teach our children and children's children to do so. The penalty for this grip and oath was disembowelment. . . .

I would not have discussed the methods of these endowments when I was a member of the Utah Church. The penalty for revealing or disclosing these secrets was disembowelment.

The grips and tokens of the priesthood were what we were not to disclose. . . . I kept the obligations while I was

living in Salt Lake City. (*The Temple Lot Case*, pages 453, 456-459)

In *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pages 140-150, we give even more testimony on the temple ceremony, but this should be sufficient to show that the oaths given in the temple ceremony were originally very crude. They were the product of the time when the Mormon leaders were stressing the doctrine of “Blood Atonement.” After the Mormon leaders stopped preaching the doctrine of “Blood Atonement,” it became necessary to modify the oaths.

### Sealing Men to Men

Although it is a well known fact that the Mormons believe in sealing women to men and children to their parents for all eternity, few people know about the doctrine of sealing men to men. Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, called the doctrine of sealing men to men “a great and glorious doctrine”:

By this power **men will be sealed to men** back to Adam, completing and making perfect the chain of the Priesthood from his day to the winding up scene. I have known men that **I positively think would fellowship the Devil, if he would agree to be sealed to them. “Oh, be sealed to me, Brother; I care not what you do. You may lie and steal, or anything else, I can put up with all your meanness, if you will only be sealed to me.”** Now this is not so much weakness as it is selfishness. **It is a great and glorious doctrine, but the reason I have not preached it in the midst of this people, is, I could not do it without turning so many of them to the Devil. Some would go to hell for the sake of getting the devil sealed to them.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 269)

On page 270 of the same volume, Brigham Young said:

**If men are sealed to me**, it is because they want to be; and if they will be good, and hearken to my counsel and live a righteous life, I will agree to dictate and counsel them; but when **men** want to be **sealed to me** to have me feed and clothe them, and then act like the Devil, I have no more feeling and affection for them than I have for the greatest stranger in the world. Because a **man is sealed to me**, do you suppose that he can escape being judged according to his works? No.

Kimball Young gives us the following information:

That this masculine principle went deep, and far more fantastically than the Saints could comprehend, is shown in a sermon by Brigham Young, reported by John Read. In a letter to one of his wives Read said that Brigham referred to some future time “when **men would be sealed to men** in the priesthood in a **more solemn ordinance than that by which women were sealed to man**, and in a room over that in which women were sealed to man in the **temple** of the Lord. (*Isn't One Wife Enough?* p. 280)

This doctrine of sealing men to men was evidently known as the “Law of Adoption.” Juanita Brooks explains:

At this time another ceremony was instituted, which though it was of short duration and never widely practiced, was significant and important while it lasted. This was the **adoption of young men and their wives to one of the leaders**. The idea behind it was that in establishing the Kingdom of God upon the earth there should be also a celestial relationship. If the Prophet Joseph were to become a God over a minor planet, he must not only have a large posterity but able assistants of practical skills. Brigham Young had been “sealed” to Joseph under this law; now he in turn had some thirty-eight young men sealed to him.

Of this number, John D. Lee was second. . . . All of the men thus joined in the covenant seemed brothers in one sense, and for some of them Lee developed a genuine affection. Among others, jealousies grew up as they competed for favor.

In the same way, Lee had eighteen or nineteen young men with their wives adopted to him, most of them those he had brought into the church. He often spoke of them as George Laub Lee, W. B. Owens Lee, Miles Anderson Lee, James Pace Lee, Allen Weeks Lee, William Swap Lee. (*John D. Lee*, by Juanita Brooks, 1962, p. 73)

Juanita Brooks also stated: “Joseph Smith had sealed to himself a number of his most faithful followers, among them the first members of the Council of Fifty, to help to establish the Kingdom of God upon this earth...Brigham Young had **adopted** at least forty young men with their wives and families in a **temple ceremony**. Many of these added his name to their own . . .” (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 178, n. 50). John D. Lee said that he was “the second one **adopted** to Brigham Young. I should have been his first **adopted son**, being the first that proposed it to him, but always ready to give preference to those in authority, I placed A. P. Rockwood’s name first on the list” (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, p. 170). Lee took the doctrine of adoption very serious. He often referred to Brigham Young as “Father Young.” At one time he was sick and Brigham Young came to visit him. Speaking of this incident John D. Lee stated: “About 3 . . . Father B.Y. brought and laid on my breast a cane built from one of the branches of the Tree of Life that stood in the garden in the Temple” (*Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859*, edited by Charles Kelly, p. 67). On another occasion John D. Lee stated:

Walked to Pres. B. Young’s, . . . Had the pleasure of drinking a glass of wine made by himself. . . . Spent 2 hours conversing with him and hearing him explain the **Law of Adoption**. . . . he suggested to me the propriety of taking some 20 or 30 of the brethren down into the settlements and take contracts of threshing and cleaning wheat . . . My reply was to him, **Father, thy will be done.** (*Ibid.*, pp. 37-38)

The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft said that older men could be sealed to younger men as their sons:

The father may be either younger or older than the son, but in any case assumes the character of guardian, with full control of the labor and estate of the **adopted** son. (*History of Utah*, photo-reprint of 1889 Edition, p. 361)

Brigham Young was apparently embarrassed because some of the “old persons,” who were adopted to him, were calling him father. He stated:

I have a request to make of my family and that is that they (especially old persons) **omit calling me Father**. Call me Bro. Brigham. (*Journals of John D. Lee*, p. 82)

To Brigham Young the Law of Adoption was a serious matter. Under the date of January 6, 1847, he recorded the following in his history:

Thomas Alvord wrote to me . . . I replied as follows:

“In answer to your questions I reply, inasmuch as you have made a covenant with bro. Samuel Bent to be **sealed to him** and be attached to **his kingdom**, you ought to keep that covenant; and when there is some one to act in his stead, or as proxy for him (as he is fallen asleep) and a Temple built for such purposes, you must attend to it, and if you should not live, you must leave on record your request with some of your relatives, or some one you shall select.” (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” January 6, 1847, typed copy)

Under the date of January 16, 1847, the following appears in the “Manuscript History of Brigham Young”:

I said some men were afraid they would lose some glory if they were **sealed to one of the Twelve**, and did not stand alone and have others **sealed** to them. A Saint’s kingdom consisted of his own posterity, and to be **sealed to one of the Twelve** did not diminish him, but only connected him according to the **law of God** by that perfect chain and order of Heaven, that will bind the righteous from Adam to the last Saint.

Under the date of February 23, 1847, Brigham Young even claimed that he saw Joseph Smith in a dream and asked him concerning the law of adoption:

23RD—. . . I related the following dream: While sick and asleep about noonday of the 17th inst., I dreamed that

I went to see Joseph. He looked perfectly natural, sitting with his feet on the lower round of his chair. I took hold of his right hand and kissed him many times, and said to him: "Why is it that we cannot be together as we used to be, You have been from us a long time, and we want your society and I do not like to be separated from you."

Joseph rising from his chair and looking at me with his usual, earnest, expressive and pleasing countenance replied, "It is all right."

I said, "I do not like to be away from you."

Joseph said, "It is all right; we cannot be together yet; we shall be by and by; but you will have to do without me a while, and then we shall be together again."

I then discovered there was a hand rail between us,

Joseph stood by a window and to the southwest of him it was very light. I was in the twilight and to the north of me it was very dark; I said, "Brother Joseph, the brethren you know well, better than I do; you raised them up, and brought the Priesthood to us. The brethren have a great anxiety to understand the **Law of Adoption** or sealing principles; and if you have a word of counsel for me I should be glad to receive it."

Joseph stepped toward me, and looking very earnestly, yet pleasantly said, "Tell the people to be humble and faithful. . . . Be sure to tell the people to keep the Spirit of the Lord; and if they will, they will find themselves just as they were organized by our Father in Heaven before they came into the world. Our Father in heaven organized the human family, but they are all disorganized and in great confusion."

Joseph then shewed me the pattern, how they were in the beginning. This I cannot describe, but I saw it, and saw where the Priesthood had been taken from the earth and how it must be joined together, so that there would be a perfect chain from Father Adam to his latest posterity. Joseph again said, "Tell the people to be sure to keep the Spirit of the Lord and follow it, and it will lead them just right." ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," February 23, 1847, typed copy)

Under the date of February 28, 1847, Hosea Stout told that Brigham Young related his dream and called it a "vision of God":

At six went to a High Council as usual. There was not much done of interest except some remarks of President Young which I will give in short It is in relation to a spell of sickness he had had lately. He spoke as follows. . . .

On Wednesday morning I was taken ill and it has been asked if I had a vision . . .

All that I know, is what my wife told me about it since. She said that I said, I had been where Joseph & Hyrum was.

And again that I said, it is hard coming to life again.

But I know that I went to the world of spirits; but what I saw I know not, for the vision went away from me, as a dream which you loose when you awake.

The next day I had a dream.

I dreamed that **I saw Joseph** sitting in a room, . . .

I told him that the Latter Day Saints was very anxious to know about the **Law of Adoption**, and the sealings powers & c and desired word of council from him. . . .

I saw how we were organized before we took tabernacles and every man will be restored to that which he had then, and all will be satisfied. After this I turned away & saw Joseph was in the edge of the light; but where I had to go was as midnight darkness.

He said I must go back, so I went back in the darkness.

I want you all to remember my dream for I [sic] it is a **vision of God** and was revealed through the spirit of Joseph.

(*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, vol. 1, pp. 237-238)

John D. Lee also told of Brigham Young's "vision" in his journal (see *The Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, p. 21).

The Law of Adoption evidently caused a great deal of dissension among the Mormons. In a sermon delivered on February 16, 1847, Brigham Young stated:

Such jealousies do exist and were I to say to the elders you now have the liberty to build up your kingdoms, one half of them would lie, swear, steal and fight like the very devil to get **men** and women sealed to them. They would even try to pass right by me and go to Jos. thinking to get between mine and the 12. Some have already tried to use an influence against me, but such jealousies and selfishness shall be stopped and if the brethren do not stop it I will blow it to the four winds by making them all come and be **sealed to me** and I through my father, and he and all this church to Jos. . . .

I have gathered a number of families around me through the **Law of Adoption** and seal of the covenant according to the order of the priesthood and others have done likewise, it being the **means of salvation** left to bring us back to God. (*Journals of John D. Lee*, edited by Charles Kelly, pp. 80-81)

In the same sermon Brigham Young stated:

Those that are **adopted** into my family and take me for their counsellor, if I continue faithfully I will preside over them throughout all eternity and will stand at their head and Jos. will stand at the head of this church and will be their president, prophet and **God** to the people in this dispensation. When we locate I will settle my family down in the order and teach them their duties. They will then have to **provide temporal blessings for me** instead of my boarding from 40 to 50 persons as I now do, and will administer spiritual blessings to them. (*Ibid.*, p. 83)

Brigham Young claimed that the Law of Adoption would bring great exaltation to the faithful:

Pres. B. Young . . . continued his remarks on the **Law of Adoption**. Granted the brethren permission to ask questions when they did not fully comprehend his meaning. The Lord introduced the **Law of Adoption** for the benefit of the children of men . . . This principle I ans[w]er is not clearly understood by many of [the] Elders in this church at the present time as it will hereafter be, and **I confess that I have had only a smattering of these things**, but when it is necessary I will attain to more knowledge on the subject . . . I have often heard elders say that they were [not] dependent on any man. . . . I consider that we are all dependent on one another for our **exaltation**, that our interests is inseparately connected (for example) what can my family do without me? Supposing they were to all turn away from me, I hold the **keys** over them through which they are to receive their **exaltation**. Would they not be like sheep that are without a shepherd and would be devoured by the wolves? (Ans.) They certainly would. Then let us change the position and say that I would cut off all my family, then what **glory** would I have with **nobody to rule over** but my own dear little self? To tell you my feelings I would rather be annihilated than to be in that situation. . . . I will show you a rule by which you may comprehend the **exaltation of the faithful**. I will use myself as a figure and say that I am ruler over **ten sons** and soon each one of them will have **10 men sealed to them** and then they would be **rulers** over them and that would make me **ruler** over ten presidents (or rather kings), whereas before I was **ruler** over 10 subjects only. Or in other words I ruled over one kingdom whereas I now rule over 10. Then let each one of those ten get ten more and then I would be **ruler of 100 kingdoms** and so on continue through all eternity and the more honor and glory that I could bestow upon my sons the more it would add to **my exaltation** but to clip the thread of your **exaltation** then where would be your **glory**. . . . if you wish to advance, hold up the hands of your **file leader** and as the Yankee says, **boost him ahead** and should you have 10 legions of trains follow on after you you should say to your **file leader, push ahead for I am coming with my train, boosting up at the same [time] instead of trying to pass**. To him the word would stimulate him and he would say, come on my boys, I will travel as fast as you can and on we would go in **one solid train th[r]ough all eternity**.

Before I stop I will answer a question that has been repeatedly asked me (E.I.) should I have a father dead



that has never heard this gospel, would it be required of men to redeem him and then have him adopted into some man's family and I be adopted to my father? (**I ans. No.**) If we have to attend to the ordinances of redemption for our dead relatives we then become their saviours and were we to wait to redeem our dead relatives before we could link the chains of the P.H. **we would never accomplish it.** (*Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859, Edited by Charles Kelly, pp. 86-89*)

The following statements by the Mormon leaders appear in John D. Lee's journal under the date of Feb. 17, 1847:

I [Heber C. Kimball is speaking] look upon the **law of adoption** as being the means of uniting families together by the connecting links of the priesthood, still I am aware that many have had trials for fear that they **had given away their birthright** when if [in?] fact they had none, not having been adopted. . . . But to urge anyone to be adopted or sealed to you it is like damming water to make it run up hill, it always breaks over unless [you] are all the time draining and is but dammed water at last. . . . Dr. Richards (the Historian) addressed the collection. Said . . . I but seldom ever address this people. . . . One item that caught my attention was this thing of **jealousy**, fearing that some now is rising or gaining power and influence faster than what I am. Therefore jealousy will arise which causes an envious feelings in our bosom and we imagine **that man is lexeering** [electioneering] and using unlawful measures to gain an influence. . . . Elder W. Woodruff said he never before enjoyed himself as well as he did under the instructions of yesterday's and today's while my brethren were reasoning upon the **law of adoption**, seal of the covenant and priesthood, a subject of deep and thrilling interest to us all. Yet I have had but little instruction on this important subject although I have much desired. I have **never had the privilege of having anyone adopted into my family**. At the time those ordinances were attended to I was absent on a mission, consequently **have never lectioneered much** and I do not know that I have ever asked a man to be adopted into my family. . . . Elder G. A. Smith said he and Bro. Amasa Lyman have just returned from a mission on the other side of the river but he **durst** [not] say as Bro. Pratt and Woodruff has, that he had not lectioneered, **for I have with all my might**, but if I have lectioneered to the injury and hurt of any man I am ignorant of it. I always lectioneered but for the good of this cause and so does Bro. Pratt and all my brethren. But there is one thing that I don't like to see and that is this thing called jealousy stirring up family disturbances and broils because we are afraid that some man is gaining favor and I am not advancing as fast as they are. And in order to keep back or stop their influence we go to those that have been **sealed** and discourage them saying why didnt [you] go come with me where none but the respected are? Was you not as capable of holding the keys of presidency yourself as Bro. Lee who has probably **10 or 15 men sealed to him?** Certainly you (I use Bro. Lee present because he is the 1st man I see) were. Then you should have gone to serve the 12 and thereby caused dissatisfaction. For example suppose I was to jump every man and be **sealed to the great God** and have **3 only sealed to me**. I don't think my kingdom would be very large or my glory very great. Not more so than it would be was I sealed to the most obscure Saint in this Kingdom. I could get no more. I should be dependent on the exertion of those who were **sealed to me**. But was I **sealed to the most obscure individual in this church** and I had 10s of 10,000 **sealed to me**, would not **my glory be greater** than it would be was I **sealed to headquarters with my 3 only?** **Certainly it would.** It does [not] matter so much where we are **sealed** provided we form a part of link the Priesthood. Then let jealousy stop and be united that we may speedily build up the kingdom of God on the earth, & c. (*Journals of John D. Lee, February 17, 1847, pp. 91-94*)

Under the date of July 13, 1846, Hosea Stout made this entry in his journal concerning the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde:

This evening Elder O. Hyde spoke at length . . . on the **Law of Adoption**. The first sermon I ever heard publicly. He desired all who felt willing to do so **to give him a pledge to come into his kingdom** when the **ordinance** could be attended to but wished all to select the

man whom they choose & c. (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout, vol. 1, p. 178*)

In a footnote on the same page, Juanita Brooks stated:

Since some of the apostles had been away on missions, they had not heard of this plan, and so could not share the possible glory. Here Orson Hyde is definitely trying to secure some adopted children; . . . The whole plan became the subject of so much controversy that it was all dropped and the practice abandoned.

There can be little doubt that the idea of sealing men to men caused many bad feelings. Hosea Stout made this statement in his journal under the date of December 9, 1847:

There was a Council today . . . & John D. Lee's case up Most of his wives & adopted children were dissatisfied with him & I believe it was so managed to **let all go free** who chose when 2 wives & almost all of his adopted children stepped out. (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Journals of Hosea Stout, vol. 1, p. 290*)

Juanita Brooks made this comment in a footnote on the same page:

Four of Lee's adopted sons accepted their freedom at once; others continued with friendly relations but without any constraint. This action was really a **death blow** to the whole system of Adoption already a bone-of-contention among the Mormon leaders. Once in the valley, no one honored it, so that its very existence is now largely forgotten.

Charles Kelly made this statement concerning the doctrine of sealing men to men: "Like many other Mormon doctrines, **it was but a passing fad, and is now ignored and forgotten**" (*Journals of John D. Lee, 1846-47 and 1859, edited by Charles Kelly, p. 88, n. 87*).

In 1894 Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, repudiated the doctrine of adoption and claimed that a man should be sealed to his own father. Woodruff admitted that some friends had been sealed to him, but he stated that he had "peculiar feelings about it":

**I have not felt satisfied**, neither did President Taylor, **neither has any man since the Prophet Joseph who has attended to the ordinance of adoption** in the temples of our God. We have felt that there was **more to be revealed** upon this subject than we had received. Revelations were given to us in the St. George Temple, which President Young presented to the Church of God. **Changes were made there**, and we still have **more changes to make**, in order to satisfy our Heavenly Father, satisfy our dead and ourselves. I will tell you what some of them are. I have prayed over this matter, and my brethren have. We have felt, as President Taylor said, that we **have got to have more revelation** concerning sealing under the **Law of Adoption**. Well, what are these changes? One of them is the principle of adoption. In the commencement of **adopting** men and women in the **temple at Nauvoo, a great many persons** were adopted to **different men** who were not of the lineage of their fathers, and there was a spirit manifested by some in that work **that was not of God. Men would go out and electioneer and labor with all their power to get men adopted to them.** One instance I will name here: A man went around Nauvoo asking **every man he could**, "You come and **be adopted to me**, and I shall stand at the **head of the kingdom**, and you will be there with me." . . . Men are in **danger** sometimes in **being adopted** to others, until they know who they are and what they will be. Now, what are the feelings of Israel? They have felt that they wanted to be adopted to somebody. President **Young was not satisfied** in his mind with regard to the extent of this matter; President **Taylor was not**. When I went before the Lord to know who I should be adopted to (**we were then being adopted to prophets and apostles**), the Spirit of

God said to me, “Have you not a father, who begot you?” “Yes, I have.” “Then why not honor him?” “Yes,” says I, “that is right.” I was adopted to my father, and should have had my father sealed to his father, and so on back; and the duty that I want every man who presides over a temple to see performed from this day henceforth and forever, unless the Lord Almighty commands otherwise, is, let **every man be adopted to his father**. When a man receives the endowments, adopt him to **his father; not to Wilford Woodruff**, nor to any other man outside the lineage of his fathers. **That is the will of God to this people**. . . . I say let every man be adopted to his father; . . . It is my duty to honor my father who begot me in the flesh. It is your duty to do the same. When you do this, the Spirit of God will be with you. And we shall continue this work, the Lord adding light to that which we have already received. **I have had friends adopted to me. We all have**, more or less. But I **have had peculiar feelings about it**, especially lately. There are men in this congregation who wish to be **adopted to me**. I say to them to day, if they can hear me, Go and be adopted to your fathers, and save your fathers, . . . A man may say, “I am an Apostle, or I am a High Priest, or I am an Elder in Israel, and if I am adopted to my father, **will it take any honor from me?**” I would say **not**. . . . Those of you who stand here—I do not care whether you are Apostles or what you are—by honoring your fathers you will not take any honor from your heads; you will hold the keys of the salvation of your father’s house, as Joseph Smith does. You **will lose nothing** by honoring your fathers and redeeming your dead. (*Millennial Star*, vol. 56 pp. 337-341)

On April 8, 1894, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, also repudiated the Law of Adoption. He stated that since the Nauvoo period he had never thought about the Law of Adoption without having “a certain amount of fear concerning it”:

. . . as has been beautifully explained this morning by President Woodruff, it is our duty to be sealed to our parents, that our lineage may be preserved; . . . in the minds of many there has been a **feeling of doubt** in regard to this **principle of adoption** as it was being practiced among us. I well remember myself in my boyhood days that which President Woodruff has referred to—the spirit that was manifested by many at the dedication of the temple at Nauvoo when the ordinances were administered there. **Some men thought to build up kingdoms to themselves**; they appeared to think that by inducing men and women to be adopted into their families they were **adding to their own glory**. From that day until the present, I have never thought of this subject of **adoption without having a certain amount of fear concerning it**.

. . . There is no true principle of the Gospel that will produce division. . . . And this **revelation** that God has given to His servant, the President of our Church, removes all the danger which seemed to threaten us through an imperfect understanding of the manner in which the law of adoption should be carried out.

To illustrate this point, let me suppose that the First Presidency of this Church were to seek to build up families for themselves from among this people, each one seeking to have men and women sealed to him in order that he might have a large following; and suppose each of the Twelve Apostles was to do the same; and suppose the High Priests and the brethren officiating in the temples were to do the same, what would be the result? You can see at once that in a little time we would be divided into tribes and clans, each man having his own following, and each following looking to the man to whom they had been adopted for counsel and for guidance, and in this way the governing authority of the Holy Priesthood in our midst would be divided and lessened. Who can not understand the danger there would be under such a condition of affairs. But...God has removed it by making it plain that **it is the duty of every man to be sealed to his father**, . . . I have this belief concerning us; that it was arranged before we came here how we should come, and through what lineage we should come. We were not born of the seed of Ham; we were not born of some questionable race; . . .

. . . suppose that each of us should seek some great man in the Church to be sealed to . . . and we think, “well, that man is much better than my father. . . .” We should not despise our origin. . . . There need be none to say, “Well, . . . I am adopted to Joseph, or to Brigham, or to John Taylor, or to Wilford Woodruff, . . .” There will be no need to pride and plume ourselves on the fact that we are adopted to these various men, and thus divide the people . . . Every man that reflects upon it can see that this revelation which God has given through his servant Wilford Woodruff removes that danger out of our pathway and prepares us to go forward and honor our kindred . . .

Why should a man come to one of the Apostles and be sealed to him and then trace his genealogy through him and his ancestors, and neglect his own? (*Millennial Star*, vol. 56, pp. 354-358)

Thus we see that the Law of Adoption, which Brigham Young called “a great and glorious doctrine” and “the means of salvation left to bring us back to God,” was completely repudiated by later Mormon leaders. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, admitted that he had had “peculiar feelings” about the Law of Adoption, and George Q. Cannon said that the practice “would result in great confusion” (see *The Case Against Mormonism*, vol. 1, p. 24).

A comparison of Brigham Young’s teaching and that of Wilford Woodruff plainly shows that the early Mormons were not led by revelation. Brigham Young said:

. . . I will answer a question that has been repeatedly asked me (E.I.) should I have a father dead that has never heard this gospel, would it be required of me to redeem him and then have him adopted into some man’s family and I be adopted to **my father?** (**I ans. No.**) . . . were we to wait to redeem our dead relatives before we could link the chains of the P.H. **we would never accomplish it.** (*Journals of John D. Lee*, p. 89)

Wilford Woodruff, on the other hand, stated:

. . . let **every man be adopted to his father**. When a man receives the endowments, **adopt him to his father**; not to Wilford Woodruff, not to **any other man outside** the lineage of his fathers. That is the **will of God** to this people. . . . I say let every man be adopted to his father; . . . (*Millennial Star*, vol. 56, p. 338)

Brigham Young claimed to have a revelation concerning the doctrine of sealing men to men, and he declared that it was a “means of salvation.” Wilford Woodruff, however, completely repudiated the doctrine. According to John Read, Brigham Young taught that “**men would be sealed to men** in the priesthood in a **more solemn ordinance** than that by which women were sealed to man, and in a room **over** that in which women were sealed to man in the **temple** of the Lord.” Brigham Young seemed to feel that temples were more essential for sealing men to men than for sealing women to men: “But we can seal women to men, **but not men to men, without a temple**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, p. 186).

Present-day leaders of the Mormon Church put great stress upon the idea of sealing women to men, but Brigham Young’s teachings about the Law of Adoption have been repudiated.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have not only shown that the Mormon leaders have given up the ordinance of sealing unrelated men to each other, but that they have made important changes in the ceremony where women are sealed to men.

After careful examination of the temple ceremony, we have come to the conclusion that it bears unmistakable evidence of being a man-made ritual. The fact that so many changes had to be made in it to try to make it acceptable shows plainly that it is not from God.

## 32. The Temple Ceremony and Masonry

The Mormon writer Hyrum L. Andrus claims that Joseph Smith obtained “essential elements” of the temple ceremony from the papyri he received from Michael H. Chandler:

Evidence indicates that Joseph Smith obtained the **essential covenants**, key-words, etc., of the temple ceremony from the writings of Abraham. (See Facsimile No. 2, figures 3 and 8.) . . . Having obtained **essential elements** of this ceremony from the writings of Abraham, he then organized them into a formal ceremony, . . . (*God, Man and the Universe*, 1968, p. 334)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, says the ordinances performed in the temple “were given in modern times to the Prophet Joseph Smith by revelation, many things connected with them being translated by the Prophet from the papyrus on which the Book of Abraham was recorded” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 779).

We have already shown that the papyri have nothing to do with Abraham or his religion (see pages 294-369 of this book). Now that it is plain that these papyri are pagan documents, Mormons must look elsewhere for the origin of the temple ceremony. We feel that at least part of the temple ceremony came from Freemasonry. In fact, the similarities between the temple ceremony and the ritual of the Masons are rather startling.

### Joseph Becomes a Mason

Although Joseph Smith’s early writings are filled with material which condemns secret societies, the presence of the Danite band among the Mormons indicates that by 1838 his attitude toward secret societies had changed. The reader will remember that the Danites were a secret oath-bound society and that the members were to be punished with death if they made public the secrets of the order (see pages 428-50 of this book).

When the Mormon leaders found themselves in serious trouble with the law because of the Danite band, Joseph Smith went back to the teachings of the Book of Mormon and publicly repudiated secret societies. In a letter written from Liberty Jail, dated March 25, 1839, Joseph Smith joined with four others in stating:

We further, caution our brethren, against the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by covenants, oaths, penalties, or secesies, but let the time past of our experience and sufferings by the wickedness of Doctor Avarad suffice, and let our covenants, be that of the everlasting covenant, as it is contained in the holy writ, and the things which God has revealed unto us; pure friendship, always becomes weakened, the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by penal oaths and secrecy. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 1, p. 133)

After Joseph Smith went to Nauvoo, he again took an interest in secret societies. In fact, it was in Nauvoo that Joseph Smith became a Mason, formed the Council of 50, and established the secret temple ceremony. Many of the converts to the Mormon Church were Masons or had been Masons in the past. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated: “Many members of secret societies have joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (*Evidences*

*and Reconciliations*, 3 volumes in 1, p. 113). On pages 357-358 of the same book, the Apostle Widtsoe stated:

Many of the Saints were Masons, such as Joseph’s brother Hyrum, Heber C. Kimball, Elijah Fordham, Newel K. Whitney, James Adams, and John C. Bennett . . .

With the acquiescence of the Prophet, members of the Church already Masons petitioned the Grand Master of Illinois for permission to set up a lodge in Nauvoo. In answer they were granted permission, in October, 1841, to hold lodge meetings; but it was March 15, 1842, before authority was given to set up a lodge in Nauvoo and to induct new members. **Joseph Smith became a member.**

Ebenezer Robinson seemed to blame John C. Bennett for the great interest which the church leaders had in masonry. However this may have been, Joseph Smith himself became a member of the Masonic fraternity. The following statement is recorded in Joseph Smith’s *History* under the date of March 15, 1842:

In the evening **I received the first degree in Free Masonry** in the Nauvoo Lodge, assembled in my general business office. (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 551)

The next day Joseph Smith stated:

**I was with the Masonic Lodge and rose to the sublime degree.** (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 552)

The Mormons who joined the Masonic Lodge soon found themselves in trouble with other members of the fraternity. S. H. Goodwin states:

Not long after this lodge had been set to work, rumors of unusual proceedings therein became current. Report had it that the Nauvoo brethren set at naught certain established and well-known Masonic laws and usages. . . . On the 16th day of July following, Bodley Lodge No. 1, of Quincy, held a special meeting . . . After discussion, the sentiment of the meeting took the form of resolutions. One of these called upon Grand Master Jonas to suspend the dispensation of Nauvoo Lodge until the annual communication of Grand Lodge. Another throws a little light back upon the events connected with the institution of that lodge. This resolution reads:

Resolved: That Bodley Lodge No. 1, of Quincy, request of the Grand Lodge of the state of Illinois, that a committee be appointed at the next annual meeting of said lodge to make enquiry into the manner the officers of the Nauvoo Lodge, U.D. were installed, and by what authority the Grand Master initiated, passed and raised Messrs. Smith and Sidney Rigdon to the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, at one and the same time, and that the proceedings of the committee be reported for the benefit of this lodge.

(*Mormonism and Masonry*, by S. H. Goodwin, 1938, pp. 28-29)

Finally, the Masons refused to allow the Mormons to continue “a Masonic Lodge at Nauvoo” (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 34). One Masonic historian wrote: “‘If the Lodge had been suffered to work two years longer, every Mormon in Hancock County would have been initiated’ ” (*History of Freemasonry in Illinois*, p. 184, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by S. H. Goodwin, p. 34). The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe admitted that “**large**



**numbers** of Nauvoo citizens were inducted into the fraternity. Soon the Nauvoo Lodge had more members than all the other Illinois lodges together. It became the largest in the state. In this rapid growth, some lodge **errors** appear to have been made” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 volumes in 1 edition, p. 358).

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin made these statements in his book, *Mormonism and Masonry* (not to be confused with the book by Goodwin which bears the same name):

It is not surprising that they made a few departures from the ancient landmarks and introduced some changes in the procedure which brought upon them the full weight of Masonic displeasure. . . .

At this time there were only two hundred twenty-seven Masons in Illinois outside of Nauvoo. These were distributed among eleven lodges, making an average of twenty-one members in each lodge. The largest lodge was in Springfield, with a membership of forty-three.

Within five months, the Mormons initiated two hundred eighty-six members in Nauvoo, and forty-five in the Rising Sun Lodge at Montrose, Iowa.

Thus there were more Masons in Nauvoo in a few weeks than there were in all other lodges in Illinois combined. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, Salt Lake City, 1956, pp. 89-92)

Masonry is an ancient institution. Its landmarks are sacred and must be preserved. From the distant past, its leaders have attempted to keep it inviolate. The slightest change in its regulations has been regarded with suspicion.

The Mormons were careless in some respects, failing to realize the sanctity of the “ancient landmarks” and feeling free to make small innovations without consulting the Grand Lodge. Such a step, though not intended to trample underfoot the honored customs of the past, was perfectly natural for them. Their religion was a revolutionary one. They never attempted to follow the religious pattern of the world, being free to introduce many teachings and institutions that were not practiced in any other church.

This spirit of freedom and newness of growth with no attempt to deviate from the theological path of the past, may have influenced them to deviate from the ancient landmarks of Masonry. . . .

Since the Mormons were completely ignored by the Masons in neighboring towns and by the Grand Lodge also, they were likely to make many errors as they sought to put their lodge in motion. There was a spirit of freedom in all their religious activities, never for a moment feeling bound by the traditions of the past, but always free to make revolutionary changes in the matter of religious ritual and practice. This feeling may have crept into the lodge work and resulted in some changes that would be frowned upon by other Masons. The complaints about voting and initiations may have been well founded, yet those same mistakes were not uncommon in young lodges.

. . . On the question of voting, it is said that the ballot must be strictly secret and the voting must be unanimous. Each applicant must be voted for on a separate ballot. This was a slow and cumbersome method in comparison with the dispatch with which the voting was conducted in Church assemblies, so it is not unlikely that they violated the strict Masonic regulation concerning balloting. (*Ibid.*, pp. 104-106)

Although Joseph Smith found himself in trouble with the Masons, he gave the Masonic signal of distress just before he was murdered. In his book concerning Masonry, William Morgan gives this information concerning what a Mason is supposed to do “in case of distress”:

The sign is given by raising both hands and arms to the elbows, perpendicularly, one on each side of the head, the elbows forming a square. The words accompanying this sign, in case of distress, are, “**O Lord, my God!** is there no help for the widow’s son?” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, New York, 1827, p. 76)

John D. Lee claimed that Joseph Smith used the exact words that a Mason is supposed to use in case of distress:

Joseph left the door, sprang through the window, and cried out, “**Oh, Lord, my God, is there no help for the widow’s son!**” (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photomechanical reprint of 1880 edition, p. 153)

Other accounts seem to show that Joseph Smith used the first four words of the distress cry. According to the *History of the Church*, Joseph Smith “fell outward into the hands of his murderers, exclaiming. ‘**O Lord, my God!**’” (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 618). Less than a month after Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered, the following appeared in the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*:

. . . with uplifted hands they gave such **signs of distress** as would have commanded the interposition and benevolence of Savages or Pagans. They were both **Masons** in good standing. Ye brethren of “the mystic tie” what think ye! Where is our good **master** Joseph and Hyrum? Is there a pagan, heathen, or savage nation on the globe that would not be moved on this great occasion, as the trees of the forest are moved by a mighty wind? Joseph’s last exclamation was “**O Lord my God!**” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 585)

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin admitted that Joseph Smith gave the Masonic signal of distress:

When the enemy surrounded the jail, rushed up the stairway, and killed Hyrum Smith, Joseph stood at the open window, his martyr-cry being these words, “O Lord My God!” This was **not** the beginning of a prayer, because Joseph Smith did not pray in that manner. This brave, young man who knew that death was near, started to repeat **the distress signal of the Masons**, expecting thereby to gain the protection its members are pledged to give a brother in distress.

In 1878, Zina D. Huntington Young said of this theme, “I am the daughter of a Master Mason; I am the widow of the Master Mason who, when leaping from the window of Carthage jail, pierced with bullets, **made the Masonic sign of distress**, but those signs were not heeded except by the God of Heaven.” (*Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, p. 17)

On page 16 of the same book, Mr. McGavin quotes the following from the *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, page 26:

“Joseph, leaping the fatal window, **gave the Masonic signal of distress.**”

In Utah the Masons will not allow a Mormon to become a member of their fraternity because of the things that happened in Nauvoo. Brigham Young once stated: “. . . I refer to the Freemasons. They have refused our brethren membership in their lodge, because they were polygamists” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 328).

Although it is true that the Masons in Utah were disturbed with the Mormons because of polygamy, there are other reasons why they refused to allow Mormons to join their fraternity. One of the most important is that they feel that Joseph Smith stole part of the Masonic ritual and included it in his temple ceremony. S. H. Goodwin made this statement:

The observant Craftsman cannot be long among the Mormon people without noting the not infrequent use made of certain emblems and symbols which have come to be associated in the public mind with the Masonic fraternity. And now and again he will catch expressions and phrases in conversation, and meet with terms in literature, which are suggestive, to say the least. If he should continue his residence in Utah, he will sometimes be made aware of the fact, when shaking hands with a Mormon neighbor or friend, that there is a pressure of the hand as though some sort of a “grip” is being given. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, S. H. Goodwin, p. 43)

According to E. Cecil McGavin, “Grand Master J. M. Orr of Utah” made this statement in 1878:

We say to the priests of the Latter-day Church, you cannot enter our lodge rooms—you surrender all to an unholy priesthood. You have heretofore sacrificed the sacred obligations of our beloved Order, and we believe you would do the same again. Stand aside; we want none of you. Such a wound as you gave Masonry in Nauvoo is not easily healed, and no Latter-day Saint is, or can become a member of our Order in this jurisdiction. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 7)

## Masonry in Temple Ritual

The relationship between the Mormon temple ritual and Masonry is too close to be called a coincidence. The fact that both Mormons and Masons have a temple in which they administer secret ceremonies is striking, but when we compare the ritual and learn that Joseph Smith was a Mason, we are forced to the conclusion that he borrowed from Masonry in establishing his temple ceremony.

In this study we have had access to two books which give the Masonic ritual. They were reprinted by Ezra A. Cook Publications, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. The first is Capt. William Morgan's *Freemasonry Exposed*, which was first published in 1827. (It should be remembered that the author of this book disappeared and that this set off the great controversy concerning Masonry.) The second is *Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*. This book was published some time after Morgan's expose, but it is important because it gives some of the "higher degrees" not mentioned by Morgan.

The following are some of the parallels between the ritual of the Masons and the Mormon temple ceremony. Because some of the details of the temple ceremony have been changed in recent years, we are using the pamphlet, *Temple Mormonism—Its Evolution, Ritual and Meaning*, New York, 1931, to make our comparison.

### 1. Both the Masons and the Mormons have what is called "the five points of fellowship."

**MORMONS:** The five points of fellowship are given by putting the inside of the right foot to the inside of the Lord's, the inside of your knee to his, laying your breast close to his, your left hands on each other's backs, and each one putting his mouth to the other's ear, in which position the Lord whispers:

Lord—"This is the sign of the token:

"Health to the navel, marrow in the bones, . . ."

(*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:** He (the candidate) is raised on what is called the five points of fellowship, . . . This is done by putting the inside of your right foot to the inside of the right foot of the person to whom you are going to give the word, the inside of your knee to his, laying your right breast against his, your left hands on the back of each other, and your mouths to each other's right ear (in which position alone you are permitted to give the word), and whisper the word Mahhah-bone . . . He is also told that Mahhah-bone signifies marrow in the bone. (*Freemasonry Exposed*, pp. 84-85)

The reader will note that the Mormon temple ceremony still contains "the five points of fellowship" (see page 472 of this book). Masonic writers seem willing to speak of "the five points of fellowship." George Oliver stated: "Masons profess to be united in an indissoluble chain of sincere affection, called the five points of fellowship; . . ." (*The Antiquity of Freemasonry*, p. 168, as cited by McGavin in *Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 9). A Masonic poet has even written a poem entitled, "The Five Points of Fellowship." In a footnote to this poem we find this statement:

The paraphrase embodies the following ancient form of injunction.

"Foot to foot (teaches) that we will not hesitate to go on foot and out of our way to aid and succor a needy Brother; knee to knee, that we will remember a Brother's welfare, in all our applications to Deity; breast to breast, that we will ever keep, in our breast, a Brother's secrets, when communicated to us as such, murder and treason excepted; hand to back, that we will ever be ready to stretch forth our hand to aid and support a falling Brother, . . ." (*The Poetry of Freemasonry*, by Robert Morris, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 11)

The words "marrow in the bones" are still used in the Mormon temple ceremony (see page 472). It is interesting to note that the woman who exposed the ceremony back in 1846 stated that in "one place something was spoken to me which I do not recollect—the meaning was 'marrow in the bone;'. . ." (*Warsaw Signal*, April 15, 1846)

### 2. When the candidate receives "The First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" he makes a promise similar to the oath taken in the "First Degree" of the Masonic ritual.

**MORMONS:** . . . we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the first token of the Aaronic priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so, we agree that our throats be cut from ear to ear and our tongues torn out by their roots. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 18)

**MASONS:** . . . I will . . . never reveal any part or parts, art or arts, point or points of the secret arts and mysteries of ancient Freemasonry . . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by the roots, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, pp. 21-22)

### 3. In both ceremonies the thumb is drawn across the throat to show the penalty.

**MORMONS:** Sign—In executing the sign of the penalty, the right hand, palm down, is drawn sharply across the throat, . . . (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 18)

**MASONS:** This is given by drawing your right hand across your throat, the thumb next to your throat, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 23)

### 4. Those who receive the "First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" give a grip that is similar to that used by the Masons in the "First Degree" of their ritual.

**MORMONS:** The Grip—Hands clasped, pressing the knuckle of the index finger with the thumb. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 18)

**MASONS:** The right hands are joined together as in shaking hands and each sticks his thumb nail into the third joint or upper end of the forefinger; . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 23)

### 5. Some of the wording concerning the "grip" is similar.

**MORMONS:** . . . Peter now takes Adam by the right hand and asks:

Peter— "What is that?"

Adam— "The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood."

Peter— "Has it a name?"

Adam— "It has."

Peter— "Will you give it to me?"

Adam— "I can not, for it is connected with my new name, but this is the sign." (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** The Master and candidate holding each other by the grip, as before described, the Master says,

"What is this?"

Ans. "A grip."

"A grip of what?"

Ans. "The grip of an Entered Apprentice Mason."

"Has it a name?"

Ans. "It has."

"Will you give it to me?"

Ans. "I did not so receive it, neither can I so impart it."

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, pp. 23-24)

### 6. The oath of the "Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood" is similar to that taken in the second degree of Masonry.

**MORMONS:** "We and each of us do covenant and promise

that we will not reveal the secrets of this, the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign, grip or penalty. Should we do so, we agree to have our breasts cut open and our hearts and vitals torn from our bodies and given to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** “I, . . . most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, . . . that I will not give the degree of a Fellow Craft Mason to any one of an inferior degree, nor to any other being in the known world, . . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my left breast torn open and my heart and vitals taken from thence . . . to become a prey to the wild beasts of the field, and vulture of the air, . . .” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 52)

### 7. Both have a similar sign.

**MORMONS:** The sign is made by placing the left arm on the square at the level of the shoulder, placing the right hand across the chest with the thumb extended and then drawing it rapidly from left to right and dropping it to the side. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** The sign is given by drawing your right hand flat, with the palm of it next to your breast, across your breast from the left to the right side with some quickness, and dropping it down by your side; . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 53)

### 8. Both have a similar grip.

**MORMONS:** The Grip is given by clasping the hand and pressing the thumb in the hollow between the first and second knuckles of the hand. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** . . . the pass-grip, is given by taking each other by the right hand, as though going to shake hands, and each putting his thumb between the fore and second fingers where they join the hand, and pressing the thumb between the joints. (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 54)

### 9. In both cases a “name” is used.

**MORMONS:** The name is the given name of the candidate. (*Temple Mormonism*, page 20)

**MASONS:** . . . the name of it is Shibboleth. (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 54)

### 10. The promise made when receiving the “First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood” resembles the oath given by the Masons in the third or “Master Mason’s Degree.”

**MORMONS:** Peter— “We and each of us do covenant and promise that we will not reveal any of the secrets of this, the First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Should we do so, we agree that our bodies be cut asunder in the midst and all our bowels gush out.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** “I, . . . most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, in addition to my former obligations, that I will not give the degree of a Master Mason to any of an inferior degree, nor to any other being in the known world, . . . binding myself under no less penalty than to have my body severed in two in the midst, and divided to the north and south, my bowels burnt to ashes . . .” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, pp. 73-75)

**11. The sign of the penalty is similar in both cases.** (The description of this sign which appears in *Temple Mormonism* is not completely accurate; therefore, we are using the account that appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The reader can see that this is the way the sign is given today (see page 470 of this book).

**MORMONS:** In this, the left hand is placed palm upright, directly in front of the body, there being a right angle formed at the elbow;

the right hand, palm down, is placed under the elbow of the left; then drawn sharply across the bowels, and both hands are dropped at the side. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 12, 1906)

**MASONS:** The Penal Sign is given by putting the right hand to the left side of the bowels, the hand open, with the thumb next to the belly, and drawing it across the belly, and letting it fall; this is done tolerably quick. This alludes to the penalty of the obligation: “Having my body severed in twain,” etc. (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 77)

### 12. In both cases a “name” is used.

**MORMONS:** The Name of this token is the Son, meaning the Son of God. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** . . . the word or name is Tubal Cain. (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 77)

### 13. The conversation at the “veil” in the temple ceremony is very similar to that of the “Fellow Craft Mason” when he is questioned concerning the “grip.”

**MORMONS:**

Lord— “What is this?”

Endowee— “The second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood— The Patriarchal Grip or Sure Sign of the Nail.”

Lord— “Has it a name?”

Endowee— “It has.”

Lord— “Will you give it to me?”

Endowee— “I can not for I have not yet received it.”

(*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:**

. . . “What is this?”

Ans. “A grip.”

“A grip of what?”

Ans. “The grip of a Fellow Craft Mason.”

“Has it a name?”

Ans. “It has.”

“Will you give it to me?”

Ans. “I did not so receive it, neither can I so impart it.”

(*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 54)

### 14. Both the Masons and the Mormons have a vow regarding “chastity.”

**MORMONS:** “You and each of you do covenant and promise that you will not have sexual intercourse with any of the opposite sex except your lawful wife or wives who are given you by the holy priesthood.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 21)

**MASONS:** “Furthermore do I promise and swear that I will not violate the chastity of a Master Mason’s wife, mother, sister, or daughter, I knowing them to be such, nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it.” (*Masonry Exposed*, pp. 74-75)

### 15. The grip known as “The Sign of the Nail” seems to be similar to one given by Masons in one of their higher degrees.

**MORMONS:** The grip is given by placing the thumb on back of hand and the tip of forefinger in the centre of palm, representing the piercing of the hand by a nail. It is called “The Sign of the Nail.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 20)

**MASONS:** Grand Commander now explains the grip and word of a Knight of Malta. He says to candidate—Thomas,



reach hither thy finger, and feel the print of the nails; [they join right hands, and force the first finger into the centre of the palm;] . . . (Richardson's *Monitor of Free-Masonry*, p. 122)

**16. The “Oath of Vengeance” which used to be used in the Mormon Temple ceremony resembles an oath in one of the higher degrees of Masonry.**

**MORMONS:** “You and each of you do solemnly promise and vow that you will pray, and never cease to pray, and never cease to importune high heaven to avenge the blood of the prophets . . .” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 21)

**MASONS:** “We promise and swear, by the living God, always supreme, to revenge the death of our ancestor; . . .” (*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, p. 188)

**17. Both Mormons and Masons change clothing before going through their rituals.**

**MORMONS:** The candidate, being directed to these washing and dressing rooms and having divested himself of all his clothing, awaits his time in the bath . . .

The candidate then retires to the dressing room, where he puts on a shirt and a pair of white pants and white stockings. (*Temple Mormonism*, pp. 14-15)

**MASONS:** The candidate during the time is divested of all his apparel (shirt excepted) and furnished with a pair of drawers kept in the lodge for the use of candidates. The candidate is then blindfolded, his left foot bare, his right in a slipper, his left breast and arm naked, and a rope called a Cable-tow round his neck . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 18)

**18. Both Mormons and Masons use an apron.**

**MORMONS:** Adam (Turning to the audience)—“In your bundles brethren and sisters, you will each find an apron, you will now put it on.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 17)

**MASONS:** The Master returns to his seat while the Wardens are examining the candidate, and gets a lambskin or white apron, presents it to the candidate, and observes, “Brother, I now present you with a lambskin or white apron. It is an emblem of innocence, and the badge of a Mason . . .” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 24)

**19. In one of the higher degrees the Masons anoint the candidate. This is somewhat similar to the anointing ceremony in the Mormon Temple ritual.**

**MORMONS:** As the candidate is washed, the officiant hurries through the lustration ritual. . . the candidate is passed on to another attendant and is anointed with oil. The oil is very definitely applied to the various organs of his body. The pronouncements used in this ceremony are much the same as those used in the lustration ritual. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 15)

**MASONS:** Master orders the basin of perfumed water and a clean napkin to be brought to him, and directs candidate to wash his hands, which he does. . . .

Master takes a box of perfumed ointment and anoints candidate on his head, eyes, mouth, heart, the tip of his right ear, hand, and foot, and says—“You are now, my dear brother, received a member of our society; . . .” (*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, p. 167)

**20. Both Mormons and Masons give what they call a “new name” to the candidate.**

**MORMONS:** “With these garments I give you a new name which is never to be divulged to anyone. . . . The name I shall give you is \_\_\_\_\_.” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 15)

**MASONS:** “I also present you with a new name; it is CAUTION; . . .” (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 25)

**21. In the Mormon Temple ceremony the candidate cannot pass through the veil until he has given certain signs and words. In the Royal Arch Degree the Masons use veils.**

**MORMONS:** The candidate is now taken to one of the openings between the pillars by one of the Temple workers, who gives three raps with a mallet on the pillar. The Lord parts the veil slightly and asks what is wanted.

Temple Worker—“The man Adam having been true and faithful in all things now desires to converse with the Lord through the veil.”

Lord—“See that his garments are properly marked, present him at the veil, and his request shall be granted.”

Attendants or Temple workers prompt the candidate in his answers and grips. . . .

The Endowee is then taken to the opening by the attendant, who gives three more raps with the mallet.

Lord—“What is wanted?”

Attendant—“Adam, having conversed with the Lord through the veil, now desires to enter his presence.”

Lord—“Admit him.”

As he says this he extends his hand and welcomes the candidate into the Glory room. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:**

Principal Sojourner—Companions, we will pass on, and make and alarm at the Third Veil. [Stamps nine times.]

Master of the Third Veil—Who comes there? Who dare approach this Third Veil of our sacred Tabernacle?

Principal Sojourner—Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come to assist in the rebuilding of the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

Master of Third Veil—How do you expect to enter?

Principal Sojourner—By the words, sign, and word of exhortation of the Master of the Second Veil.

Master of Third Veil—Give them.

Principal Sojourner—Shem, Japeth and Adoniram. [Thrusts his hand into his bosom as Master of Second Veil had done.]

Master of Third Veil—They are right. You can enter the third Veil.

The candidates enter. (*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, pp. 76-77)

**22. In the Mormon temple ceremony a man represents Adam. The Masons also have a man who personates Adam in the degree of “Knight of the Sun.”**

**MORMONS:** Elohim—. . . “This man who is now being operated upon is Michael. . . . When he awakes he. . . will be known as Adam!” (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 16)

**MASONS:** Thrice Puissant Grand Master, representing Father Adam, is stationed in the east. (*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, p. 185)

**23. In the Mormon temple ceremony a man represents God. In the Mason's Royal Arch Degree a man “personates the Deity.”**

**MORMONS:** When all is quiet, a man dressed in white flannels, representing Elohim, comes from behind the curtain . . . (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 15)

**MASONS:** One of the members now personates the Deity, behind the bush, and calls out Moses! Moses! (*Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry*, p. 73)

**24. Both the Mormons and the Masons consider the square and the compass to be extremely important. The marks of the square and the compass appear on the Mormon temple garments and on the veil.**

**MORMONS:** We now have the veil explained to us. We are told that it represents the veil of the temple. The marks are the same as those on the garments—the compass on the left and the square on the right side. (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:** . . . the three great lights in Masonry are the Holy Bible, Square and Compass. . . the Square, to square our actions, and the Compass to keep us in due bounds with all mankind, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, pp. 22-23)

Even a Mormon writer, E. Cecil McGavin, is willing to admit that the “square and the compass” appear on Mormon temple clothing: “It is universally known that Mormon temple clothing contain certain marks of the priesthood, including the **square and compass**” (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 72).

**25. In the Masonic ritual the point of the compass is pressed against the left breast of the candidate. The Mormon temple garment has the mark of the compass on the left breast.**

**MORMONS:** The marks are the same as those on the garments—the compass on the left . . . (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:** The candidate then enters, the Senior Deacon at the same time pressing his naked left breast with the point of the compass, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 19)

**26. The angle of the square is pressed against the right breast in the Masonic ritual. The mark of the square appears on the right breast of the Mormon temple garment.**

**MORMONS:** . . . the square on the right side, . . . (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:** As he enters, the angle of the square is pressed hard against his naked right breast, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 50)

**27. A mallet is used by both the Masons and the Mormons in their ceremonies.**

**MORMONS:** . . . one of the Temple workers, . . . gives three raps with a mallet . . . (*Temple Mormonism*, p. 22)

**MASONS:** . . . he gives a rap with the common gavel or mallet, . . . (*Freemasonry Exposed*, p. 11)

Other parallels between the Mormon temple ceremony and the Masonic ritual could be shown, but these should be sufficient to convince the reader that Joseph Smith borrowed from the Masons when he established the endowment ceremony.

In 1934 Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, wrote a book entitled, *The Relationship of “Mormonism” and Freemasonry*. On page 89 of this book, the following statement appears:

Whether there are resemblances between the ordinances administered in the temples of the Church and those administered in Masonic temples, the writer does not know. He has made **no effort to find out**. It is **not** his business to know. While there are many Masons who are members of the Church, he has **not** at any time asked one of them for information, nor has any one of them ever proffered it. He has read the criticism of no writer who has written on the subject, his limited knowledge has been derived from books written by recognized Masonic authorities. Were he in possession of knowledge of ceremonies regarded as private and sacred by Masons his respect for the men who are connected with the order would seal his lips. . . . the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was **not** influenced by Masonry, either in its doctrines, organization, or the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon. (*The Relationship of “Mormonism” and Freemasonry*, p. 89)

We feel that Anthony W. Ivins’ own statement shows that he was not qualified to write a book concerning “The Relationship of ‘Mormonism’ and Freemasonry.” If he “made no effort to find out” what went on in the Masonic ceremonies, how could he know that Mormonism “was not influenced by Masonry”?

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin has written a book which is far better than that written by Anthony W. Ivins. Although we cannot agree with many of his conclusions, we feel that he has compiled a great deal of material that is relevant to the subject. Mr. McGavin is even willing to admit that there are some similarities between Mormonism and Masonry:

Numerous, indeed, were the early references to the Temple ritual in the sermons and writings of Joseph Smith. Though a few rudimental principles may have been similar to the Masonic ritual, he opened a vast, new field of wisdom that had certainly been “hidden for generations.” (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 148)

**The Mormons**, the American Indians, the ancient Essenes, and the early Druids are not the only ones who have “**Masonic**” symbols and **practices in their rituals**. . . .

The Odd Fellows and other fraternal orders have their **secret signs, grips, tokens, and passwords**. The Masons certainly have no monopoly on that vast field of ritual and symbolism that arose during the childhood of the human race and spread into all countries. . . .

It is evident that the **Masonic** ritual embraces a few features that **resemble** the rudimental ceremonies of the **temple endowment**, yet these few points of similarity are largely restricted to the rituals pertaining to the Aaronic priesthood. (*Ibid.*, pp. 196-197)

Masons who visit the Temple Block in Salt Lake City are impressed by what they call the Masonic emblems displayed on the outside of the **Mormon Temple**.

**Yes, the “Masonic emblems” are displayed on the walls of the temple**—the sun, moon, and stars, “Holiness to the Lord,” the two right hands clasped in fellowship, the All-seeing eye, Alpha and Omega, and the beehive. Masonic writers tell us the Mormon Temple ritual and their own are slightly similar in some respects.

Without any apologies we frankly admit that there may be **some truth in these statements**.

Yes, the public is entitled to an explanation of these mysteries and coincidences. (*Ibid.*, Preface)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this comment:

Fourth, **that there are similarities in the services of the temple and some secret organization may be true**. (*Evidence and Reconciliations*, 3 volume in one edition, p. 112)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gave the following testimony regarding the temple ceremony:

The CHAIRMAN. The obligations and covenants, whatever they are, then, you are not at liberty to disclose?

Mr. ROBERTS. No, sir. I would be led to regard those obligations as similar to those who perhaps have passed through **Masonic fraternities, or are members of Masonic fraternities**.

The CHAIRMAN. Then your church organization in that particular is a sort of **Masonic fraternity**?

Mr. ROBERTS. **It is analogous**, perhaps, in some of its features. (*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 741)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of Brigham Young University, has made this statement concerning Mormonism and Masonry:

Among the first to engage in the Latter-day Temple work were many members of the Masons, a society that “is not, and does not profess to be, a religion,” but whose rites present **unmistakable parallels to those of**

**the Temple.** Yet, like the Indians, those men experienced only an expansion of understanding. (*What Is a Temple*, Brigham Young University Press, 1968, p. 247)

In footnote 71 on page 248 of the same work, Dr. Nibley stated:

Pending the exhaustive study that the subject deserves, we will only say here, that an extensive reading of Masonic and Mormon teachings and history should make it clear to any reader that the former is the shadow, the latter the substance. The one is literal, the other allegorical.

Since many members of the Mormon Church were Masons and were familiar with its ritual, Joseph Smith must have realized that he might be accused of stealing the ceremonies from Masonry. In what was apparently a move to offset this criticism, Joseph Smith claimed that Masonry once had the true endowment and that it had become corrupted through the passage of time. E. Cecil McGavin gives us this information:

In the diary of Benjamin F. Johnson, an intimate friend and associate of Joseph Smith, it is recorded that “Joseph told me that Freemasonry was the apostate endowment, as sectarian religion was the apostate religion.” Elder Heber C. Kimball, who had been a Mason for many years, related that after Joseph Smith became a Mason, he explained to his brethren that **Masonry had been taken from the Priesthood.** (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 199)

The last part of McGavin’s information may have come from Heber C. Kimball’s daughter, for she stated that “The Prophet Joseph after becoming a Mason said that Masonry had been taken from the Priesthood” (*Woman’s Exponent*, vol. 12, p. 126, as cited in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, p. 99).

In trying to explain why their temple ritual resembles that of the Masons, some Mormons claim that the endowment was given in Solomon’s Temple and that the Masons preserved part of the ceremony. The Mormon Apostle Melvin J. Ballard has been quoted as saying the following:

“Modern Masonry is a fragmentary presentation of the ancient order established by King Solomon, from whom it is said to have been handed down through the centuries.

“Frequent assertion that some details of the Mormon Temple ordinances resemble Masonic rites, led him to refer to this subject,” the speaker declared, and he added, “that he was not sorry there was such a similarity, because of the fact that the ordinances and rites revealed to Joseph Smith constituted a reintroduction upon the earth of the divine plan inaugurated in the Temple of Solomon in ancient days.” . . .

“Masonry is an apostasy from the ancient early order, just as so-called Christianity is an apostasy from the true Church of Christ.” (*The Salt Lake Herald*, December 29, 1919, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by S. H. Goodwin, pp. 49-50)

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin states:

Yes, there may be some similarities in the rituals of the Mormons and the Masons, but those few likenesses in a vast realm of ritual cannot be explained by the fact that Joseph Smith attended a few meetings of the Masonic fraternity. In the light of the evidence supplied by Masonic historians, the conclusion is forced upon us that some of the features of the ritual once administered in Solomon’s Temple have persisted in Masonry. . . .

Since some of the Masonic ritual has descended from Solomon’s time, altered and corrupted by the passing centuries, should one be surprised to find a few similarities when the Temple ritual is again established? . . .

If the facts were available and the original sources extant, it would doubtless be apparent that everything in the ritual of the Mormons that the Masons say was taken from their ceremonies, dates back to Solomon’s time. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, pp. 192-194)

William J. Whalen made these comments in rebuttal to E. Cecil McGavin’s statements:

McGavin accepts the most fanciful claims to antiquity put forth by such discredited Masonic historians as Mackey, Anderson and Oliver.

These early Masonic writers were wont to claim Solomon, Adam, and most of the upright men of the Old Testament as early lodge brothers. Modern Masonic historians date the origin of the lodge in the early eighteenth century and recognize that these pioneer speculative Masons simply adopted the story of the building of Solomon’s temple as a dramatic background for their initiations. Fred L. Pick and G. Norman Knight in their *Pocket History of Freemasonry* admit:

Up to the present time, no even plausible theory of the “origin” of the Freemasons has been put forward. The reason for this is probably that the Craft, as we know it, originated among the Operative Masons of Britain. No doubt it incorporated from the earliest times shreds of ritual, folk-lore and even occult elements of time-immemorial antiquity. But it is almost certainly a British product and of British origin.

A few elements in modern Masonry here and there can be traced to the medieval guilds of working masons, but no one with a scholarly reputation would try to maintain that the degree system as it is worked now—and as it was worked in Nauvoo in 1842—could have possibly been derived from Solomonic rites. (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, New York, 1964, pp. 203-204)

While some Mormon writers claim that Masonry dates back to the time of Solomon, Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency, stated:

. . . the foregoing definitely proves that the origin of Freemasonry is shrouded in mystery, that the origin of the craft is based largely upon legends which are not authenticated by reliable evidence. If true, they take us back to the idolatrous worship and pagan practices of Egypt, Greece, and other semi-heathen nations of antiquity. (*The Relationship of “Mormonism” and Freemasonry*, 1934, p. 15)

## Only One Explanation

We feel that there is only one logical explanation for the many parallels between the temple ceremony and Masonry, and that is that Joseph Smith borrowed from the Masons. The reader should remember that it was on March 16, 1842, that Joseph Smith stated: “I was with the **Masonic Lodge** and rose to the sublime degree” (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 552). Less than two months later (May 4, 1842), Joseph Smith introduced the Temple endowment ceremony. According to Joseph Smith’s *History*, it was in the **same room** “where the Masonic fraternity meet occasionally”:

Wednesday, 4.—I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is in my private office (so called because in that room I keep my sacred writings, translate ancient records, and receive revelations) and in my general business office, or lodge room (that is where the **Masonic** fraternity meet occasionally, for want of a better place) in council with General James Adams, of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to **washings, anointings, endowments** and the communication of **keys** pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 1-2)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

A photogravure of the “brick store” in the upper story of which were instituted these sacred ceremonies accompanies this chapter. In addition to its use as a “temple” it was also the place of meeting for the Nauvoo Lodge of **Free Masons.** (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 135-136)

One woman who was questioned concerning the temple ceremony gave this testimony:

A.—. . . I said I received endowments in Nauvoo, **in the Masonic Hall**, I rather think it was. Yes, sir, I think that was where it was. All the ceremony was performed in the **Masonic Hall. The washing was done**



**in the Masonic Hall, and the anointed with oil.**

Q.—What furniture was in the Masonic Hall at the time the endowment was performed?

A.—Well, now, if you are expecting me to tell you all about the particulars of what was there in the way of furniture and what was done there, you must not expect me to do it any more than you would expect a Mason or an Odd Fellow or any other member of a **secret society to reveal the secrets of their order**; . . . (*Temple Lot Case*, pp. 353-354)

Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon Church, testified:

I do not say there were any washings in the Masonic Temple, but there were meetings held in the **Masonic Temple. There were certain ordinances performed there at the start, because there was no temple built at that time.** (*Temple Lot Case*, p. 299)

With this very close connection between Mormonism and Masonry, it is almost impossible to believe that Joseph Smith did not borrow from Masonry in establishing the temple ceremony. E. Cecil McGavin, however, argues that Joseph Smith did not take an active part in Masonry, and therefore he could not have used Masonry to build up the temple ritual:

. . . he never attended more than six meetings of the lodge after receiving the third degree of Masonry on March 16, 1842. He never took an active part in the fraternity and never received a higher degree than that conferred upon him by Grand Master Jonas at the time the Nauvoo lodge was installed.

It is sheer presumption to maintain that the signs, tokens, keys, and blessings of the Temple ritual, that he frequently spoke about, were to be taken from Masonry. (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 135)

We feel that Joseph Smith probably had some knowledge of Masonry long before he joined the fraternity. Many of his close associates were Masons. The Apostle Heber C. Kimball, one of Joseph Smith's best friends, had been a Mason since 1823, and Joseph Smith's own brother, Hyrum, became a member of the fraternity in 1827—three years before the Book of Mormon was published. The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey gives this information:

Joseph Smith's own brother, Hyrum, became a Mason at Victor, New York, in 1827, and Heber C. Kimball, an early Mormon apostle, joined and received the first three degrees of Freemasonry at Milnor as early as 1823. . . .

William W. Phelps, an early Mormon writer and publisher, . . . had broad background and solid acquaintance with Masonic history and practice. Thus he was in a position to influence the Mormon prophet, . . .

The number of Masons in the church, together with Joseph Smith's close association with Phelps, leads to the conclusion that the Prophet and other Mormons were undoubtedly acquainted with some aspects of the Masonic ceremony before they settled in Illinois. (*Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Spring, 1971, pp. 81-82)

Joseph Smith probably became well informed concerning Masonry through the newspapers published in his area. The *Wayne Sentinel* contained a great deal about Masonry, and the *Palmyra Freeman* was regarded as an anti-Masonic newspaper. William J. Whalen observed that Joseph Smith might have "witnessed the presentation of burlesque Masonic ceremonies at anti-Masonic rallies near his home. If he did not enjoy such spectacles or hear exposes of Masonic initiations, he would have been one of the few people in that part of New York State to have escaped the pervasive influence of the anti-Masonic movement." (*The Latter-day Saints in the Modern Day World*, pp. 195-196)

S. H. Goodwin stated that Joseph Smith "lived in the very heart of the region affected by the anti-Masonic excitement, 1826-1830; he was familiar with exposes widely distributed at that time; undoubtedly he, with his neighbors, had often seen 'renouncing Masons' present at great public gatherings what was alleged to be all of the Masonic Degrees; . . ." (*Mormonism and Masonry*, p. 38)

On page 51 of the same book, Goodwin points out that "Joseph Smith lived within a few miles of the center of that excitement. And further, there were exposes and innumerable pamphlets and other printed matter dealing with this subject that were widely distributed in New York and adjoining states."

The reader will remember that William Morgan's expose of Masonry was published in Batavia, New York, in 1827. Joseph Smith could have learned a great deal about the Masonic ritual from this book. We know that Heber C. Kimball had a copy of it, for his own daughter stated:

I remember once, when but a young girl, of getting a glimpse of the outside of the Morgan's book exposing Masonry, but which my father always kept locked up. (*Woman's Exponent*, XII, 126, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by E. Cecil McGavin, p. 99)

It is interesting to note that Morgan's widow became a member of the Mormon Church and lived in Nauvoo. Heber C. Kimball's daughter stated: In Nauvoo I was acquainted with the widow and daughter of Morgan who exposed Masonry." Fawn Brodie says that the "most famous woman in the church was William Morgan's widow, Lucinda, now married to George W. Harris, one of Joseph's key men, and incidentally a Mason of high rank" (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 301).

Strange as it may seem, Morgan's widow later became one of Joseph Smith's wives. Andrew Jenson, who was the Assistant LDS Church Historian, stated that she was "one of the first women sealed to the Prophet Joseph" (*Historical Record*, vol. VI, p. 233).

## Embarrassing Questions

The Mormon leaders find themselves faced with several embarrassing questions regarding the temple ritual and Masonry. Many members of the Mormon Church wonder how they can believe in a secret temple ritual, when the Book of Mormon condemns all secret societies, bands and oaths. In fact, it plainly states that "the Lord worketh **not** in secret combinations, . . ." (Ether 8:19).

Then, too, there is the question of why Joseph Smith would become a Mason. Besides all of the statements in the Book of Mormon which condemn secret societies, the reader will remember that Joseph Smith joined with four others in stating:

We further, caution our brethren, against the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by covenants, oaths, penalties, or secrecies, . . . pure friendship, always becomes weakened, the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by penal oaths and secrecy. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 1, p. 133)

Benjamin F. Johnson claims that Joseph Smith told him that "Freemasonry was the **apostate endowment**." Why would Joseph Smith join an organization that was in a state of apostasy?

The Mormon leaders now claim that it is not right for members of the church to join the Masons or other secret societies. Anthony W. Ivins, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement:

The Mormon Church has no quarrel with Free Masonry or any other organization which is formed for a righteous purpose. It advises its members to refrain from identifying themselves with any secret, oath-bound society. . . . It is difficult to serve two masters and do justice to both. (*The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry*, p. 8)

Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement in 1900:

"We have passed a resolution that men who are identified with these secret organizations shall **not** be preferred as bishops, or sought for as counselors; the same when it comes to selecting M.I.A. officers. The men who have done this have disqualified themselves and are **not fit** to hold these offices." (*Provo Enquirer*, November 12, 1900, as quoted in *Mormonism and Masonry*, by Goodwin, p. 76)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

The activities of the Church, in all departments are sacred, not secret.

This point of view makes it difficult for Latter-day Saints to look with favor upon secret, oath-bound societies. The words of the Prophet Joseph Smith are sufficient answer to the question: (Note especially the last sentence.)

And again, I would further suggest the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by covenant or oaths, by penalties or secrecies; . . . Pure friendship always becomes weakened that very moment you undertake to make it stronger by penal oaths and secrecy (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 146).

Many secret organizations may be actuated by high ideals. None, however, can transcend the ideals of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the point of view of encouraging people to walk uprightly they would seem unnecessary. . . . Sometimes they cause loss of interest in Church duties, for no one can serve two masters with equal interest. . . . Divided allegiance is always unsatisfactory and often dangerous. (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, vol. 1, pp. 213-214)

It is interesting to note that the same Apostle who made these statements against secret societies had to turn right around and write a chapter entitled, “Why Did Joseph Smith Become a Mason?” He claimed that Joseph Smith joined the Masons to win friends among “the prominent and influential men of the state” so that the church would not be persecuted, but he had to admit that “The attempt to win sufficient friends through Masonry to stop persecution failed” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, vol. 3, pp. 114-117).

The reader will note that the Apostle Widtsoe has cited Joseph Smith’s words about “the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by covenant or oaths, by penalties or secrecies” to use against secret societies. We feel that these same words could be used against the Temple ceremony. The Apostle Widtsoe, however, maintains that “the temple endowment is **not secret**. All who meet the requirements for entrance to the temple may enjoy it” (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, vol. 3, p. 24).

The Apostle Widtsoe’s reasoning with regard to this matter is very poor. All secret societies allow their **own** members to participate in their ritual. The Mormon temple ceremony is kept secret from outsiders, and, after all, isn’t this what makes a secret society?

Many members of the Mormon Church maintain that the temple ceremonies are sacred and not secret. The Mormons, of course, have a right to believe that their ceremonies are sacred, but this does not excuse the fact that they are secret. They are just as secret as the ceremonies of any other secret society. We once heard a guide on Temple Square tell the people that the reason they couldn’t go into the temple was that if they let some in soon everyone would want to go in, and they would not be able to perform their ceremonies with such a crowd coming and going through the temple. This seemed to satisfy the people, but it was far from the truth. If the guide had been telling the truth, the church would be willing to make films of the temple ceremonies so that the people could see them without disturbing the work. They could not do this, of course, for the very nature of the ritual would prohibit such a production. In one part of the ceremony we find the following (see page 468 of this book):

. . . we desire to impress upon your minds the sacred character of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its accompanying name, sign and penalty, together with that of all the other Tokens of the Holy Priesthood, . . . They are most sacred and are guarded by solemn covenants and obligations of **secrecy** to the effect that under no condition, even at the peril of your life, will you ever divulge them, except at a certain place that will be shown you hereafter. The representation of the penalties indicates different ways in which life may be taken.

From this it is obvious that the temple ritual is a secret, and John A. Widtsoe’s statement that “the temple endowment is not secret” is completely false.

## Conclusion

Briefly summarized, the connection between Mormonism and Masonry is as follows:

1. Both Mormonism and Masonry have secret ceremonies that are performed in secret temples.
2. The “Masonic emblems” are displayed on the walls of the Mormon temple.
3. The Mormon temple ritual is similar in many respects to that used by the Masons.
4. Joseph Smith and many of the most prominent members of the Mormon Church were also members of the Masonic Lodge.
5. Temple ceremonies were actually performed in the Masonic Hall.

## — UPDATED MATERIAL —

### Dr. Durham Admits Masonic Influences

Reed Durham, who has served as president of the Mormon History Association, has carefully examined the parallels between Mormonism and Masonry. Although Dr. Durham still maintains that Joseph Smith was a prophet, he has to admit that Masonry had a definite influence upon Mormonism:

. . . I am convinced that in the study of Masonry lies a pivotal key to further understanding Joseph Smith and the Church. . . . It commenced in Joseph’s home when his older brother became a Mason. . . . The many parallels found between early Mormonism and the Masonry of that day are substantial . . . I believe that there are few significant developments in the Church, that occurred after March 15, 1842, which did not have some Masonic interdependence. . . . There is absolutely no question in my mind that the Mormon ceremony which came to be known as the Endowment, introduced by Joseph Smith to Mormon Masons, had an immediate inspiration from Masonry. This is not to suggest that no other source of inspiration could have been involved, but the similarities between the two ceremonies are so apparent and overwhelming that some dependent relationship cannot be denied. . . .

It is also obvious that the Nauvoo Temple architecture was in part, at least, Masonically influenced. Indeed, it appears that there was an intentional attempt to utilize Masonic symbols and motifs. . . .

It was true that in orthodox Masonry, . . . the inclusion of women was definitely prohibited . . . The Joseph Smith Masonry was daily becoming less orthodox and tended to follow more in the direction of some unorthodox Masonry . . .

The second type of unorthodox female Masonry was known as “Adoptive” Masonry . . . The ceremonies for women in this order were quite similar to those later found within the endowment ceremony of the Mormons. . . . I suggest that enough evidence presently exists to declare that the entire institution of the political kingdom of God, including the Council of Fifty, the living constitution, the proposed flag of the kingdom, and the anointing and coronation of the king, had its genesis in connection with Masonic thoughts and ceremonies. . . . Can anyone deny that Masonic influence on Joseph Smith and the Church, either before or after his personal Masonic membership? The evidence demands comments. . .

There are many questions which still demand the answers . . . if we, as Mormon historians, respond to these questions and myriads [sic] like them relative to Masonry in an ostrich-like fashion, with our heads buried in the traditional sand, then I submit: there never will be “any help for the widow’s son.” (“Is There No Help For the Widow’s Son?” *Mormon Miscellaneous*, October, 1975, pp. 11, 12, 13, 16)



## 33. The Mountain Meadows Massacre

Because of the persecution the Mormon people received in Missouri and Illinois, some members of the church became very bitter against their enemies. The Mormon leaders went so far as to blame the United States Government for their troubles. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt wrote the following in 1845:

Brethren awake!—be determined to get out from this **evil nation** next spring. We do not want one saint to be left in the United States after that time. Let every branch . . . be determined to flee out of Babylon, . . . (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 6, p. 1043)

The following statements from the *Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 7, show the feelings that the Mormons had against the United States Government in 1846:

And now when the Saints cannot remain any longer, they are willing to go. This is also necessary in order that the judgments of God might be poured out upon that guilty nation that is already drunk with the blood of the Saints. The church must come out from the midst of the Gentiles. . . . There is no safety under the government of the United States . . . let the Saints arise and go out of her midst. . . .

Elder Thomas Ward rose to express his feelings on the present occasion, . . . Providence and circumstances compel the church to come from that Gentile race, to become a people and nation themselves, and to transact business with nations instead of the people that have oppressed us. (*Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 7, pp. 1-2)

. . . duty calls our beloved brother Woodruff from the presidency of the church in Britain, to join his brethren in their exodus from the United States . . . from an unprotecting and oppressive government. (*Ibid.*, p. 10)

. . . the wrath of an avenging God must fall upon the nation, and it is necessary for his people to be gathered away, that they be not partakers of the plagues that will assuredly come upon that guilty land. (*Ibid.*, p. 60)

. . . her [America's] own children are ashamed of their birthright, . . . they will go forth shaking off the dust of their feet upon her, and leaving their curse upon the doomed and fated people and rulers of the United States. . . . The cup of the iniquity of that nation is full unto the brim, and the blood of the Saints crieth from the ground for vengeance, and it is nigh at hand, even at the door. That guilty nation, that hath vaunted herself above all nations, shall bite the dust and come to naught, the elements of destruction are within herself, . . . shameful shall be thy fall! (*Ibid.*, pp. 200-201)

On December 1, 1845, W. W. Phelps wrote a letter in which he stated:

“Sir: The Quorum of the Twelve solicited me to write to you . . . we have concluded to let this **rotten government** alone, and shall not petition at Washington.” (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder And Scribe*, p. 249)

On May 14, 1848, Oliver B. Huntington reported the following in his diary:

“ . . . the spirit of God rested upon **Brigham** and **he cursed the nation by the authority and power of God and the Priesthood** given him and all the Saints said amen. He was never known to curse so much in his life as on that day. The nation, the land of Missouri, that

sickness should not allow any but the righteous to live upon it, and old Colonel Miller, . . . All the Saints said amen.” (“Oliver B. Huntington Diary,” May 14, 1848, as cited in *The Lion of the Lord*, p. 88)

Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

Friday 26th [1845]. . . . The company . . . were addressed by Lieu Gen Young . . . I never intend to winter in the United States except on a visit we do not owe this country a single Sermon . . . I do not intend to Stay in such an Hell of a Hole and if this bee your mind signify it by saying Hie—which was loudly responded to by the assembly—they are continually accusing us of stealing they [their?] horses & cattle—I wish some of the brethren would steal & kill them . . . They are as corrupt as Hell from the president down clean through the priest and the people are all as corrupt as the Devil . . . (*On The Mormon Frontier—The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 73)

In 1857 Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made these comments:

Thank God, I say, that we are delivered from that Christian nation. Deliver me from their Christianity and from them. . . .

I will tell you the day of our separation has come, and we are a free and an independent people, isolated a thousand miles from the Christian nation; and thanks be to our God for ever. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 130, 133)

### The Utah War

Brigham Young had hoped to take the Mormons “beyond the boundaries of the United States,” but the Mexican War “changed these calculations” (*Quest for Empire*, p. 115). Therefore, the Mormon leaders found themselves still under the power of the United States Government. Although Brigham Young was allowed the privilege of being Governor, the federal government appointed a number of officials that displeased the Mormon leaders. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, stated:

I said, We have been outrageously imposed upon by United States' officials. They send out every rag-tag and bob-tail, and every mean nincompoop they can scrape up from the filth and scum of society, and dub him a United States' officer; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 118)

Although Brigham Young's idea of establishing a kingdom was bound to bring him into conflict with the government of the United States, it should be acknowledged that the officials sent by the government were not perfect. Stanley P. Hirshon observes:

Unfortunately some of Utah's federal appointees deserved such treatment, “Money is my God,” Drummond bragged to Remy and Julius Brenchley, “and you may put this down in your journals if you like.” Abandoning his wife without support, Drummond brought with him to Utah a prostitute he had picked up in Washington and passed off as his wife. In court she sat beside him. (*The Lion of the Lord*, p. 160)

In his zeal to establish a kingdom Brigham Young was ready to capitalize on any mistake made by the federal government. The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft gives this information: “At the tabernacle elders waxed bold,



and all their remonstrances and overtures of peace being rejected, they openly avowed, sometimes in braggart phrase, their contempt for the United States government and its army, and declared that Israel should now be free” (*History of Utah*, pp. 523-524). Stanley P. Hirshon states that “Young’s methods reinforced the Gentile belief that the Mormons seriously threatened the federal government” (*The Lion of the Lord*, p. 142). The Mormon writer William E. Berrett made this statement: “Misunderstandings between the Saints and Federal appointees and the subsequent ill feelings and abusive actions on both sides, fill many pages of Utah history” (*The Restored Church*, 1956, p. 446). On May 4, 1855, the *New York Herald* reported that Brigham Young said the following:

. . . It is reported that I have said that whoever the President appoints, I am still Governor. I repeat it, all hell cannot remove me. (Cries of “Amen.”) I am still your Governor. (Cries of “Glory to God.”) I will still rule this people until God himself permits another to take my place. I wish I could say as much for the other officers of the government. The greater part of them are a gambling, drinking, whoring set. . . . Do you think I’ll obey or respect them? No! I’ll say as I did the other day, when the flag was hauled down from before the military quarters—“Let them take down the American flag; we can do without it.” (Great applause, stamping of feet and yells.) (*New York Herald*, May 4, 1855, as cited in *The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 158-159)

On September 6, 1857, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

President B. Young in his Sermon declared that the **thre[a]ld was cut between us and the U.S.** and that the Almighty recognised us as a free and independent people and that **no officer** appointed by government (sent to [crossed out]) should come and rule over us from this time forth. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 636)

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made these statements:

Is there a collision between us and the United States? No; we have not collashed: that is the word that sounds nearest to what I mean. But now **the thread is cut** between them and us, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 251)

We have **declared our independence**...when the time of the test comes, as the Lord God Almighty lives, if you then leave us or betray us, **that is the end of you**. . . .

This year’s trouble will not be much. It is not going to amount to a great deal; but it will amount to this—a collision between this people and the United States; and the gate will be shut down between us and them. This is already done to a certain extent; but many of you do not see it. (*Ibid.*, p. 275)

One of the main incidents that triggered the Utah War was a raid the Mormons made on the office of Judge George P. Stiles. Nels Anderson states:

Stiles took the position that the United States marshal and not the territorial marshal should have jurisdiction over serving writs and impaneling juries. The former office was usually a Gentile; the latter, a Mormon, an important factor in selecting jurors. Because of his opposition, three Mormon lawyers—James Ferguson, J. C. Little, and Hosea Stout—in February, 1857, created a disturbance in the court of Judge Stiles. Not satisfied with breaking up the court and forcing its adjournment, these lawyer-Saints raided the office of Judge Stiles, took possession of some of his books, and carried some of his documents and papers to an outhouse and burned them. (*Desert Saints*, p. 160)

The reader will notice that Nels Anderson states that Hosea Stout was involved in this disturbance. In his diary Hosea Stout recorded the following under the date of December 30, 1856:

Last night the Law library of Judge Stiles & T. S. Williams was broken open and the books and papers thereof taken away. A privy near by was filled with books a few thousand shingles and laths added

and the concern set on fire and consumed. Six transit Lex non Scripti. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 613)

In a footnote on the same page, Juanita Brooks states:

As on October 12, 1855, when persons unknown broke into the office of Almon W. Babbitt and carried away all the official papers, now again some zealots looted the offices of Judge Stiles, lately excommunicated, and Thomas S. Williams, also out of favor with the church. Later these books were found and returned, the burning of the privy and some papers being only a trick to anger and deceive the judge. *Sic transit lex non Scripti*—“Thus passeth away the unwritten law.”

The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft gives the following information concerning this matter:

A short time afterwards the records of the United States district courts were taken from the judge’s office during his absence, and a few moments before his return a bonfire was made of the books and papers in his office. He, of course, supposed that the records were also consumed, and so made affidavit on his return to Washington in the spring of 1857. Meanwhile the business of the courts was suspended. The records had, in fact, been removed, and were in safe-keeping; but this silly freak was noised abroad throughout the land with many exaggerations, and excited much adverse comments. (*History of Utah*, pp. 488-489)

After the departure of Drummond, the only gentile official remaining in the territory was Garland Hurt, the Indian agent, and none were found willing to accept office in a territory where it was believed they could only perform their duty at peril of their lives. (*Ibid.*, p. 492)

It was now established, as was supposed, on sufficient evidence, that the Mormons refused obedience to gentile law, that federal officials had been virtually driven from Utah, that one, at least, of the federal judges had been threatened with violence while his court was in session, and that the records of the court had been destroyed or concealed. With the advice of his cabinet, therefore, and yielding perhaps not unwillingly to the outcry of the republican party, President Buchanan determined that Brigham should be superseded as governor, and that a force should be sent to the territory, ostensibly as a posse comitatus, to sustain the authority of his successor. (*Ibid.*, p. 495)

Nels Anderson gives this information:

Senator Stephen A. Douglas made a speech on June 12, 1857, . . . He spoke with authority of reports which indicated that the Mormons were not loyal to the government. He charged that nine out of ten of Utah’s inhabitants were aliens, that Mormons were bound to their leader by “horrid oaths,” that the church was inciting the Indians to acts of hostility, and that the Danites, or “Destroying Angels,” were robbing and killing American citizens.

On June 26 Lincoln made a speech, also at Springfield; and he also touched the Mormon question. He ventured the opinion that perhaps territorial status should be repealed and Utah placed under the judicial control of neighboring states. The Mormons, he said, “ought somehow [to] be called into obedience.” . . .

President Buchanan felt impelled to take action against the Mormons, . . . He met the situation by calling the Mormon problem one of civil disobedience. . . .

On June 29 General Scott dispatched orders to General W. S. Harney at Fort Leavenworth, instructing him to outfit a detachment of 2,600 men and officers for garrison service in Utah to restore order and support civil authority. (*Desert Saints*, pp. 167-168)

Instead of submitting, the Mormon leaders decided to resist the federal government. Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made these statements:

Listen to the counsel of God and those men that are placed here; . . . our enemies shall be overcome every time before they cross that Big Mountain, if we have to do it ourselves. . . . We intend to **kill** the poor curses ourselves, before they get to the Big Mountain. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 135)

Will we have manna? Yes. The United States have 700 waggons loaded with about 2 tons to each wagon with all kinds of things, and then 7,000 head of cattle; and there are said to be 2,500 troops, with this, and that, and the other. That is all right. Suppose the troops **don't get here, but all these goods and cattle come**. Well, that would be a mighty help to us; that would clothe up the boys and the girls, and make them comfortable; and then, remember, there are 15 months' provisions besides. I am only talking about this . . . the **President** of the United States, . . . shall be **cursed**, in the name of Israel's God, . . .

Send 2,500 troops here, our brethren, to make a desolation of this people! God Almighty helping me, I will fight until there is not a drop of blood in my veins. Good God! I have wives enough to whip out the United States; for they will whip themselves. Amen. (*Ibid.*, pp. 94-95)

. . . we shall never be ruled over by them from this day forth, . . . You ladies, too, will certainly have to do your part, or back out. I told you last Sunday to **arm yourselves**; and if you cannot do it any other way, sell some of your fine bonnets, fine dresses, and buy yourselves a good dirk, a pistol, or some other instrument of war. Arm your boys and arm yourselves universally, and that, too, with the weapons of war; . . . if we live our religion, and do as we are told, those men will never come over those mountains; for **we shall slay the poor devils** before they get there. (*Ibid.*, pp. 162-163)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith was sent south, and according to his own statement, his preaching was of a military nature:

. . . I found myself preaching a **military discourse**; . . .

I then went to Harmony, Brother Dame preached to the military, and I to the civil powers; . . . my discourse partook of **the military more than the religious**. . . it seemed that I was perfectly **running over with it**, and hence I had to say something about it. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 221-222)

As we shall see later, the visit to the southern settlements by George A. Smith had a very important relationship to the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

At this time the Mormon leaders did everything they could to turn their people against the U.S. Government and to stir them up to resist the troops sent by the President. Brigham Young, for instance, told the people that the federal government's request for the "Mormon Battalion" in 1846 was an act of persecution:

There **cannot be a more damnable, dastardly order issued** . . . the poor, low, degraded curses sent a requisition for five hundred of our men . . . That was President Polk; and he is now weltering in hell. . . . And the very act of James K. Polk in taking five hundred of our men, . . . would have hung him between the heavens and the earth, if the laws had been faithfully executed. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 231, 232, 235)

This accusation was, of course, completely untrue; actually, the federal government did this as a "special favor" for the Mormon people, and the Mormons themselves had requested it (see pp. 249-250 of this book).

The Mormon leaders also misrepresented the intentions of the U.S. Government by stating that the troops were going to kill them and steal the women. Stanley P. Hirshon stated: "As Kimball saw it, Buchanan had sent 'troops to kill brother Brigham and me; and to take the young women to the States' . . ." (*The Lion of the Lord*, p. 172). On September 27, 1857, Heber C. Kimball stated:

. . . they [the troops] exulted over us and sang all manner of songs, telling how they were going to kill brother Brigham and all those who would uphold "Mormonism;" and they seemed to be as crazy as fools. They swore that they would use every woman in this place at their own pleasure—that they would slay old Brigham and old Heber; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 274)

Charles L. Walker recorded the following in his diary:

Sunday, Jan. 24, 1858. . . . Went to the Tabernacle. Bro. E. T. Benson . . . said the U.S. were all gaping full of fear about the Mormons and

were shipping troops around by California. Said it was their intention to **destroy every man, woman and child that was a Mormon and wipe us out of existence**. ("Diary of Charles L. Walker," 1855-1902, typed excerpts, p. 2)

The following statements by the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft show that the accusations by the Mormon leaders were without foundation:

. . . every precaution was taken to avoid, if possible, the shedding of blood. "The instructions of the commanding officer," writes the secretary of war, "were deliberately considered and carefully drawn, and he was charged not to allow any conflict to take place between the troops and the people of the territory, except only he should be called upon by the governor for soldiers to act as a posse comitatus in enforcing obedience to the laws." (*History of Utah*, p. 497)

On page 537 of the same book, Bancroft shows that when the Mormons finally allowed the troops to come in they did not commit the crimes which the Mormon leaders claimed they would commit:

During the march of the army not a house was disturbed, not a citizen harmed or molested, and during its sojourn of nearly two years in the territory, instances were rare indeed of gross misconduct on the part of the soldiery.

When the Mormon leaders told their people that the troops were coming to destroy them and take their women it caused a great deal of fear. Under the direction of Brigham Young the Mormon people prepared to fight the U.S. Government troops. On September 15, 1857, Brigham Young issued a proclamation in which he stated:

Therefore, I, Brigham Young, governor, and superintendent of Indian affairs for the territory of Utah, in the name of the people of the United States in the territory of Utah,

1st—Forbid all armed forces, of every description, from coming into this territory under any pretense whatever.

2nd—That all the forces in said territory hold themselves in readiness to march, at a moments notice, to repel any and all such invasion.

3d—Martial law is hereby declared to exist in this territory, from and after the publication of this proclamation; and no person shall be allowed to pass or repass into, or through, or from this territory, without a permit from the proper officer. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 274)

In simple language Brigham Young's "proclamation" meant that he intended to resist the U.S. troops when they tried to enter the territory of Utah. In his *History of Utah*, the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft gives the following information concerning the "Utah War":

But the sequel will show that instead of the troops living on the Mormons, the Mormons lived on the troops, stampeding their cattle, **plundering or destroying** their provision trains, and only after all fear of active hostilities had been removed, selling them surplus grain at exorbitant rates. (*History of Utah*, p. 499)

Then war became the universal theme. Fire-arms were manufactured or repaired; scythes were turned into bayonets; long-unused sabres were burnished and sharpened, and from all parts of the earth the saints were summoned to the defence of Zion. (*Ibid.*, p. 505)

. . . I cannot do better than quote a few lines from a despatch addressed soon afterward by the lieutenant-general of the Nauvoo legion to Major Joseph Taylor, and signed, "your brother in Christ, Daniel H. Wells." "On ascertaining the locality or route of the troops, proceed at once to annoy them in every possible way. Use every exertion to stampede their animals and set fire to their trains. Burn the whole country before them and on their flanks. Keep them from sleeping, by night surprises; blockade the road by felling trees or destroying the river fords where you can. Watch for opportunities to set fire to the grass on their windward, so as, if possible, to envelop their trains. Leave no grass before them that can be burned. Keep your men concealed as much as possible,

and guard against surprise.” . . . later General Wells, in command of 1,250 men, supplied with thirty days’ rations, established his headquarters at Echo Canon, . . . Through this canon, the Mormons supposed, lay the path of the invading army, . . . On the western side of the canon dams and ditches were constructed, by means of which the road could be submerged to a depth of several feet; at the eastern side stone heaps were collected and boulders loosened from the overhanging rocks, so that a slight leverage would **hurl them on the passing troops**, and parapets were built as a protection for sharp-shooters. . . . Wells determined to open the campaign, a plan of which had been before arranged at Salt Lake City. Inviting to dinner Major Lot Smith, . . . he asked him whether he could take some forty men, . . . and, passing in rear of the foe, turn back or burn the supply trains still on the road. “I think I can,” replied Lot Smith; and the next evening he started out. . . . he approached them at dusk, while encamped at a spot known as Simpson’s Hollow, on Green River, and there lay in ambush for several hours. Meanwhile he ascertained as he relates, that there were two trains, each of twenty-six wagons—there being, in fact, three, with seventy-five wagons in all. . . . When all the wagons were fairly in a blaze, the Mormons rode away, telling their panic-stricken captives that they would return as soon as they had delivered the spoils to their comrades near by, and instantly shoot any one who should attempt to extinguish the flames. . . .

On the 11th of October the troops commenced their march. . . . Meanwhile bands of Mormons, under their nimble and ubiquitous leaders, hung on their flanks, just out of rifle-shot, harassing them at every step, 700 oxen being captured and driven to Salt Lake City on the 13th. . . .

The march commenced on the 6th of November, and on the previous night 500 of the strongest oxen had been **stolen** by the Mormons. . . . The trains destroyed at Simpson Hollow, for instance, were laden entirely with provisions, while three others that followed contained the tents and all the clothing. Fortunately the latter did not fall into the hands of the Mormons, though when unpacked it was found that they contained more of utterly useless supplies than of what was really needed. . . .

Thus did the army of Utah pass the winter of 1857-8, amid privations no less severe than those endured at Valley Forge eighty-one years before; . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 511, 513-520, 522)

. . . Buchanan was induced to stop the threatened war, and on the 6th of April signed a proclamation promising amnesty to all who returned to their allegiance. After dwelling at length on the past offences of the Mormons and the malign influence of their leaders, he declares the territory to be in a state of rebellion. “This rebellion,” he continues, “is not merely a violation of your legal duty; it is without just cause, without reason, without excuse. You never made a complaint that was not listened to with patience. You never exhibited a real grievance that was not redressed as promptly as it could be . . . But being anxious to save the effusion of blood, and to avoid the indiscriminate punishment of a whole people for crimes of which it is not probable that all are equally guilty, I offer now a free and full pardon to all who will submit themselves to the authority of the government.”

The proclamation, though it served its purpose gave offence to both parties. . . . the Mormon authorities admitted the burning of the army trains and the stampeding of cattle, and for those acts accepted the president’s pardon. All other charges they denied. (*Ibid.*, pp. 529-532)

The Utah war was an ill-advised measure on the part of the United States government. . . . The Utah war cost several hundred lives, and at least \$15,000,000, at a time in the nation’s history when men and money could least be spared, and accomplished practically nothing, save that it exposed the president and his cabinet to much well-deserved ridicule. (*Ibid.*, p. 538)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts says that the Mormons did not wish to shed blood, but he admits that they destroyed government property:

A council of war was held by the Nauvoo Legion officers at Fort Bridger on the afternoon of the 3rd of October. It was decided in the council to begin active operations against the “Expedition.” . . .

General Wells ordered Major Lot Smith to take a small company of men and intercept the supply trains then advancing from South Pass and either turn them back or burn them. . . .

While Smith’s command was burning the first train a guard from the second came up to see what was going on. . . . **fifty-one** wagons and their contents were completely destroyed in this first burning. . . . There were twenty-five wagons in this third train, and allowing the teamsters and Captain Simpson to load up two of the wagons with provisions and clothing for their personal use, the rest of the train was burned. . . .

The amount of property destroyed in burning these seventy-four wagons was considerable, and appears in detail in Commissary Clarke’s report in the House Documents of the 35th Congress. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 278, 279, 280, 281, 283, 285)

It is very interesting to note that when indictments were issued against the Mormon leaders and others for treason, the notorious “Destroying Angels” Bill Hickman and Orrin Porter Rockwell were included. The Mormon writer Harold Schindler states:

A grand jury empanelled by the “court” returned a true bill against twenty Mormons by name . . .

A glance at the first eight names on the blanket indictment showed Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Daniel H. Wells, John Taylor, George D. Grant, Lot Smith, Porter Rockwell, and William A. Hickman. All were charged with treason, in that they “wickedly, maliciously and traitorously levied war against the United States.” (*Orrin Porter Rockwell*, p. 282)

. . . in Washington Buchanan was directing a team of peace commissioners to proceed to Utah with a proclamation of full pardon for all deeds committed during the “war.” Its language swept away treason indictments returned by the grand jury at Camp Scott. So long as he accepted the terms, Rockwell, among others, had no need to fear reprisals for military actions during the so-called rebellion. (*Ibid.*, p. 286)

Although the Mormons did not shed the blood of the United States troops, they robbed and destroyed their provisions and thus caused hardships that undoubtedly led to the death of many soldiers. The historian Bancroft states that the Utah war “cost several hundred lives.” It would, of course, be hard to determine just how many of these men would have lived if the Mormons had not destroyed their provisions. While the Mormons were reluctant to fire upon the U.S. troops, they killed a large number of innocent civilians in Utah at this time. The Mountain Meadows Massacre, the Aiken Massacre and a number of other cruel murders were committed during this period of rebellion.

## The Massacre

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts called the Mountain Meadows Massacre “the most lamentable episode in Utah history, and in the history of the church” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 139). The details of the Mountain Meadows Massacre are as follows: In 1857 a company of emigrants led by Charles Fancher was passing through Utah. Joseph Fielding Smith states:

. . . —About the time the news arrived in Salt Lake City of the coming of an army, there was passing through the city under command of Captain Fancher, a company of emigrants from Arkansas and Missouri. This company consisted of about thirty families, numbering one hundred and thirty-seven persons. The Arkansas emigrants appeared to be respectable and well-to-do. With them there traveled a rough and reckless company calling themselves “Missouri Wild Cats,” who conducted themselves in keeping with the name. (*Essentials in Church History*, p. 513)



Juanita Brooks states:

This group all arrived in Salt Lake City on August 3 and 4, and knowing the fate of the Donner Party the year before, decided to take the southern route. They followed a few days behind President George A. Smith on his journey south ordering the people to keep their grain and **not to sell a kernel to any gentiles**. This, of course, was hard on travelers who faced the desert and had expected to replenish their stores in Utah. The Fancher train was well-to-do; they had cash to pay or goods to trade, **but no one would sell**. (*John D. Lee*, p. 203)

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett gives this information:

During this period of Utah's history there was a constant string of emigrant trains passing through the territory on their way to California. The feeling between such emigrants and the Saints was not always a wholesome one. . . .

A crisis in feeling was reached during the time that a large company of Arkansas emigrants were on their way to California via southern Utah, in 1857. . . .

The evidence concerning their actions in passing through the southern settlements is so conflicting that it is difficult to determine the entire truth. . . .

The Indians were thoroughly aroused. All the accumulated insults of the many caravans caused them to seek vengeance. . . .

Ordinarily the influence of the settlers was exerted to keep the peace, and at any cost prevent an attack upon emigrant trains. **At this time it appears that this restraint was not used**. (*The Restored Church*, 1956, pp. 466-467)

Brigham Young warned Captain Van Vliet that if the government persisted in sending the army he would "not hold the Indians by the wrist any longer":

"If the government persists in sending an army to destroy us, in the name of the Lord, we shall conquer them. If they dare to force the issue, I shall **not** hold the Indians by the wrist any longer, for white men to shoot at them; they shall go ahead and **do as they please**. If the issue comes, you may tell the government to stop all emigration across this continent, for the Indians will kill all who attempt it." (*History of Brigham Young*, Ms., September 9, 1857, as cited in *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 155, n. 32)

B. H. Roberts claims that this statement by Young was made a few days after the Mountain Meadows Massacre and therefore had nothing to do with the massacre. He also states that it "constituted a warning instead of a threat."

In a new edition of her book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Juanita Brooks calls attention to a very revealing entry in the journal of Brigham Young:

Recently I was given access to an electrostatic copy of the daily journal of Brigham Young. Under the date of September 1, 1857, the entry reads:

Kanosh the Pavaunt chief with several of his band visited me gave them some council and presents. A spirit seems to be taking possession of the Indians to assist Israel. I can hardly restrain them from exterminating the Americans.

This seems very significant . . . it seems that Kanosh was given private audience. He was the chief who had killed Captain John W. Gunnison and several of his men . . . on October 28, 1853. Whether or not Kanosh and his band were at the Mountain Meadows we do not know, but we can now be more certain that the Mormon war strategy was to use the natives as "the battle-ax of the Lord," . . . (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1970, Author's Statement—II, pp. vii-viii)

As the company of emigrants passed through Utah, the feelings became very bitter. Juanita Brooks states:

At Parowan, the gates of that fort were closed and the company passed by the town. Here one man, William Leany, recognized a member of the company, William Aiden, as the son of a man who had befriended him while he was on a mission. He gave Aiden some

vegetables from his garden, knowing well that he was acting in direct opposition to the official orders. A few days later he was called out of his house and struck over the head by one of the local police on the charge that he had rendered "aid and comfort to the enemy." He was left for dead, and indeed never did recover fully from the blow.

At Cedar City, the last place on the road where they could get provisions, the conduct of some of the Missourians was such that the local police tried to arrest them, only to be laughed at with scorn. Since the people would not sell nor trade any foodstuff at all, some of the emigrants proceeded to help themselves; thus as they left the town, a trail of hate and resentment remained behind them. (*John D. Lee*, p. 206)

Prior to the arrival of the emigrants, the Mormon leaders had been very strongly preaching the doctrine of "blood atonement." Juanita Brooks observes: "There was much preaching of '**blood atonement**' . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 188). John D. Lee himself stated:

The Mormons nearly all, and I think every one of them in Utah, previous to the massacre at Mountain Meadows, **believed in blood atonement**. It was taught by the leaders and believed by the people that the Priesthood were inspired and could not give a wrong order. It was the belief of all that I ever heard talk of these things—and I have been with the Church since the dark days in Jackson County—that the authority that ordered a murder committed, was the only responsible party, that the man who did the killing was only an instrument, working by command of a superior, and hence could have no ill will against the person killed, but was only acting by authority and committed no wrong. In other words, if Brigham Young or any of his apostles, or any of the Priesthood, gave an order to a man, the act was the act of the one giving the order, and the man doing the act was only an instrument of the person commanding—just as much of an instrument as the knife that was used to cut the throat of the victim. This being the belief of all good Mormons, it is easily understood why the orders of the Priesthood were so blindly obeyed by the people. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, pp. 279-280)

John D. Lee's statements with regard to the teachings of the early Mormon leaders are certainly true. As we have shown, Heber C. Kimball, First Counsellor to Brigham Young, definitely taught that the people should follow the leaders whether they were right or wrong:

. . . learn to do as you are told, . . . if you are told by your leader to do a thing, do it, **none of your business whether it is right or wrong**. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 32)

Now, according to the teachings of Brigham Young, the emigrants had committed at least one sin which was deserving of death—i.e., they had stolen some food at Cedar City. Brigham Young made this statement concerning thieves:

If you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, **I say kill him on the spot**, and never suffer him to commit another iniquity. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 108)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde made these statements a few years before the Mountain Meadows Massacre:

Suppose the shepherd should discover a wolf approaching the flock, what would he be likely to do? Why, we should suppose, if the wolf was within proper distance, that he would **kill him** at once with the weapons of defense which he carries; in short, that he would **shoot him down, kill him on the spot**. If the wolf was not within shot, we would naturally suppose he would set the dogs on him; and you are aware, I have no doubt, that these shepherd dogs have very pointed teeth, and they are very active, very sensitive to know when the flock is in danger. It is sometimes the case, perhaps, that the shepherd has not with him the necessary arms to destroy the wolf, but in such a case he would set his faithful dogs on him, and by that means accomplish his destruction. . . .

Now don't say that brother Hyde has taught strong things, for I have only told you what takes place between the shepherd and the flock, when the sheep have to be protected.

If you say that the **priesthood** or **authorities of the Church** here are the shepherd, and the Church is the flock, you can make your own application of this figure. It is not at all necessary for me to do it.

It is all the same to me whether they want to destroy the flock, or destroy, **steal**, and carry off the property of the flock. . . . my feelings are these—the best way to sanctify ourselves, and please God our heavenly Father in these days, is to rid ourselves of every thief, and sanctify the people from every vile character. . . . It would have a tendency to place a terror on those who leave these parts, that may prove their salvation when they see the **heads of thieves taken off, or shot down** before the public. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 72-73)

Now, the emigrants had not only stolen some food from the Mormons, but they claimed they had persecuted them in Missouri and Illinois. Brigham Young made this statement concerning those who had persecuted the Mormons: “. . . in regard to those who have persecuted this people . . . we could take the same law they have taken, viz., mobocracy, and if any miserable scoundrels come here, **cut their throats**” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 311). On another occasion Young stated:

I will tell you how much I love those characters. If they had any respect to their own welfare, they would come forth and say, whether Joseph Smith was a Prophet or not, “We shed his blood, and now let us **atone for it**,” and they would be willing to have their **heads chopped off, that their blood might run** upon the ground, and the smoke of it rise before the Lord as an incense for their sins. I love them that much. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 186)

The reader will remember that the Mormon Apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded in his journal that Joseph F. Smith, who became the sixth President of the Mormon Church, was about to murder a man with his “pocket knife” if he even expressed approval of the murder of Joseph Smith:

The cloud immediately lifted from Bro. Smith and he found that he had his **open pocket knife grasped in his hand** in his pocket, and he believes that had this man given his approval to that murder of the prophets **he would have immediately struck him to the heart**. (“Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” December 6, 1889, p. 206; see photograph on page 403 of this book)

In the same journal we find that George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, admitted that when “he had his endowments in Nauvoo that he took an oath against the murderers of the Prophet Joseph as well as other prophets, and if he had ever met any of those who had taken a hand in that massacre he would undoubtedly have attempted to avenge the blood of the martyrs” (*Ibid.*, p. 205).

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admits that much of the boasting of the emigrants may have been “mere bravado,” but he states that these statements placed them in a dangerous position:

Though much of their boasting about participation in the Missouri and Illinois “Mormon” troubles may have been the mere bravado of the “Missouri Wildcats;” and their threats against the then presiding “Mormon” leaders, and their expressed intention to return in force and destroy the Latter-day Saint settlements, may have been but vain ranting of the reckless spirits of the camp, yet it was suicidal to indulge in that bravado and such ranting. . . . to make these boasts, and to indulge in these threats at a time when great excitement prevailed in the “Mormon” settlements, and the war spirit of the people was aroused by reports of the approach of an invading army . . . was, under all the circumstances, to invite calamity . . . fear became a weighty argument in determining the fate of the emigrant company. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 154-155)

The reader will also remember that the Mormon leaders had told the people that the army was coming to destroy them and take their women, and that the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith went south preaching war. According to his own statement, when he preached at Harmony his “discourse partook of **the military more**

**than the religious.**” He also stated that “one single sentence is enough to put every man in motion.”

What made it worse for the emigrants was that one of them boasted that he had a gun which was used to shoot Joseph Smith. Although this statement probably had no basis in fact, it helped to seal the fate of the emigrants.

Juanita Brooks states that after “the Sunday service at Cedar City on September 6” was over “a special priesthood meeting was called at which the problems connected with the Fancher Train were discussed.” Mrs. Brooks quotes part of the discussion as follows:

“. . . I think they should be done away with, at least the one that bragged that he carried the gun . . . I think that we are all bound by our covenants to see that he does not live to do any more damage.”

“There were others just as bad as he was.”

“But how will you get them? They are all well armed, and we would lose more than we would gain. Any attempt to take one of them would mean the lives of the posse that went after him.”

So the discussion went on, some in favor of “doing away with” the men who had been the chief offenders, others preferring to let them all go . . .

Thus events followed one another, leading inexorably to the final tragedy. . . . Strong hatred, deep-seated beliefs, and greed were all combined in the drama. That this was a wealthy train with good wagons and ox teams and horses; with a large herd of cattle; and with loads of household goods and necessities was without doubt a factor with some who were involved. Their own deep religious convictions increased in potency—that “the blood of the Prophet should be avenged” and that by their own covenants, taken in the Nauvoo Temple or in the Endowment House, they were bound to help carry out God’s will. (*John D. Lee*, pp. 207-208)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admits that such a meeting was held:

It was customary for the local leading men at Cedar and from the smaller settlements in its vicinity to gather in a council meeting after the close of the regular Sunday services of the church, to consider the questions of local community interest. At such a meeting on the 6th of September the question concerning the conduct of, and what ought to be done with, the Arkansas emigrants was brought up and debated. Some in the council were in favor of destroying them, and others were not. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 149)

Juanita Brooks states that the Mormons wanted the Indians to attack the emigrant train:

Here again all the offenses of the emigrants, real and imagined, were gone over; here again was summarized all the evidence that those in authority in the church would approve of the destruction of the emigrant train, if it could be done by the Indians. Lee had accompanied George A. Smith in his travels through the southern settlements, and from the various conversations along the road as well as from the public speeches, convinced himself that this action would be in harmony with the course to be taken in the approaching war. . . .

As a result of the conversation that night, it was agreed that they would stir up the Indians further and encourage them to attack the company and rob them of their cattle and goods. At this point there was no decision to exterminate them. Everything was to be done by the Indians, under the direction of a few white men. (*Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 54; p. 77 of 1962 reprint)

On page 67 (page 95 of 1962 reprint) of the same book, Mrs. Brooks states:

Lee’s statement that the original plan was to stir up the Indians to the attack seems to be true, with the Mormons brought in later when it became evident that the Indians alone could not commit the crime. Certainly the final responsibility must rest squarely upon the Mormons, William H. Dame as commander, and those under him who helped to form the policy and to carry out the orders.

Garland Hurt made this statement concerning the Indians: “They acknowledged having participated in the massacre

of the emigrants, but said that the Mormons persuaded them into it” (*Senate Executive Document 42*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 94-95, as cited in *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 194; p. 252 of 1962 edition). On page 36 (pages 56-57 of 1962 reprint) of her book, Juanita Brooks states:

The Indians, being “the battle-ax of the Lord,” could logically do the work, for they had no qualms about shedding blood, even innocent blood. Since the Big Mormon Chief wanted them to help with this war, here was a good place to begin. So the natives had followed and annoyed the company, happy in the sense of Mormon approval; they sent out runners to other bands for reinforcements in this exciting and thrilling game.

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, gives this account of what followed:

. . . —Early in September the emigrant train of the Arkansas and Missouri companies camped in the little valley known as the Mountain Meadows. There they contemplated remaining for several days. In the meantime their conduct had aroused the Indian tribes who now surrounded their camp in hostile attitude. As near as can be ascertained, on the morning of the 7th of September at the break of day, the attack upon the emigrants began. . . . The Indians sent runners throughout the surrounding country calling for reinforcements from among their tribes and for John D. Lee, who had been in close touch with Indian affairs as their farmer, to come and lead them to victory. . . . Later, other **white men** appeared upon the scene, . . . Some of them remained, willingly or by coercion, to participate in the massacre

which followed. . . . The victims discovered that **white men were in league with the Indians**, and this knowledge sealed their fate. It was determined by those making the attack that no emigrant should live who could tell the tale.

On the morning of Friday the 11th, Lee induced the emigrants to surrender under promise of protection and conveyance to a place of safety. They were led to a place where the Indians were in ambush, and at a given signal a volley of shots rang out, both Indians and **white men participating in the outrage**. Seventeen children of tender years—ranging in age from a few months to seven years—were all that were spared. (*Essentials in Church History*, pp. 515-516)

The Mormon writer William E. Berrett gives this description of the massacre:

It was a **deliberately planned massacre, treacherously carried into execution**. On the morning of September 11, **a flag of truce was sent to the emigrant camp and terms of surrender proposed. The emigrants were to give up their arms**. The wounded were to be loaded into wagons, followed by the women and children, and the men to bring up the rear, single file. Thus they were to be conducted by the whites to Cedar City. This was agreed to, and the march began. . . . **the white men** at a given signal, **fell upon the unarmed emigrant men**. . . . Only the smallest children were spared. (*The Restored Church*, pp. 468-469)

The pages which follow contain John D. Lee’s own account of the massacre as published in *Mormonism Unveiled* in 1880. The reader must keep in mind that John D. Lee was a Danite in Missouri and that he served in the Council of 50 under Brigham Young.





## LAST CONFESSION AND STATEMENT OF JOHN D. LEE.

### CHAPTER XVIII.

WRITTEN AT HIS DICTATION AND DELIVERED TO WILLIAM W. BISHOP,  
ATTORNEY FOR LEE, WITH A REQUEST THAT THE  
SAME BE PUBLISHED.

AS A DUTY to myself, my family, and mankind at large, I propose to give a full and true statement of all that I know and all that I did in that unfortunate affair, which has cursed my existence, and made me a wanderer from place to place for the last nineteen years, and which is known to the world as the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

I have no vindictive feeling against any one; no enemies to punish by this statement; and no *friends* to shield by keeping back, or longer keeping secret, any of the facts connected with the Massacre.

I believe that I must tell all that I do know, and tell everything just as the same transpired. I shall tell the truth and permit the public to judge who is most to blame for the crime that I am accused of committing. I did not act alone; I had many to assist me at the Mountain Meadows. I believe that most of those who were connected with the Massacre, and took part in the lamentable transaction that has blackened the character of all who were aiders or abettors in the same, were acting under the impression that they were performing a religious duty. I know all were acting under the orders and by the command of their Church leaders; and I firmly believe that the most of those who took part in the proceedings, considered it a religious duty to unquestioningly obey the orders which they had received. That they acted from a sense of duty to the Mormon Church, I never doubted. Believing that those with me acted from a sense of religious duty on that occasion, I have faithfully kept the secret of their guilt, and remained silent and true to the oath of secrecy which we took on the bloody field, for many long and bitter years. I have never betrayed those who acted with me and participated in the crime for which I am convicted, and for which I am to suffer death.

My attorneys, especially Wells Spicer and Wm. W. Bishop, have long tried, but tried in vain, to induce me to *tell all I knew* of the massacre and the causes which led to it. I have heretofore refused to tell the tale. Until the last few days I had intended to die, if die I must, without giving one word to the public concerning those who joined willingly, or unwillingly, in the work of destruction at Mountain Meadows.

To hesitate longer, or to die in silence, would be unjust and cowardly. I will not keep the secret any longer as my own, but will tell all I know.

At the earnest request of a *few* remaining friends, and by the advice of Mr. Bishop, my counsel, who has defended me thus far with all his ability, notwithstanding my want of money with which to pay even his expenses while attending to my case, I have concluded to write facts as I know them to exist.

I cannot go before the Judge of the quick and the dead without first revealing all that I know, as to what was done, who ordered me to do what I did do, and the motives that led to the commission of that unnatural and bloody deed.

The immediate orders for the killing of the emigrants came from those in authority at Cedar City. At the time of the massacre, I and those with me, acted by virtue of positive orders from Isaac C. Haight and his associates at Cedar City. Before I started on my mission to the Mountain Meadows, I was told by Isaac C. Haight

that his orders to me were the result of full consultation with Colonel William H. Dame and all in authority. It is a new thing to me, if the massacre was not decided on by the head men of the Church, and it is a new thing for Mormons to condemn those who committed the deed. . . .

About the 7th of September, 1857, I went to Cedar City from my home at Harmony, by order of President Haight. I did not know what he wanted of me, but he had ordered me to visit him and I obeyed. If I remember correctly, it was on Sunday evening that I went there. When I got to Cedar City, I met Isaac C. Haight on the public square of the town. Haight was then President of that Stake of Zion, and the highest man in the Mormon priesthood in that country, and next to Wm. H. Dame in all of Southern Utah, and as Lieutenant Colonel he was second to Dame in the command of the Iron Military District. The word and command of Isaac C. Haight were the law in Cedar City, at that time, and to disobey his orders was certain death; be they right or wrong, no Saint was permitted to question them, their duty was obedience or death.

When I met Haight, I asked him what he wanted with me. He said he wanted to have a long talk with me on private and particular business. We took some blankets and went over to the old Iron Works, and lay there that night, so that we could talk in private and in safety. After we got to the Iron Works, Haight told me all about the train of emigrants. He said (and I then believed every word that he spoke, for I believed it was an impossible thing for one so high in the Priesthood as he was, to be guilty of falsehood) that the emigrants were a rough and abusive set of men. That they had, while traveling through Utah, been very abusive to all the Mormons they met. That they had insulted, outraged, and ravished many of the Mormon women. That the abuses heaped upon the people by the emigrants during their trip from Provo to Cedar City, had been constant and shameful; that they had burned fences and destroyed growing crops; that at many points on the road they had poisoned the water, so that all people and stock that drank of the water became sick, and many had died from the effects of poison. That these vile Gentiles publicly proclaimed that they had the very pistol with which the Prophet, Joseph Smith, was murdered, and had threatened to kill Brigham Young and all of the Apostles. That when in Cedar City they said they would have friends in Utah who would hang Brigham Young by the neck until he was dead, before snow fell again in the Territory. They also said that Johnston was coming, with his army, from the East, and they were going to return from California with soldiers, as soon as possible, and would then desolate the land, and kill every d—d Mormon man, woman and child that they could find in Utah. That they violated the ordinances of the town of Cedar, and had, by armed force, resisted the officers who tried to arrest them for violating the law. That after leaving Cedar City the emigrants camped by the company, or cooperative field, just below Cedar City, and burned a large portion of the fencing, leaving the crops open to the large herds of stock in the surrounding country. Also that they had given poisoned meat to the Corn Creek tribe of Indians, which had killed several of them, and their Chief, Konosh, was on the trail of the emigrants, and would soon attack them. All of these things, and much more of a like kind, Haight told me as we lay in the dark at the old Iron Works. I believed all that he said, and, thinking that he had full right to do all that he wanted to do, I was easily induced to follow his instructions.

Haight said that unless something was done to prevent it, the emigrants would carry out their threats and rob every one of the out-lying settlements in the South, and that the whole Mormon people were liable to be butchered by the troops that the emigrants would bring back with them from California. I was then told that the Council had held a meeting that day, to consider

the matter, and that it was decided by the authorities to arm the Indians, give them provisions and ammunition, and send them after the emigrants, and have the Indians give them a *brush*, and if they killed part or all of them, so much the better.

I said, “Brother Haight, who is your authority for acting in this way?”

He replied, “It is the *will of all in authority*. The emigrants have no pass from any one to go through the country, and they are liable to be killed as common enemies, for the country is at war now. No man has a right to go through this country without a written pass.”

We lay there and talked much of the night, and during that time Haight gave me very full instructions what to do, and how to proceed in the whole affair. He said he had consulted with Colonel Dame, and every one agreed to let the Indians use up the whole train if they could. Haight then said:

“I expect you to carry out your orders.”

I knew I had to obey or die. I had no wish to disobey, for I then thought that my superiors in the Church were the mouthpieces of Heaven, and that it was an act of godliness for me to obey any and all orders given by them to me, without my asking any questions.

My orders were to go home to Harmony, and see Carl Shirts, my son-in-law, an Indian interpreter, and send him to the Indians in the South, to notify them that the Mormons and Indians were at war with the “*Mericats*” (as the Indians called all whites that were not Mormons) and bring all the Southern Indians up and have them join with those from the North, so that their force would be sufficient to make a successful attack on the emigrants.

It was agreed that Haight would send Nephi Johnson, another Indian interpreter, to *stir up* all the other Indians that he could find, in order to have a large enough force of Indians to give the emigrants a good *hush*. He said, “These are the orders that have been agreed upon by the Council, and it is in accordance with the feelings of the *entire people*.”

I asked him if it would not have been better to first send to Brigham Young for instructions, and find out what he thought about the matter.

“No,” said Haight, “that is unnecessary, *we are acting by orders*. Some of the Indians are now on the war-path, and all of them must be sent out; all must go, so as to make the thing a success.”

It was then intended that the Indians should kill the emigrants, and make it an *Indian massacre*, and not have any whites interfere with them. No whites were to be known in the matter, it was to be all done by the Indians, so that it could be laid to them, if any questions were ever asked about it. I said to Haight:

“You know what the Indians are. They will kill all the party, women and children, as well as the men, and you know we are sworn not to shed innocent blood.”

“Oh h—ll” said he, “there will not be one drop of innocent blood shed, if every one of the d—d pack are killed, for they are the worse lot of outlaws and ruffians that I ever saw in my life.”

We agreed upon the whole thing, how each one should act, and then left the iron works, and went to Haight’s house and got breakfast.

After breakfast I got ready to start, and Haight said to me:

“Go, Brother Lee, and see that the instructions of those in authority are obeyed, and as you are dutiful in this, so shall your reward be in the kingdom of God, for God will bless those who willingly obey counsel, and make all things fit for the people in these last days.”

I left Cedar City for my home at Harmony, to carry out the instructions that I had received from my superior.

I then believed that he acted by the direct order and command of William H. Dame, and others even higher in authority than Colonel Dame. One reason for thinking so was from a talk I had only a few days before, with Apostle George A. Smith, and he had just then seen Haight, and talked with him, and I knew that George A. Smith never talked of things that Brigham Young had not talked over with him before-hand. Then the Mormons were at war with the United States, and the orders to the Mormons had been all the time to kill and waste away our enemies, but lose none of our people. These emigrants were from the section of country most hostile to our people, and I believed then as I do now, that it was the will of every true Mormon in Utah, at that time, that the enemies of the Church should be killed as fast as possible, and that as this lot of people had men amongst them that were supposed to have helped kill the Prophets in the Carthage jail, the killing of all of them would be keeping our oaths and avenging the blood of the Prophets.

In justice to myself I will give the facts of my talk with George A. Smith.

In the latter part of the month of August, 1857, about ten days before the company of Captain Fancher, who met their doom at Mountain Meadows, arrived at that place, General George A. Smith called on me at one of my homes at Washington City, Washington County, Utah Territory, and wished me to take him round by Fort Clara, via Pinto Settlements, to Hamilton Fort, or Cedar City. He said,

“I have been sent down here by the old Boss, Brigham Young, to instruct the brethren of the different settlements not to sell any of their grain to our enemies. And to tell them not to feed it to their animals, for it will all be needed by ourselves. I am also to instruct the brethren to prepare for a *big fight*, for the enemy is coming in large force to attempt our destruction. But Johnston’s army will not be allowed to approach our settlements from the east. God is on our side and will fight our battles for us, and deliver our enemies into our hands. Brigham Young has received revelations from God, giving him the right and the power to call down the curse of God on all our enemies who attempt to invade our Territory. *Our greatest danger* lies in the people of California—a class of reckless miners who are strangers to God and his righteousness. They are likely to come upon us from the south and destroy the small settlements. But we will try and outwit them before we suffer much damage. The people of the United States who oppose our Church and people are a mob, from the President down, and as such it is impossible for their armies to prevail against the Saints who have gathered here in the mountains.”

He continued this kind of talk for some hours to me and my friends who were with me.

General George A. Smith held high rank as a military leader. He was one of the twelve apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and as such he was considered by me to be an inspired man. His orders were to me sacred commands, which I considered it my duty to obey, without question or hesitation.

I took my horses and carriage and drove with him to either Hamilton Fort or Cedar City, visiting the settlements with him, as he had requested. I did not go to hear him preach at any of our stopping places, nor did I pay attention to what he said to the leaders in the settlements.

The day we left Fort Clara, which was then the headquarters of the Indian missionaries under the presidency of Jacob Hamblin, we stopped to noon at the Clara River. While there the Indians gathered around us in large numbers, and were quite saucy and impudent. Their chiefs asked me where I was going and who I had with me. I told them that he was a big captain.

“Is he a Mericat Captain?”

“No,” I said, “he is a Mormon.”

The Indians then wanted to know more. They wanted to have a talk.

The General told me to tell the Indians that the Mormons were their friends, and that the Americans were their enemies, and the enemies of the Mormons, too; that he wanted the Indians to remain the fast friends of the Mormons, for the Mormons were all friends to the Indians; that the Americans had a large army just east of the mountains, and intended to come over the mountains into Utah and kill all of the Mormons and Indians in Utah Territory; that the Indians must get ready and keep ready for war against all of the Americans, and keep friendly with the Mormons and obey what the Mormons told them to do—that this was the will of the Great Spirit; that if the Indians were true to the Mormons and would help them against their enemies, then the Mormons would always keep them from want and sickness and give them guns and ammunition to hunt and kill game with, and would also help the Indians against their enemies when they went into war.

This talk pleased the Indians, and they agreed to all that I asked them to do.

I saw that my friend Smith was a little nervous and fearful of the Indians, notwithstanding their promises of friendship. To relieve him of his anxiety I hitched up and started on our way, as soon as I could do so without rousing the suspicions of the Indians.

We had ridden along about a mile or so when General Smith said,

“Those are savage looking fellows. I think they would make it lively for an emigrant train if one should come this way.”

I said I thought they would attack any train that would come in their way. Then the General was in a deep study for some time, when he said,

“Suppose an emigrant train should come along through this southern country, making threats against our people and bragging of the part they took in helping kill our Prophets, what do you think the brethren would do with them? Would they be permitted to go their way, or would the brethren pitch into them and give them a good drubbing?”

I reflected a few moments, and then said,

“You know the brethren are now under the influence of the late reformation, and are still red-hot for the gospel. The brethren believe the government wishes to destroy them. I really believe that any train of emigrants that may come through here will be attacked, and probably all destroyed. I am sure they would be wiped out if they had been making threats against our people. Unless emigrants have a pass from Brigham Young, or some one in authority, they will certainly never get safely through this country.”

My reply pleased him very much, and he laughed heartily, and then said,

“Do you really believe the brethren would make it lively for such a train?”

I said, “Yes, sir, I know they will, unless they are protected by a pass, and I wish to inform you that unless *you want every train captured* that comes through here, you must inform Governor Young that if he wants emigrants to pass, without being molested, he must send orders to that effect to Colonel Wm. H. Dame or Major Isaac C. Haight, so that they can give passes to the emigrants, for *their passes will insure safety*, but nothing else will, except the positive orders of Governor Young, as the people are all bitter against the Gentiles, and full of religious zeal, and anxious to avenge the blood of the Prophets.”

The only reply he made was to the effect that on his way down from Salt Lake City he had had a long talk with Major Haight on

the same subject, and that Haight had assured him, and given him to understand, that emigrants who came along without a pass from Governor Young could not escape from the Territory.

We then rode along in silence for some distance, when he again turned to me and said,

“Brother Lee, I am satisfied that the brethren are under the full influence of the reformation, and I believe they will do just as you say they will with the wicked emigrants that come through the country making threats and abusing our people.”

I repeated my views to him, but at much greater length, giving my reasons in full for thinking that Governor Young should give orders to protect all the emigrants that he did not wish destroyed. I went into a full statement of the wrongs of our people, and told him that the people were under the blaze of the reformation, full of wild fire and fanaticism, and that to shed the blood of those who would *dare to speak* against the Mormon Church or its leaders, they would consider doing the will of God, and that the people would do it as willingly and cheerfully as they would any other duty. That the apostle Paul, when he started forth to persecute the followers of Christ, was not any more sincere than every Mormon was then, who lived in Southern Utah.

My words served to cheer up the General very much; he was greatly delighted, and said,

“I am glad to hear so good an account of our people. God will bless them for all that they do to build up His Kingdom in the last days.”

General Smith did not say one word to me or intimate to me, that he wished *any emigrants* to pass in safety through the Territory. But he led me to believe then, as I believe now, that he did want, and expected every emigrant to be killed that undertook to pass through the Territory while we were at war with the Government. I thought it was his mission to prepare the people for the bloody work.

I have always believed, since that day, that General George A. Smith was then visiting Southern Utah to prepare the people for the work of exterminating Captain Fancher’s train of emigrants, and I now believe that he was sent for that purpose by the direct command of Brigham Young.

I have been told by Joseph Wood, Thomas T. Willis, and many others, that they heard George A. Smith preach at Cedar City during that trip, and that he told the people of Cedar City that the emigrants were coming, and he told them that they must not sell that company *any grain or provisions* of any kind, for they were a mob of villains and outlaws, and the enemies of God and the Mormon people.

Sidney Littlefield, of Panguitch, has told me that he was knowing to the fact of Colonel Wm. H. Dame sending orders from Parowan to Maj. Haight, at Cedar City, to *exterminate the Francher outfit*, and to kill every emigrant without fail. Littlefield then lived at Parowan, and Dame was the Presiding Bishop. Dame still has all the wives he wants, and is a great friend of Brigham Young.

The knowledge of how George A. Smith felt toward the emigrants, and his telling me that he had a long talk with Haight on the subject, made me certain that it was the wish of the *Church authorities* that Francher and his train should be *wiped out*, and knowing all this, I did not doubt then, and I do not doubt it now, either, that Haight was acting by full authority from the Church leaders, and that the orders he gave to me were just the orders that he had been directed to give, when he ordered me to raise the Indians and have them attack the emigrants.

I acted through the whole matter in a way that I considered it my religious duty to act, and if what I did was a crime, it was a crime of the Mormon Church, and not a crime for which I



feel individually responsible.

I must here state that Klingensmith was not in Cedar City that Sunday night. Haight said he had sent Klingensmith and others over towards Pinto, and around there, to stir up the Indians and force them to attack the emigrants.

On my way from Cedar City to my home at Harmony, I came up with a large band of Indians under Moquetas and Big Bill, two Cedar City Chiefs; they were in their war paint, and fully equipped for battle. They halted when I came up and said they had had a big talk with Haight, Higby and Klingensmith, and had got orders from them to follow up the emigrants and kill them all, and take their property as the spoil of their enemies.

These Indians wanted me to go with them and command their forces. I told them that I could not go with them that evening, that I had orders from Haight, the *big Captain*, to send other Indians on the war-path to help them kill the emigrants, and that I must attend to that first; that I wanted them to go on near where the emigrants were and camp until the other Indians joined them; that I would meet them the next day and lead them.

This satisfied them, but they wanted me to send my little Indian boy, Clem, with them. After some time I consented to let Clem go with them, and I returned home.

When I got home I told Carl Shirts what the orders were that Haight had sent to him. Carl was naturally cowardly and was not willing to go, but I told him the orders must be obeyed. He then started off that night, or early next morning, to stir up the Indians of the South, and lead them against the emigrants. The emigrants were then camped at Mountain Meadows.

The Indians did not obey my instructions. They met, several hundred strong, at the Meadows, and attacked the emigrants Tuesday morning, just before daylight, and at the first fire, as I afterwards learned, they killed seven and wounded sixteen of the emigrants. The latter fought bravely, and repulsed the Indians, killing some of them and breaking the knees of two war chiefs, who afterwards died.

The news of the battle was carried all over the country by Indian runners, and the excitement was great in all the small settlements. I was notified of what had taken place, early Tuesday morning, by an Indian who came to my house and gave me a full account of all that had been done. The Indian said it was the wish of all the Indians that I should lead them, and that I must go back with him to the camp.

I started at once, and by taking the Indian trail over the mountain, I reached the camp in about twelve miles from Harmony. To go round by the wagon road it would have been between forty and fifty miles.

When I reached the camp I found the Indians in a frenzy of excitement. They threatened to kill me unless I agreed to lead them against the emigrants, and help them kill them. They also said they had been told that they could kill the emigrants without danger to themselves, but they had lost some of their braves, and others were wounded, and unless they could kill all the "*Mericats*," as they called them, they would declare war against the Mormons and kill every one in the settlements.

I did as well as I could under the circumstances. I was the only white man there, with a wild and excited band of several hundred Indians. I tried to persuade them that all would be well, that I was their friend and would see that they had their revenge, if I found out that they were entitled to revenge.

My talk only served to increase their excitement, and being afraid that they would kill me if I undertook to leave them, and I would not lead them against the emigrants, so I told them that I would go south and meet their friends, and hurry them up to help them. I intended to put a stop to the carnage if I had the power,

for I believed that the emigrants had been sufficiently punished for what they had done, and I felt then, and always have felt that such wholesale murdering was wrong.

At first the Indians would not consent for me to leave them, but they finally said I might go and meet their friends.

I then got on my horse and left the Meadows, and went south.

I had gone about sixteen miles, when I met Carl Shirts with about one hundred Indians, and a number of Mormons from the southern settlements. They were going to the scene of the conflict. How they learned of the emigrants being at the Meadows I never knew, but they did know it, and were there fully armed, and determined to obey *orders*.

Amongst those that I remember to have met there, were Samuel Knight, Oscar Hamblin, William Young, Carl Shirts, Harrison Pearce, James Pearce, John W. Clark, William Slade, Sr., James Matthews, Dudley Leavitt, William Hawley, (now a resident of Fillmore, Utah Territory,) William Slade, Jr., and two others whose names I have forgotten. I think they were George W. Adair and John Hawley. I know they were at the Meadows at the time of the massacre, and I think I met them that night south of the Meadows, with Samuel Knight and the others.

The whites camped there that night with me, but most of the Indians rushed on to their friends at the camp on the Meadows.

I reported to the whites all that had taken place at the Meadows, but none of them were surprised in the least. They all seemed to know that the attack was to be made, and all about it. I spent one of the most miserable nights there that I ever passed in my life. I spent much of the night in tears and at prayer. I wrestled with God for wisdom to guide me. I asked for some sign, some evidence that would satisfy me that my mission was of Heaven, but I got no satisfaction from my God.

In the morning we all agreed to go on together to Mountain Meadows, and camp there, and then send a messenger to Haight, giving him full instructions of what had been done, and to ask him for further instructions. We knew that the original plan was for the Indians to do all the work, and the whites to do nothing, only to stay back and plan for them, and encourage them to do the work. Now we knew the Indians could not do the work, and we were in a sad fix.

I did not then know that a messenger had been sent to Brigham Young for instructions. Haight had not mentioned it to me. I now think that James Haslem was sent to Brigham Young, as a sharp play on the part of the authorities to protect themselves, if trouble ever grew out of the matter.

We went to the Meadows and camped at the springs, about half a mile from the emigrant camp. There was a larger number of Indians there then, fully three hundred, and I think as many as four hundred of them. The two Chiefs who were shot in the knee were in a bad fix. The Indians had killed a number of the emigrants' horses, and about sixty or seventy head of cattle were lying dead on the Meadows, which the Indians had killed for spite and revenge.

Our company killed a small beef for dinner, and after eating a hearty meal of it we held a council and decided to send a messenger to Haight. I said to the messenger, who was either Edwards or Adair, (I cannot now remember which it was), "Tell Haight, for my sake, for the people's sake, for God's sake, send me help to protect and save these emigrants, and pacify the Indians."

The messenger started for Cedar City, from our camp on the Meadows, about 2 o'clock P. M.

We all staid on the field, and I tried to quiet and pacify the Indians, by telling them that I had sent to Haight, the Big Captain, for orders, and when he sent his order I would know what to do. This appeared to satisfy the Indians, for said they,

"The Big Captain will send you word to kill all the Mericats."

Along toward evening the Indians again attacked the emigrants

This was Wednesday. I heard the report of their guns, and the screams of the women and children in the corral.

This was more than I could stand. So I ran with William Young and John Mangum, to where the Indians were, to stop the fight. While on the way to them they fired a volley, and three balls from their guns cut my clothing. One ball went through my hat and cut my hair on the side of my head. One ball went through my shirt and leaded my shoulder, the other cut my pants across my bowels. I thought this was rather warm work, but I kept on until I reached the place where the Indians were in force. When I got to them, I told them the Great Spirit would be mad at them if they killed the women and children. I talked to them some time, and cried with sorrow when I saw that I could not pacify the savages.

When the Indians saw me in tears, they called me “Yaw Guts,” which in the Indian language means “cry baby,” and to this day they call me by that name, and consider me a coward.

Oscar Hamblin was a fine interpreter, and he came to my aid and helped me to induce the Indians to stop the attack. By his help we got the Indians to agree to be quiet until word was returned from Haight. (I do not know now but what the messenger started for Cedar City, after this night attack, but I was so worried and perplexed at that time, and so much has happened to distract my thoughts since then, that my mind is not clear on that subject.)

On Thursday, about noon, several men came to us from Cedar City. I cannot remember the order in which all of the people came to the Meadows, but I do recollect that at this time and in this company Joel White, William C. Stewart, Benjamin Arthur, Alexander Wilden, Charles Hopkins and — Tate, came to us at the camp at the springs. These men said but little, but every man seemed to know just what he was there for. As our messenger had gone for further orders, we moved our camp about four hundred yards further up the valley on to a hill, where we made camp as long as we staid there.

I soon learned that the whites were as wicked at heart as the Indians, for every little while during that day I saw white men taking aim and shooting at the emigrants’ wagons. They said they were doing it to keep in practice and to *help pass off the time*.

I remember one man that was shooting, that rather amused me, for he was shooting at a mark over a quarter of a mile off, and his gun would not carry a ball two hundred yards. That man was Alexander Wilden. He took pains to fix up a seat under the shade of a tree, where he continued to load and shoot until he got tired. Many of the others acted just as wild and foolish as Wilden did.

The wagons were corraled after the Indians had made the first attack. On the second day after our arrival the emigrants drew their wagons near each other and chained the wheels one to the other. While they were doing this there was no shooting going on. Their camp was about one hundred yards above and north of the spring. They generally got their water from the spring at night.

Thursday morning I saw two men start from the corral with buckets, and run to the spring and fill their buckets with water, and go back again. The bullets flew around them thick and fast, but they got into their corral in safety.

The Indians had agreed to keep quiet until orders returned from Haight, but they did not keep their word. They made a determined attack on the train on Thursday morning about daylight. At this attack the Clara Indians had one brave killed and three wounded. This so enraged that band that they left for home that day and drove off quite a number of cattle with them. During the day I said to John Mangum,

“I will cross over the valley and go up on the other side, on the hills to the west of the corral, and take a look at the situation.”

I did go. As I was crossing the valley I was seen by the emigrants, and as soon as they saw that I was a white man they ran up a white flag in the middle of their corral, or camp. They then sent two little boys from the camp to talk to me, but I could not talk to them at that time, for I did not know what orders Haight would send back to me, and until I did know his orders I did not know how to act. I hid, to keep away from the children. They came to the place where they had last seen me and hunted all around for me, but being unable to find me, they turned and went back to the camp in safety.

While the boys were looking for me several Indians came to me and asked for ammunition with which to kill them. I told them they must not hurt the children—that if they did I would kill the first one that made the attempt to injure them. By this act I was able to save the boys.

It is all false that has been told about little girls being dressed in white and sent out to me. There never was anything of the kind done.

I staid on the west side of the valley for about two hours, looking down into the emigrant camp, and feeling all the torture of mind that it is possible for a man to suffer who feels merciful, and yet knows, as I then knew, what was in store for that unfortunate company if the Indians were successful in their bloody designs.

While I was standing on the hill looking down into the corral, I saw two men leave the corral and go outside to cut some wood; the Indians and whites kept up a steady fire on them all the time, but they paid no attention to danger, and kept right along at their work until they had it done, and then they went back into camp. The men all acted so bravely that it was impossible to keep from respecting them

After staying there and looking down into the camp until I was nearly dead from grief, I returned to the company at camp. I was worn out with trouble and grief; I was nearly wild waiting for word from the authorities at Cedar City. I prayed for word to come that would enable me to save that band of suffering people, but no such word came. It never was to come.

On Thursday evening John M. Higbee, Major of the Iron Militia, and Philip K. Smith, as he is called generally, but whose name is Klingensmith, Bishop of Cedar City, came to our camp with two or three wagons, and a number of men all well armed. I can remember the following as a portion of the men who came to take part in the work of death which was so soon to follow, viz.: John M. Higbee, Major and commander of the Iron Militia, and also first counselor to Isaac C. Haight; Philip Klingensmith, Bishop of Cedar City; Ira Allen, of the High Council; Robert Wiley, of the High Council; Richard Harrison, of Pinto, also a member of the High Council; Samuel McMurdy, one of the Counselors of Klingensmith; Charles Hopkins, of the City Council of Cedar City; Samuel Pollock; Daniel McFarland, a son-in-law of Isaac C. Haight, and acting as Adjutant under Major Higbee; John Ure, of the City Council; George Hunter, of the City Council; and I honestly believe that John McFarland, now an attorney-at-law at St. George, Utah, was there—I am not positive that he was, but my best impression is that he was there: Samuel Jukes; Nephi Johnson, with a number of Indians under his command; Irvin Jacobs; John Jacobs; E. Curtis, a Captain of Ten; Thomas Cartwright of the City Council and High Council; William Bateman, who afterwards carried the flag of truce to the emigrant camp; Anthony Stratton; A. Loveridge; Joseph Clews; Jabez Durfey; Columbus Freeman, and some others whose names I cannot remember. I know that our total force was fifty-four whites and over three hundred Indians.

As soon as these persons gathered around the camp, I demanded

of Major Higbee what orders he had brought. I then stated fully all that had happened at the Meadows, so that every person might understand the situation.

Major Higbee reported as follows: "It is the orders of the President, that all the emigrants must be *put out of the way*. President Haight has counseled with Colonel Dame, or has had orders from him to put all of the emigrants out of the way; none who are old enough to talk are to be spared."

He then went on and said substantially that the emigrants had come through the country as our enemies, and as the enemies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. That they had no pass from any one in authority to permit them to leave the Territory. That none but friends were permitted to leave the Territory, and that as these were our sworn enemies, they must be killed. That they were nothing but a portion of Johnston's army. That if they were allowed to go on to California, they would raise the war cloud in the West, and bring certain destruction upon all the settlements in Utah. That the only safety for the people was in the utter destruction of the whole rascally lot.

I then told them that God would have to change my heart before I could consent to such a wicked thing as the wholesale killing of that people. I attempted to reason with Higbee and the brethren. I told them how strongly the emigrants were fortified, and how wicked it was to kill the women and children. I was ordered to be silent. Higbee said I was resisting authority.

He then said, "Brother Lee is afraid of shedding innocent blood. Why, brethren, there is not a drop of innocent blood in that entire camp of Gentile outlaws; they are set of cut-throats, robbers and assassins; they are a part of the people who drove the Saints from Missouri, and who aided to shed the blood of our Prophets, Joseph and Hyrum, and it is our orders from all in authority, to get the emigrants from their stronghold, and help the Indians kill them."

I then said that Joseph Smith had told us never to betray any one. That we could not get the emigrants out of their corral unless we used treachery, and I was opposed to that.

I was interrupted by Higbee, Klingensmith and Hopkins, who said it was the orders of President Isaac C. Haight to us, and that Haight had his orders from Colonel Dame and the authorities at Parowan, and that all in authority were of one mind, and that they had been sent by the Council at Cedar City to the Meadows to counsel and direct the way and manner that the company of emigrants should be disposed of.

The men then in council, I must here state, now knelt down in a prayer circle and prayed, invoking the Spirit of God to direct them how to act in the matter.

After prayer, Major Higbee said, "Here are the orders," and handed me a paper from Haight. It was in substance that it was the orders of Haight to *decoy* the emigrants from their position, and kill all of them that could talk. This order was in writing. Higbee handed it to me and I read it, and then dropped it on the ground, saying,

"I cannot do this."

The substance of the orders were that the emigrants should be *decoyed* from their strong-hold, and all exterminated, so that no one would be left to tell the tale, and then the authorities could say it was done by the Indians.

The words *decoy* and *exterminate* were used in that message or order, and these orders came to us as the orders from the Council at Cedar City, and as the orders of our military superior, that we were bound to obey. The order was signed by Haight, as commander of the troops at Cedar City.

Haight told me the next day after the massacre, while on the Meadows, that he got his orders from Colonel Dame.

I then left the Council, and went away to myself, and bowed myself in prayer before God, and asked Him to overrule the decision of that Council. I shed many bitter tears, and my tortured

soul was wrung nearly from the body by my great suffering. I will here say, calling upon Heaven, angels, and the spirits of just men to witness what I say, that if I could then have had a thousand worlds to command, I would have given them freely to save that company from death.

While in bitter anguish, lamenting the sad condition of myself and others, Charles Hopkins, a man that I had great confidence in, came to me from the Council, and tried to comfort me by saying that he believed it was all right, for the brethren in the *Priesthood* were all united in the thing, and it would not be well for me to oppose them.

I told him the Lord must change my heart before I could ever do such an act willingly. I will further state that there was a reign of terror in Utah, at that time, and many a man had been put out of the way, on short notice, for disobedience, and I had made some narrow escapes.

At the earnest solicitation of Brother Hopkins, I returned with him to the Council. When I got back, the Council again prayed for aid. The Council was called The City Counselors, the Church or High Counselors; and all in authority, together with the private citizens, then formed a circle, and kneeling down, so that elbows would touch each other, several of the brethren prayed for Divine instructions.

After prayer, Major Higbee said, "I have the evidence of God's approval of our mission. It is God's will that we carry out our instructions to the letter."

I said, "My God! this is more than I can do. I must and do refuse to take part in this matter."

Higbee then said to me, "Brother Lee, I am ordered by President Haight to inform you that you shall receive a crown of Celestial glory for your faithfulness, and your eternal joy shall be complete." I was much shaken by this offer, for I had full faith in the power of the Priesthood to bestow such rewards and blessings, but I was anxious to save the people. I then proposed that we give the Indians all of the stock of the emigrants, except sufficient to haul their wagons, and let them go. To this proposition all the leading men objected. No man there raised his voice or hand to favor the saving of life, except myself.

The meeting was then addressed by some one in authority, I do not remember who it was. He spoke in about this language: "Brethren, we have been sent here to perform a duty. It is a duty that we owe to God, and to our Church and people. The orders of those in authority are that all the emigrants must die. Our leaders speak with inspired tongues, and their orders come from the God of Heaven. We have no right to question what they have commanded us to do; it is our duty to obey. If we wished to act as some of our weak-kneed brethren desire us to do, it would be impossible; the thing has gone too far to allow us to stop now. The emigrants know that we have aided the Indians, and if we let them go they will bring certain destruction upon us. It is a fact that on Wednesday night, two of the emigrants got out of camp and started back to Cedar City for assistance to withstand the Indian attacks; they had reached Richards' Springs when they met William C. Stewart, Joel White and Benjamin Arthur, three of our brethren from Cedar City. The men stated their business to the brethren, and as their horses were drinking at the Spring, Brother Stewart, feeling unusually full of zeal for the glory of God and the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God on earth, shot and killed one of the emigrants, a young man by the name of Aden. When Aden fell from his horse, Joel White shot and wounded the other Gentile; but he unfortunately got away, and returned to his camp and reported that the Mormons were helping the Indians in all that they were doing against the emigrants. Now the emigrants will report these facts in California if we let them go. We must kill them



all, and our orders are to get them out by treachery if no other thing can be done to get them into our power.”

Many of the brethren spoke in the same way, all arguing that the orders must be carried out.

I was then told the plan of action had been agreed upon, and it was this: The emigrants were to be decoyed from their strong-hold under a promise of protection. Brother William Bateman was to carry a flag of truce and demand a parley, and then I was to go and arrange the terms of the surrender. I was to demand that all the children who were so young they could not talk should be put into a wagon, and the wounded were also to be put into a wagon. Then all the arms and ammunition of the emigrants should be put into a wagon, and I was to agree that the Mormons would protect the emigrants from the Indians and conduct them to Cedar City in safety, where they should be protected until an opportunity came for sending them to California.

It was agreed that when I had made the full agreement and treaty, as the brethren called it, the wagons should start for Hamblin's Ranch with the arms, the wounded and the children. The women were to march on foot and follow the wagons in single file; the men were to follow behind the women, they also to march in single file. Major John M. Higbee was to stand with his militia company about two hundred yards from the camp, and stand in double file, open order, with about twenty feet space between the files, so that the wagons could pass between them. The drivers were to keep right along, and not stop at the troops. The women were not to stop there, but to follow the wagons. The troops were to halt the men for a few minutes, until the women were some distance ahead, out into the cedars, where the Indians were hid in ambush. Then the march was to be resumed, the troops to form in single file, each soldier to walk by an emigrant, and on the right-hand side of his man, and the soldier was to carry his gun on his left arm, ready for instant use. The march was to continue until the wagons had passed beyond the ambush of the Indians, and until the women were right in the midst of the Indians. Higbee was then to give the orders and words, “Do Your Duty.” At this the troops were to shoot down the men; the Indians were to kill all of the women and larger children, and the drivers of the wagons and I were to kill the wounded and sick men that were in the wagons. Two men were to be placed on horses near by, to overtake and kill any of the emigrants that might escape from the first assault. The Indians were to kill the women and large children, so that it would be certain that no Mormon would be guilty of shedding *innocent blood*—if it should happen that there was any innocent blood in the company that were to die. Our leading men all said that there was no innocent blood in the whole company.

The Council broke up a little after daylight on Friday morning. All the horses, except two for the men to ride to overtake those who might escape, and one for Dan McFarland to ride as Adjutant, so that he could carry orders from one part of the field to another, were turned out on the range. Then breakfast was eaten, and the brethren prepared for the work in hand.

I was now satisfied that it was the wish of all of the Mormon priesthood to have the thing done. One reason for thinking so was that it was in keeping with the teachings of the leaders, and as Utah was then at war with the United States we believed all the Gentiles were to be killed as a war measure, and that the Mormons, as God's chosen people, were to hold and inhabit the earth and rule and govern the globe. Another, and one of my strongest reasons for believing that the leaders wished the thing done, was on account of the talk that I had with George A. Smith, which I have given in full in this statement. I was satisfied that Smith had passed the

emigrants while on his way from Salt Lake City, and I then knew this was the train that he meant when he spoke of a train that would make threats and illtreat our people, etc.

The people were in the full blaze of the reformation and anxious to do some act that would add to their reputation as zealous Churchmen.

I therefore, taking all things into consideration, and believing, as I then did, that my superiors were *inspired* men, who could not go wrong in any matter relating to the Church or the duty of its members, concluded to be obedient to the wishes of those in authority. I took up my cross and prepared to do my duty.

Soon after breakfast Major Higbee ordered the two Indian interpreters, Carl Shirts and Nephi Johnson, to inform the Indians of the plan of operations, and to place the Indians in ambush, so that they could not be seen by the emigrants until the work of death should commence.

This was done in order to make the emigrants believe that we had sent the Indians away, and that we were acting honestly and in good faith, when we agreed to protect them from the savages.

The orders were obeyed, and in five minutes not an Indian could be seen on the whole Meadows. They secreted themselves and lay still as logs of wood, until the order was given for them to rush out and kill the women.

Major Higbee then called all the people to order, and directed me to explain the whole plan to them. I did so, explaining just how every person was expected to act during the whole performance.

Major Higbee then gave the order for his men to advance. They marched to the spot agreed upon, and halted there. William Bateman was then selected to carry a flag of truce to the emigrants and demand their surrender, and I was ordered to go and make the treaty after some one had replied to our flag of truce. (The emigrants had kept a white flag flying in their camp ever since they saw me cross the valley.)

Bateman took a white flag and started for the emigrant camp. When he got about half way to the corral, he was met by one of the emigrants, that I afterwards learned was named Hamilton. They talked some time, but I never knew what was said between them.

Brother Bateman returned to the command and said that the emigrants would accept our terms, and surrender as we required them to do.

I was then ordered by Major Higbee to go to the corral and negotiate the treaty, and superintend the whole matter. I was again ordered to be certain and get all the arms and ammunition into the wagons. Also to put the children and the sick and wounded in the wagons, as had been agreed upon in council. Then Major Higbee said to me:

“Brother Lee, we expect you to faithfully carry out all the instructions that have been given you by our council.”

Samuel McMurdy and Samuel Knight were then ordered to drive their teams and follow me to the corral to haul off the children, arms, etc.

The troops formed in two lines, as had been agreed upon, and were standing in that way with arms at rest, when I left them.

I walked ahead of the wagons up to the corral. When I reached there I met Mr. Hamilton on the outside of the camp. He loosened the chains from some of their wagons, and moved one wagon out of the way, so that our teams could drive inside of the corral and into their camp. It was then noon, or a little after.

I found that the emigrants were strongly fortified; their wagons were chained to each other in a circle. In the centre was a rifle-pit, large enough to contain the entire company. This had served to shield them from the constant fire of their enemy, which had been poured into them from both sides of the valley,

from a rocky range that served as a breastwork for their assailants. The valley at this point was not more than five hundred yards wide, and the emigrants had their camp near the center of the valley. On the east and west there was a low range of rugged, rocky mountains, affording a splendid place for the protection of the Indians and Mormons, and leaving them in comparative safety while they fired upon the emigrants. The valley at this place runs nearly due north and south.

When I entered the corral, I found the emigrants engaged in burying two men of note among them, who had died but a short time before from the effect of wounds received by them from the Indians at the time of the first attack on Tuesday morning. They wrapped the bodies up in buffalo robes, and buried them in a grave inside the corral. I was then told by some of the men that seven men were killed and seventeen others were wounded at the first attack made by the Indians, and that three of the wounded men had since died, making ten of their number killed during the siege.

As I entered the fortifications, men, women and children gathered around me in wild consternation. Some felt that the time of their happy deliverance had come, while others, though in deep distress, and all in tears, looked upon me with doubt, distrust and terror. My feelings at this time may be imagined (but I doubt the power of man being equal to even imagine how wretched I felt.) No language can describe my feelings. My position was painful, trying and awful; my brain seemed to be on fire; my nerves were for a moment unstrung; humanity was overpowered, as I thought of the cruel, unmanly part that I was acting. Tears of bitter anguish fell in streams from my eyes; my tongue refused its office; my faculties were dormant, stupefied and deadened by grief. I wished that the earth would open and swallow me where I stood. God knows my suffering was great. I cannot describe my feelings. I knew that I was acting a cruel part and doing a damnable deed. Yet my faith in the godliness of my leaders was such that it forced me to think that I was not sufficiently spiritual to act the important part I was commanded to perform. My hesitation was only momentary. Then feeling that duty compelled *obedience to orders*, I laid aside my weakness and my humanity, and became an instrument in the hands of my superiors and my leaders. I delivered my message and told the people that they must put their arms in the wagon, so as not to arouse the animosity of the Indians. I ordered the children and wounded, some clothing and the arms, to be put into the wagons. Their guns were mostly Kentucky rifles of the muzzle-loading style. Their ammunition was about all gone—I do not think there were twenty loads left in their whole camp. If the emigrants had had a good supply of ammunition they never would have surrendered, and I do not think we could have captured them without great loss, for they were brave men and very resolute and determined.

Just as the wagons were loaded, Dan. McFarland came riding into the corral and said that Major Higbee had ordered great haste to be made, for he was afraid that the Indians would return and renew the attack before he could get the emigrants to a place of safety.

I hurried up the people and started the wagons off towards Cedar City. As we went out of the corral I ordered the wagons to turn to the left, so as to leave the troops to the right of us. Dan. McFarland rode before the women and led them right up to the troops, where they still stood in open order as I left them. The women and larger children were walking ahead, as directed, and the men following them. The foremost man was about fifty yards behind the hindmost woman.

The women and children were hurried right on by the troops. When the men came up they cheered the soldiers as if they believed that they were acting honestly. Higbee then gave the orders for his

men to form in single file and take their places as ordered before, that is, at the right of the emigrants.

I saw this much, but about this time our wagons passed out of sight of the troops, over the hill. I had disobeyed orders in part by turning off as I did, for I was anxious to be out of sight of the bloody deed that I knew was to follow. I knew that I had much to do yet that was of a cruel and unnatural character. It was my duty, with the two drivers, to kill the sick and wounded who were in the wagons, and to do so when we heard the guns of the troops fire. I was walking between the wagons; the horses were going in a fast walk, and we were fully half a mile from Major Higbee and his men, when we heard the firing. As we heard the guns, I ordered a halt and we proceeded to do our part.

I here pause in the recital of this horrid story of man's inhumanity, and ask myself the question, Is it honest in me, and can I clear my conscience before my God, if I screen myself while I accuse others? No, never! Heaven forbid that I should put a burden upon others' shoulders, that I am unwilling to bear my just portion of. I am not a traitor to my people, nor to my former friends and comrades who were with me on that dark day when the work of death was carried on in God's name, by a lot of deluded and religious fanatics. It is my duty to tell facts as they exist, and I will do so.

I have said that all of the small children were put into the wagons; that was wrong, for one little child, about six months old, was carried in its father's arms, and it was killed by the same bullet that entered its father's breast; it was shot through the head. I was told by Haight afterwards, that the child was killed by accident, but I cannot say whether that is a fact or not. I saw it lying dead when I returned to the place of slaughter.

When we had got out of sight, as I said before, and just as we were coming into the main road, I heard a volley of guns at the place where I knew the troops and emigrants were. Our teams were then going at a fast walk. I first heard one gun, then a volley at once followed.

McMurdy and Knight stopped their teams at once, for they were ordered by Higbee, the same as I was, to help kill all the sick and wounded who were in the wagons, and to do it as soon as they heard the guns of the troops. McMurdy was in front; his wagon was mostly loaded with the arms and small children. McMurdy and Knight got out of their wagons; each one had a rifle. McMurdy went up to Knight's wagon, where the sick and wounded were, and raising his rifle to his shoulder, said: "*O Lord, my God, receive their spirits, it is for thy Kingdom that I do this.*" He then shot a man who was lying with his head on another man's breast; the ball killed both men.

I also went up to the wagon, intending to do my part of the killing. I drew my pistol and cocked it, but somehow it went off prematurely, and I shot McMurdy across the thigh, my pistol ball cutting his buck-skin pants. McMurdy turned to me and said:

"Brother Lee, keep cool, you are excited; you came very near killing me. Keep cool, there is no reason for being excited."

Knight then shot a man with his rifle; he shot the man in the head. Knight also brained a boy that was about fourteen years old. The boy came running up to our wagons, and Knight struck him on the head with the butt end of his gun, and crushed his skull. By this time many Indians reached our wagons, and all of the sick and wounded were killed almost instantly. I saw an Indian from Cedar City, called Joe, run up to the wagon and catch a man by the hair, and raise his head up and look into his face; the man shut his eyes, and Joe shot him in the head. The Indians then examined all of the wounded in

in the wagons, and all of the bodies, to see if any were alive, and all that showed signs of life were at once shot through the head. I did not kill any one there, but it was an accident that kept me from it, for I fully intended to do my part of the killing, but by the time I got over the excitement of coming so near killing McMurdy, the whole of the killing of the wounded was done. There is no truth in the statement of Nephi Johnson, where he says I cut a man's throat.

Just after the wounded were all killed I saw a girl, some ten or eleven years old, running towards us, from the direction where the troops had attacked the main body of emigrants; she was covered with blood. An Indian shot her before she got within sixty yards of us. That was the last person that I saw killed on that occasion.

About this time an Indian rushed to the front wagon, and grabbed a little boy, and was going to kill him. The lad got away from the Indian and ran to me, and caught me by the knees; and begged me to save him, and not let the Indian kill him. The Indian had hurt the little fellow's chin on the wagon-bed, when he first caught hold of him. I told the Indian to let the boy alone. I took the child up in my arms, and put him back in the wagon, and saved his life. This little boy said his name was Charley Fancher, and that his father was Captain of the train. He was a bright boy. I afterwards adopted him, and gave him to Caroline. She kept him until Dr. Forney took all the children East. I believe that William Sloan, alias Idaho Bill, is the same boy.

After all the parties were dead, I ordered Knight to drive out on one side, and throw out the dead bodies. He did so, and threw them out of his wagon at a place about one hundred yards from the road, and then came back to where I was standing. I then ordered Knight and McMurdy to take the children that were saved alive, (sixteen was the number, some say seventeen, I say sixteen,) and drive on to Hamblin's ranch. They did as I ordered them to do. Before the wagons started, Nephi Johnson came up in company with the Indians that were under his command, and Carl Shirts I think came up too, but I know that I then considered that Carl Shirts was a coward, and I afterwards made him suffer for being a coward. Several white men came up too, but I cannot tell their names, as I have forgotten who they were.

Knight lied when he said I went to the ranch and ordered him to go to the field with his team. I never knew anything of his team, or heard of it, until he came with a load of armed men in his wagon, on the evening of Thursday. If any one ordered him to go to the Meadows, it was Higbee. Every witness that claims that he went to the Meadows without knowing what he was going to do, has lied, for they all knew, as well as Haight or any one else did, and they all voted, every man of them, in the Council, on Friday morning, a little before daylight, to kill all the emigrants.

After the wagons, with the children, had started for Hamblin's ranch, I turned and walked back to where the brethren were. Nephi Johnson lies when he says he was on horse-back, and met me, or that I gave him orders to go to guard the wagons. He is a perjured wretch, and has sworn to every thing he could to injure me. God knows what I did do was bad enough, but he has lied to suit the leaders of the Church, who want me out of the way.

While going back to the brethren, I passed the bodies of several women. In one place I saw six or seven bodies near each other; they were stripped perfectly naked, and all of their clothing was torn from their bodies by the Indians.

I walked along the line where the emigrants had been killed, and saw many bodies lying dead and naked on the field, near by where the women lay. I saw ten children; they had been killed close to each other; they were from ten to sixteen years of age. The

bodies of the women and children were scattered along the ground for quite a distance before I came to where the men were killed.

I do not know how many were killed, but I thought then that there were some fifteen women, about ten children, and about forty men killed, but the statement of others that I have since talked with about the massacre, makes me think there were fully one hundred and ten killed that day on the Mountain Meadows, and the ten who had died in the corral, and young Aden killed by Stewart at Richards' Springs, would make the total number one hundred and twenty-one.

When I reached the place where the dead men lay, I was told how the orders had been obeyed. Major Higbee said, "The boys have acted admirably, they took good aim, and all of the d—d Gentiles but two or three fell at the *first fire*."

He said that three or four got away some distance, but the men on horses soon overtook them and cut their throats. Higbee said the Indians did their part of the work well, that it did not take over a minute to finish up when they got fairly started. I found that the first orders had been carried out to the letter.

Three of the emigrants did get away, but the Indians were put on their trail and they overtook and killed them before they reached the settlements in California. But it would take more time than I have to spare to give the details of their chase and capture. I may do so in my writings hereafter, but not now.

I found Major Higbee, Klingensmith, and most of the brethren standing near by where the largest number of the dead men lay. When I went up to the brethren, Major Higbee said,

"We must now examine the bodies for valuables."

I said I did not wish to do any such work.

Higbee then said, "Well, you hold my hat and I will examine the bodies, and put what valuables I get into the hat."

The bodies were all searched by Higbee, Klingensmith and Wm. C. Stewart. I did hold the hat a while, but I soon got so sick that I had to give it to some other person, as I was unable to stand for a few minutes. The search resulted in getting a little money and a few watches, but there was not much money. Higbee and Klingensmith kept the property, I suppose, for I never knew what became of it, unless they did keep it. I think they kept it all.

After the dead were searched, as I have just said, the brethren were called up, and Higbee and Klingensmith, as well as myself, made speeches, and *ordered* the people to keep the matter a secret from the *entire* world. Not to tell their wives, or their most intimate friends, and we pledged ourselves to keep everything relating to the affair a secret during life. We also took the most binding oaths to stand by each other, and to always insist that the massacre was committed by Indians alone. This was the advice of Brigham Young too, as I will show hereafter.

The men were mostly ordered to camp there on the field for that night, but Higbee and Klingensmith went with me to Hamblin's ranch, where we got something to eat, and staid there all night. I was nearly dead for rest and sleep; in fact I had rested but little since the Saturday night before. I took my saddle-blanket and spread it on the ground soon after I had eaten my supper, and lay down on the saddle-blanket, using my saddle for a pillow, and slept soundly until next morning.

I was awakened in the morning by loud talking between Isaac C. Haight and William H. Dame. They were very much excited, and quarreling with each other. I got up at once, but was unable to hear what they were quarreling about, for they cooled down as soon as they saw that others were paying attention to them.

I soon learned that Col. Dame, Judge Lewis of Parowan, and Isaac C. Haight, with several others, had arrived at the Hamblin



ranch in the night, but I do not know what time they got there.

After breakfast we all went back in a body to the Meadows, to bury the dead and take care of the property that was left there.

When we reached the Meadows we all rode up to that part of the field where the women were lying dead. The bodies of men, women and children had been stripped entirely naked, making the scene one of the most loathsome and ghastly that can be imagined.

Knowing that Dame and Haight had quarreled at Hamblin's that morning, I wanted to know how they would act in sight of the dead, who lay there as the result of their orders. I was greatly interested to know what Dame had to say, so I kept close to them, without appearing to be watching them.

Colonel Dame was silent for some time. He looked all over the field, and was quite pale, and looked uneasy and frightened. I thought then that he was just finding out the difference between giving and executing orders for wholesale killing. He spoke to Haight, and said:

"I must report this matter to the authorities."

"How will you report it?" said Haight.

Dame said, "I will report it just as it is."

"Yes, I suppose so, and implicate yourself with the rest?" said Haight.

"No," said Dame. "I will not implicate myself, for I had nothing to do with it."

Haight then said, "That will not do, for you know a d—d sight better. You ordered it done. Nothing has been done except by your orders, and it is too late in the day for you to order things done and then go back on it, and go back on the men who have carried out your orders. You cannot sow pig on me, and I will be d—d if I will stand it. You are as much to blame as any one, and you know that we have done nothing except what you ordered done. I know that I have obeyed orders, and by G—d I will not be lied on."

Colonel Dame was much excited. He choked up, and would have gone away, but he knew Haight was a man of determination, and would not stand any foolishness.

As soon as Colonel Dame could collect himself, he said:

*"I did not think there were so many of them, or I would not have had anything to do with it."*

I thought it was now time for me to chip in, so I said:

"Brethren, what is the trouble between you? It will not do for our chief men to disagree."

Haight stepped up to my side, a little in front of me, and facing Colonel Dame. He was very mad, and said:

"The trouble is just this: Colonel Dame counseled and ordered me to do this thing, and now he wants to back out, and go back on me, and by G—d, he shall not do it. He shall not lay it all on me. He cannot do it. He must not try to do it. I will blow him to h—l before he shall lay it all on me. He has got to stand up to what he did, like a little man. He knows he ordered it done, and I dare him to deny it."

Colonel Dame was perfectly cowed. He did not offer to deny it again, but said:

"Isaac, I did not know there were so many of them."

"That makes no difference," said Haight, "you ordered me to do it, and you have got to stand up for your orders."

I thought it was now time to stop the fuss, for many of the young brethren were coming around. So I said:

"Brethren, this is no place to talk over such a matter. You will agree when you get where you can be quiet, and talk it over."

Haight said, "There is no more to say, for he knows he ordered it done, and he has got to stand by it."

That ended the trouble between them, and I never heard of Colonel Dame denying the giving of the orders any more, until after the Church authorities concluded to offer me up for the sins of the Church.

We then went along the field, and passed by where the brethren were at work covering up the bodies. They piled the dead bodies up in heaps, in little gullies, and threw dirt over them. The bodies were only lightly covered, for the ground was hard, and the brethren did not have sufficient tools to dig with. I suppose it is true that the first rain washed the bodies all out again, but I never went back to examine whether it did or not.

We then went along the field to where the corral and camp had been, to where the wagons were standing. We found that the Indians had carried off all of the wagon covers, and the clothing, and the provisions, and had emptied the feathers out of the feather-beds, and carried off all the ticks.

After the dead were covered up or buried (but it was not much of a burial,) the brethren were called together, and a council was held at the emigrant camp. All the leading men made speeches; Colonel Dame, President Haight, Klingensmith, John M. Higbee, Hopkins and myself. The speeches were first—Thanks to God for delivering our enemies into our hands; next, thanking the brethren for their zeal in God's cause; and then the necessity of always saying the Indians did it alone, and that the Mormons had nothing to do with it. The most of the speeches, however, were in the shape of exhortations and commands to keep the whole matter secret from every one but Brigham Young. It was voted unanimously that any man who should divulge the secret, or tell who was present, or do anything that would lead to a discovery of the truth, should suffer death.

The brethren then all took a most solemn oath, binding themselves under the most dreadful and awful penalties, to keep the whole matter secret from every human being, as long as they should live. No man was to know the facts. The brethren were sworn not to talk of it among themselves, and each one swore to help kill all who proved to be traitors to the Church or people in this matter.

It was then agreed that Brigham Young should be informed of the whole matter, by some one to be selected by the Church Council, after the brethren had returned home.

It was also voted to turn all the property over to Klingensmith, as Bishop of the Church at Cedar City, and he was to take care of the property for the benefit of the Church, until Brigham Young was notified, and should give further orders what to do with it.

## CHAPTER XIX.

CONFESSION CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED, MARCH 16, 1877,  
SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO HIS EXECUTION.

**C**OLONEL DAME then blest the brethren and we prepared to go to our homes. I took my little Indian boy, Clem, on the horse behind me, and started home. I crossed the mountains and returned the same way I had come.

When I got in about two miles of Harmony, I overtook a body of about forty Indians, on their way home from the massacre. They had a large amount of bloody clothing, and were driving several head of cattle that they had taken from the emigrants.

The Indians were very glad to see me, and said I was their Captain, and that they were going to Harmony with me as my men. It was the orders from the Church authorities to do everything we could to pacify the Indians, and make them the fast friends of the Mormons, so I concluded to humor them.

I started on and they marched after me until we reached the fort at Harmony. We went into the fort and marched round inside, after which they halted and gave their whoop of victory, which means much the same with them as the *cheers* do with the whites. I then ordered the Indians to be fed; my family gave them some bread and melons, which they eat, and then they left me and went to their tribe.

I will here state again that on the field, before and after the massacre, and again at the council at the emigrant camp, the day after the massacre, orders were given to keep everything secret, and if any man told the secret to any human being, he was to be killed, and I assert as a fact that if any man had told it then, or for *many years afterwards, he would have died*, for some "*Destroying Angel*" would have followed his trail and sent him over the "*rim of the basin*."

From that day to this it has been the understanding with all concerned in that massacre, that the man who divulged the secret should die; he was to be killed, wherever he was found, for treason to the men who killed the emigrants, and for his treason to the Church. No man was at liberty to tell his wife, or any one else, nor were the brethren permitted to talk of it even among themselves. Such were the orders and instructions, from Brigham Young down to the lowest in authority. The orders to lay it all to the Indians, were just as positive as they were to keep it all secret. This was the counsel from all in authority, and for years it was faithfully observed.

The children that were saved were taken to Cedar City, and other settlements, and put out among different families, where they were kept until they were given up to Dr. Forney, the Agent of the United States, who came for them.

I did not have anything to do with the property taken from the emigrants, or the cattle, or anything else, for some three months after the massacre, and then I only took charge of the cattle because I was ordered to do so by Brigham Young.

There were eighteen wagons in all at the emigrant camp. They were all wooden axles but one, and that was a light iron axle; it had been hauled by four mules. There were something over five hundred head of cattle, but I never got the half of them. The Indians killed a large number at the time of the massacre, and drove others to their tribes when they went home from Mountain Meadows. Klingensmith put the Church brand on fifty head or more, of the best of the cattle, and then he and Haight and Higbee drove the cattle to Salt Lake City and sold them for goods that they brought back to Cedar City to trade on.

The Indians got about twenty head of horses and mules. Samuel Knight, one of the witnesses on my trial, got a large sorrel mare; Haight got a span of average American mules; Joel White got a fine mare; Higbee got a good large mule; Klingensmith got a span of mules. Haight, Higbee and Allen each took a wagon. The people all took what they wanted, and they had divided and used up much over half of it before I was put in charge.

The first time I heard that a messenger had been sent to Brigham Young for instructions as to what should be done with the emigrants, was three or four days after I had returned home from the Meadows. Then I heard of it from Isaac C. Haight, when he came to my house and had a talk with me. He said:

"We are all in a muddle. Haslem has returned from Salt Lake City, with orders from Brigham Young to let the emigrants pass in safety."

In this conversation Haight also said:

"I sent an order to Higbee to save the emigrants, after I had sent the orders for killing them all, but for some reason the message did not reach him. I understand the messenger did not go to the Meadows at all."

I at once saw that we were in a bad fix, and I asked Haight what was to be done. We talked the matter over again.

Haight then told me that it was the orders of the Council that I should go to Salt Lake City and lay the whole matter before Brigham Young. I asked him if he was not going to write a report of it to the Governor, as he was the right man to do it, for he was in command of the militia in that section of country, and next to Dame in command of the whole district. I told him that it was a matter which really belonged to the military department, and should be so reported.

He refused to write a report, saying:

"You can report it better than I could write it. You are like a member of Brigham's family, and can talk to him privately and confidentially. I want you to take all of it on yourself that you can, and not expose any more of the brethren than you find absolutely necessary. Do this, Brother Lee, as I order you to do, and you shall receive a celestial reward for it, and the time will come when all who acted with us will be glad for the part they have taken, for the time is near at hand when the Saints are to enjoy the riches of the earth. And all who deny the faith and doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints shall be slain—the sword of vengeance shall shed their blood; their wealth shall be given as a spoil to our people."

At that time I believed everything he said, and I fully expected to receive the celestial reward that he promised me. But now I say, *Damn all such "celestial rewards"* as I am to get for what I did on that fatal day.

It was then preached every Sunday to the people that the Mormons were to conquer the earth at once, and the people all thought that the millennium had come, and that Christ's reign upon earth would soon begin, as an accomplished fact.

According to the orders of Isaac C. Haight, I started for Salt Lake City to report the whole facts connected with the massacre, to Brigham Young. I started about a week or ten days after the massacre, and I was on the way about ten days. When I arrived in the city I went to the President's house and gave to Brigham Young a full, detailed statement of the whole affair, from first to last—only I took rather more on myself than I had done.

He asked me if I had brought a letter from Haight, with his report of the affair. I said:

"No, Haight wished me to make a verbal report of it, as I was an eye witness to much of it."

I then went over the whole affair and gave him as full a statement as it was possible for me to give. I described everything about it. I told him of the orders Haight first gave me. I told him everything. I told him that "Brother McMurdy, Brother Knight and myself killed the wounded men in the wagons, with the assistance of the Indians. We killed six wounded men."

He asked me many questions, and I told him every particular, and everything that I knew. I described everything very fully. I told him what I had said against killing the women and children.

Brigham then said:

"Isaac (referring to Haight) has sent me word that if they had killed every man, woman and child in the outfit, there would not have been a drop of innocent blood shed by the brethren; for they were a set of murderers, robbers and thieves."

While I was still talking with him, some men came into his house to see him, so he requested me to keep quiet until they left. I did as he directed.

As soon as the men went out, I continued my recital. I gave him the names of every man that had been present at the massacre. I told him who killed various ones. In fact I gave him all the information there was to give.

When I finished talking about the matter, he said:

"This is the most unfortunate affair that ever befel the Church.

I am afraid of treachery among the brethren that were there. If any one tells this thing so that it will become public, it will work us great injury. I want you to understand now, that you are never to tell this again, not even to Heber C. Kimball. It must be kept a secret among ourselves. When you get home, I want you to sit down and write a long letter, and give me an account of the affair, charging it to the Indians. You sign the letter as Farmer to the Indians, and direct it to me as Indian Agent. I can then make use of such a letter to keep off all damaging and troublesome enquiries.”

I told him that I would write the letter. (I kept my word; but, as an evidence of his treachery, that same letter that he *ordered* me to write, he has given to Attorney Howard, and he has introduced it in evidence against me on my trial.)

Brigham Young knew when he got that letter just as well as I did, that it was not a true letter, and that it was only written according to his orders to throw the public off of the right trail. He *knew* that it was written simply to cast all the blame on the Indians, and to protect the brethren. In writing that letter I was still obeying my orders and earning that Celestial reward that had been promised to me.

He then said, “If only men had been killed, I would not have cared so much; but the killing of the women and children is the sin of it. I suppose the men were a hard set, but it is hard to kill women and children for the sins of the men. This whole thing stands before me like a horrid vision. I must have time to reflect upon it.”

He then told me to withdraw and call next day, and he would give me an answer. I said to him,

“President Young, the people all felt, and I know that I believed I was obeying *orders*, and acting for the good of the Church, and in strict conformity with the oaths that we have all taken to avenge the blood of the Prophets. You must either sustain the people for what they have done, or you must release us from the oaths and obligations that we have taken.”

The only reply he made was,

“Go now, and come in the morning, and I will give you an answer.”

I went to see him again in the morning. When I went in, he seemed quite cheerful. He said,

“I have made that matter a subject of prayer. *I went right to God with it*, and asked Him to take the horrid vision from my sight, *if it was a righteous thing* that my people had done in killing those people at the Mountain Meadows. God answered me, and at *once the vision was removed*. I have evidence from God that He has overruled it all for good, and the action was a righteous one and well intended.

The brethren acted from pure motives. The only trouble is they acted a *little prematurely*; they were a *little* ahead of time. I *sustain you* and all of the brethren for what they did. All that I fear is treachery on the part of some one who took a part with you, but we will look to that.”

I was again cautioned and commanded to keep the whole thing as a sacred secret, and again told to write the report as Indian Farmer, laying the blame on the Indians. That ended our interview, and I left him, and soon started for my home at Harmony.

Brigham Young was then satisfied with the purity of my motives in acting as I had done at the Mountain Meadows. Now he is doing all he can against me, but I know it is nothing but cowardice that has made him turn against me as he has at last.

....

There is another falsehood generally believed in Utah, especially among the Mormons. It is this. It has generally been reported that Brigham Young was anxious to help Judge Cradlebaugh arrest all the guilty parties. There is not one word of truth in the whole statement. Brigham Young knew the name

of every man that was in any way implicated in the Mountain Meadows Massacre. He knew just as much about it as I did, except that he did not see it, as I had seen it.

If Brigham Young had wanted one man, or fifty men, or five hundred men arrested, all he would have had to do would have been to say so, and they would have been arrested instantly. There was no escape for them if he ordered their arrest. Every man who knows anything of affairs in Utah at that time knows this is so.

It is true that Brigham made a great parade at the time, and talked a great deal about bringing the guilty parties to justice, but he did not mean a word of it—not a word. He did go South with Cradlebaugh, but he took good care that Cradlebaugh caught no person that had been in the massacre.

I know that I had plenty of notice of their coming, and so did *all the brethren*. It was one of Brigham Young’s cunning dodges to blind the government. That this is true I can prove by the statement of what he did at Cedar City while out on his trip with Judge Cradlebaugh to *investigate* the matter and *arrest* (?) the guilty parties.

Judge Cradelbaugh and his men were working like faithful men to find out all about it, but they did not learn very much. True, they got on the right track, but could not learn it all, for Brigham Young was along to see that they did not learn the facts.

While at Cedar City, Brigham preached one night, but none of the Judge’s party heard him. In his sermon, when speaking of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, he said:

“Do you know who those people were that were killed at the Mountain Meadows? I will tell you who those people were. They were fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins and children of those who killed the Saints, and drove them from Missouri, and afterwards killed our Prophets in Carthage jail. These children that the government has made such a stir about, were gathered up by the government and carried back to Missouri, to St. Louis, and letters were sent to their relatives to come and take them; but their relations wrote back that they did not want them—that they were the children of thieves, outlaws and murderers, and they would not take them, they did not wish anything to do with them, and would not have them around their houses. Those children are now in the poor house in St. Louis. And yet after all this, I am told that there are many of the brethren who are willing to inform upon and swear against the brethren who were engaged in that affair. I hope there is no truth in this report. I hope there is no such person here, under the sound of my voice. But if there is, I will tell you my opinion of you, and the fact so far as your fate is concerned. Unless you repent at once of that *unholy* intention, and *keep the secret* of all that you know, you will die a dog’s death, and be *dammèd*, and go to *hell*. I do not want to hear of any more *treachery among my people*.”

These words of Brigham Young gave great comfort to all of us who were out in the woods keeping out of the way of the officers. It insured our safety and took away our fears.

There has been all sorts of reports circulated about me, and the bigger the lie that was told the more readily it was believed.

I have told in this statement just what I did at the Mountain Meadows Massacre. The evidence of Jacob Hamblin is false in toto. Hamblin lied in every particular, so far as his evidence related to me. It is my fate to die for what I did; but I go to my death with a certainty that it cannot be worse than my life has been for the last nineteen years.

*(Mormonism Unveiled: or the Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee, 1880, pp. 213, 214, 218-254, 258, 259)*



The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admits that white settlers were involved in the Mountain Meadows Massacre:

The call, however, whatever its purport, brought to Mountain Meadows a number of white settlers from Cedar, on Thursday, the 10th of September, enough to swell the number of **whites** now there to between fifty and sixty, many of whom were but very young men. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 153)

After the discussion as to the disposition of the emigrants referred to ended, it appears that leading spirits among the white settlers who had assembled at Mountain Meadows determined upon the destruction of the emigrants; and in order that it might be accomplished without risk to themselves it was decided to decoy the emigrants from their fortified camp, disarm them and treacherously put them to death. (*Ibid.*, p. 156)

## After the Massacre

The historian Juanita Brooks gives this information:

In the meantime, before the civil authorities had been able to start an investigation, the church conducted a private one, if we are to trust their own records. The leaders had to know the truth of this affair, even though the group loyalty which they had always encouraged would not permit them to make public their findings. Through long years of experience they had developed the attitude that, right or wrong, they must stand together. . . .

Later, in his testimony at the first trial of John D. Lee, Klingensmith insisted that he visited Brigham Young in company with Lee and Hopkins, and that the three discussed the disposition of the spoil. "Let John D. Lee take care of it, in as much as he is the Indian Agent now. What you know of this affair, **say nothing about it**," he quoted Brigham Young as saying. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 120; pp. 161-162 of 1962 reprint)

While he did not order the massacre, and would have prevented it if he could, Brigham Young was **accessory after the fact**, in that he knew what had happened, and how and why it happened. Evidence of this is abundant and unmistakable, and from the most impeccable Mormon sources. . . . he understood well that their acts had grown out of loyalty to him and his cause, . . . (*Ibid.*, pp. 161-162; p. 219 of 1962 reprint)

About two weeks after the massacre John D. Lee made his report to Brigham Young. Under the date of September 29, 1857, Wilford Woodruff recorded the following in his journal:

John D. Lee also arrived from Harmony with an express and an awful tale of blood. A company of California emigrants, of about 150 men, women and children, many of them belonging to the mob in Missouri and Illinois, had been massacred. . . . Brother Lee said that he did not think there was a drop of innocent blood in their camp, for he had two of the children in his house, and he could not get but one to kneel down in prayer-time, and the other would laugh at her for doing it, and they would swear like pirates. The scene of blood has commenced, and Joseph said that we should see so much of it that it would make our hearts sick. ("Woodruff's Journal," September 29, 1857, as cited in *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 160-161)

While Woodruff claimed that the massacre was committed by Indians, Lee states that he "gave to Brigham Young a full, detailed statement of the whole affair, from first to last . . . I gave him the names of every man that had been present at the massacre. I told him who killed various ones. In fact I gave him all the information there was to give." Brigham Young, however, testified that he would not listen to all the details given by Lee:

Answer: Within some two or three months after the massacre he called at my office and . . . commenced giving an account of the massacre. I told him **to stop**, as from what I had already heard by rumor, I did not wish my feelings harrowed up with a recital of details.

(Court Record, the second Lee trial, September, 1876, Deposition of Brigham Young, as cited in *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 160)

The Mormon historian B.H. Roberts states: "According to Governor Young's deposition at the second trial of Lee, he (Governor Young) refused to hear the story in detail. . . . it is clear that Brigham Young, unfortunately, as I think, did not get the full account of the great crime" (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 160-161). Roberts, however, does admit that Jacob Hamblin—a very prominent Mormon—gave Brigham Young a full report of the massacre right after it took place:

But previous to this [the report of George A. Smith, dated August 17, 1858], and "soon after" the event, the presence of Lee and other white men at the massacre and even somewhat of their participation in it had been made known in Salt Lake City. . . .

Jacob Hamblin, a reputable witness, testified at the second Lee trial that "soon after it [the massacre] happened," he **reported to Brigham Young** and George A. Smith what Lee had told him of the affair; of **the part that white men had taken in it**; and that in greater detail than he had given it, or was able to give in his testimony in court, because he then more clearly remember it; and that **Brigham Young** said to him that "as soon as we can get a court of justice we will ferret this thing out, **but till then, don't say anything about it**." All this seems to have been **forgotten** in the Smith "report." (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 166)

While B. H. Roberts suggests that George A. Smith may have "forgotten" this important conversation with Jacob Hamblin, we feel that it is much more reasonable to believe that Smith simply did not tell the truth in his report of August 17, 1858.

Jacob Hamblin's testimony makes it very plain that Brigham Young knew all about the fact that white men were involved, yet six years after the massacre took place Brigham Young was still trying to blame the whole thing on the Indians. In a sermon delivered March 8, 1863, Brigham Young made the following statements:

. . . a company of emigrants were traveling on the route to California. Nearly all of that company were destroyed by the **Indians**. That unfortunate affair has been laid to the charge of the **whites**. A certain judge that was then in this Territory wanted the whole army to accompany him to Iron county to try the whites for the murder of that company of emigrants. . . . but to this day they have not touched the matter, **for fear the Mormons would be acquitted from the charge of having any hand in it**, and our enemies would thus be deprived of a favorite topic to talk about, when urging hostility against us. "The Mountain Meadow massacre! Only think of the Mountain Meadow massacre!!" is their cry from one end of the land to the other. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, pp. 109-110)

Juanita Brooks gives this information concerning Judge Cradlebaugh's attempt to bring the guilty parties to justice:

In April, 1859, Judge Cradlebaugh and his military escort started south, . . . The court and its bodyguard had everything against them from the beginning, for word had traveled ahead and all the suspected had gone into hiding.

That both John D. Lee and Isaac C. Haight were warned in advance is shown clearly in their diaries. . . . the Judge made out writs for some thirty-six men, . . . Of all these thirty-six writs, not one was served, and the marshal, unable to make a single arrest, wrote a formal statement to justify his failure. . . .

Forced at last to admit that they could do nothing, the Judge and his escort started back to Salt Lake City, and the local leaders came out of hiding. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 1962, pp. 173, 174, 177, 178)

Although the Mormons opposed Judge Cradlebaugh's investigation, Brigham Young tried to make it appear that it was the other way around. On June 11, 1871, Charles Walker recorded in his diary that Brigham Young

said “as to the Mountain Meadows Massacre if he had not been foiled by Judge Cradlebaugh and other federal officials, he would have hung every guilty person concerned in the bloody deed.” (“Diary of Charles Walker,” typed copy, page 30) The truth, of course, was that the Mormons under Brigham Young opposed Cradlebaugh’s investigation. Judge Cradlebaugh made the following statements concerning this matter:

Sitting as a committing magistrate, complaint after complaint was made before me of murders and robberies . . . and darkest in this appalling catalogue of blood, the cowardly, cold-blooded butchery and robbery at the Mountain Meadows. At that time there still lay all ghastly under the sun of Utah the unburied skeletons of one hundred and nineteen men, women, and children, the hapless, hopeless victims of the Mormon creed. . . . I was the first Federal judge in that part of the Territory after the occurrence. . . . I determined to visit that part of my district, and, if possible, expose the persons engaged in the massacre, which I did in the early part of the year 1859. . . . I was visited by the Indian chiefs of that section, . . . One of them told me, in the presence of the others, that after the attack had been made, a white man came to their camp with a piece of paper, which, he said, Brigham Young had sent, that directed them to go and help to whip the emigrants. . . . He said the Mormons were all painted. He said the Indians got a part of the clothing; and gave the names of John D. Lee, President Haight, and Bishop Higbee, as the big captains. . . .

While at Cedar City I was visited by a number of apostate Mormons, who gave me every assurance that they would furnish an abundance of evidence in regard to the matter, so soon as they were assured of military protection. In fact, some of the persons engaged in the act came to see me in the night, and gave a full account of the matter, intending, when protection was at hand, to become witnesses. They claimed that they had been forced into the matter by the bishops. . . .

A great portion of the property was taken to Cedar City, deposited in the tithing office, and then sold out; the bed clothes upon which the wounded had been lying, and those taken from the dead, were piled in the back room of the tithing office, and allowed to remain for so great a length of time that when I was there eighteen months after the room was still offensive.

What a commentary upon the condition of affairs in our country! Mormonism reveling upon the spoils obtained by murder, while seventeen orphan children are turned penniless upon the world. . . .

It has been said we have courts in Utah, and the question is frequently asked, why do not the courts act? The uniform testimony of the judges is to the effect that the courts are powerless. More than fifteen Federal judges who have gone to the Territory have so stated. They have again and again told you that the entire legislation of the Territory is to prevent the administration of the laws; that the **Church authorities are determined that the laws shall not be enforced** in the Federal courts; that the grand and trial jurors are Mormons, who are taught that the Mormon church laws are the higher laws, and should prevail, and who refuse, therefore, to discharge their sworn duties, and have invariably refused to punish any Mormon for an offense committed against an anti-Mormon. (“Utah and the Mormons,” a Speech of Hon. J. Cradlebaugh, in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863, as printed in Appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, February 23, 1863, pp. 122-123)

John D. Lee stated that Brigham Young went south with Cradlebaugh to try to prevent him from finding out the truth about the massacre. We have found no evidence to support this, but we do know that Young offered to “accompany” Cradlebaugh (see *Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 177). Two years after Cradlebaugh’s trip, Young visited the southern settlements. During this trip Young demonstrated that he approved of the massacre. Juanita Brooks gives this information concerning the visit:

Brigham Young rode first in his train . . . When he came to the stone monument at Mountain Meadows, he pulled out and stopped.

Everyone else stopped and all gathered around to hear what he had to say about this. At first he walked a short distance away and up the incline as though he wanted to look over the whole valley and visualize what had happened and where and how. Then he came back to the pile of stones, built into a rude pyramid some twelve feet high and crowned by a hewn cross of cedar upon which were painted the words **Vengeance is mine saith the Lord, I will repay**. A flat stone at the bottom bore the inscription, “120 men, women, and children murdered in cold blood early in Sept. 1857. From Arkansas.” And on another slab, “Erected by Company, 1st Dragoons May, 1859.”

Brigham Young walked around the monument, studied the inscriptions, and then raising his right arm to the square, he said impressively, “*Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I have taken a little of it.*” Without another word, he returned to his wagon and rode on. Riding with the company were horsemen from the south who thought they understood what he meant. One immediately threw a lasso rope around the cross, and turning his horse suddenly, jerked it down and dragged it a short distance. The others dismounted quickly and began tearing down the stones, scattering them in every direction, until before the wagon train was well on the road, the monument was demolished. . . .

For Lee this had been a rewarding experience indeed. The President had expressed approval of his mill and praised him for his industry and foresight as it was shown in his homes, yards, corrals and fields. Best of all, he had seemed to approve of his efforts. Referring to the massacre, he lamented the death of the women and children, though “under the circumstances this could not be avoided.” “The men merited their fate,” he said. As for the people who would have betrayed their brethren into the hands of their enemies, he had not language strong enough to express his scorn.

“For that thing they will be damned and go down to hell,” he thundered. “I would be glad to see one of these traitors, though I don’t suppose there is any here now. They have run away.” (*John D. Lee*, by Juanita Brooks, pp. 265-268)

### Lee’s Excommunication

John D. Lee not only served in the secret Council of 50 under Brigham Young, but he was also “adopted” into Young’s family years before the massacre took place (see *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Spring 1962, p. 112).

Juanita Brooks tells us that prior to 1870 “there had been a growing discontent among members of the church with the policy of the leaders.” Concerning one group of men she states:

Worse still, they said, Brigham Young gave public recognition to men who had participated in the Mountain Meadow massacre. The *Utah Reporter*, published in Corrine, ran a series of open letters addressed to Brigham Young, demanding that those guilty of that outrage be brought to justice. If the authorities had not specifically ordered the massacre, they were accessories after the fact by shielding the guilty. (*John D. Lee*, p. 288)

Finally, thirteen years after the massacre, Brigham Young was forced to excommunicate Lee (or at least claim that he was excommunicated). Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, once made this statement concerning the excommunication of John D. Lee:

. . .—For several years the facts relating to the tragedy were unknown, but gradually the truth leaked out and an investigation was made of the affair. John D. Lee was **excommunicated** from the Church with injunction from President Young that **under no circumstances should he ever be admitted as a member again.** (*Essentials in Church History*, p. 516)

Strange as it may seem, however, in 1961 the Mormon Church leaders reinstated John D. Lee to membership and to his former blessings. Juanita Brooks states:

Through all the eighty-four years which have elapsed



since the execution of John D. Lee, the dearest hope of his many descendants has been that his name should some day be cleared. An action taken on Thursday, April 20, 1961, has made that hope a reality for them.

On that day the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve of the Mormon Church met in a joint session and “It was the action of the Council after considering all the facts available that authorization be given for the re-instatement to membership and former blessings to John D. Lee.”

On May 8 and 9 following, the necessary ordinances were performed in the Salt Lake Temple. (*John D. Lee*, p. 376)

## Trial and Execution

After John D. Lee was excommunicated from the Mormon Church, he was arrested and brought to trial. Speaking of the trial, Mrs. Brooks states:

So the evidence piled up. The attorneys were eloquent in their recital of the lurid and horrible details, the defense insisting that while Lee was present and might have participated, he was there by command of his superiors, both military and ecclesiastical, whose orders in this time of military rule it would be death to disobey. While they admitted the facts of the massacre and all its unbelievable horror, they placed the responsibility upon the Mormon Church and its doctrine that men were justified in “avenging the blood of the Prophets,” as a part of their duty to God.

For the Mormon audience, especially the group of converts who had joined the church and emigrated to Utah later, this was a shattering and soul-shaking experience. Not having shared the Missouri and Nauvoo experiences or felt the “spirit of the times,” they simply could not believe that the church with which they had become affiliated or any of the officers in it could condone such an outrage, much less be responsible for it.

In the end, the jury could not agree upon a verdict, the eight Mormons being for acquittal and the four gentiles for conviction. Now the whole thing must be gone over again, . . . (*John D. Lee*, pp. 340-341)

In the *Church Chronology* the following is found under the date of May 11, 1876:

Thus. 11.—After a long confinement Wm. H. Dane, John D. Lee and Geo. W. Adair were admitted to bail in the respective sums of \$20,000, \$15,000 and \$10,000. (*Church Chronology*, p. 96)

Emma, John D. Lee’s wife, said that the authorities sent word for John D. Lee to jump his bonds:

Emma told that in late August a messenger arrived at Lonely Dell with word from the authorities counseling Lee to jump his bonds and leave the country. Rather than have this horrible affair rehearsed again, they would assume the full responsibility to his bondsmen. The messenger arrived too late. He came via Kanab, while Lee returned via Skutumpah, so they had missed each other and there was no way for them to get together. Thus the hand of fate reached out to cast the fatal die. (*John D. Lee*, p. 358)

In her book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Mrs. Brooks states:

The church leaders decided to sacrifice Lee only when they could see that it would be impossible to acquit him without assuming a part of the responsibility themselves. It was a case where the duties of a statesman were weighed against the loyalties of a personal friend, and the duties of the statesman, of necessity, were given precedence. To air the whole story would have done injury to the church, both among its own membership and in the eyes of the world, and this token sacrifice had to be made. Hence the farce which was the second trial of Lee. The leaders evidently felt that by placing all the responsibility squarely upon him, already doomed, they could lift the stigma from the church as a whole. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 162; pp. 219-220 of the 1962 edition)

At John D. Lee’s second trial, which Juanita Brooks calls a “farce,” he was convicted of murder in the first degree. On March

23, 1877, he was executed at the Mountain Meadows. Just before he was shot, he made this statement:

It seems I have to be made a victim—a victim must be had, and I am the victim. I am sacrificed to satisfy the feelings—the vindictive feelings, or in other words to gratify parties. . . .

I am a true believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I do not believe everything that is now being taught and practiced by Brigham Young. I do not care who hears it. . . .

I studied to make this man’s will my pleasure for thirty years. See, now, what I have come to this day!

I have been sacrificed in a cowardly, dastardly manner. I cannot help it. It is my last word—it is so.

. . . Sacrifice a man that has waited upon them, that has wandered and endured with them in the days of adversity, true from the beginnings of the Church! And I am now singled out and am sacrificed in this manner! What confidence can I have in such a man! I have none, and I don’t think my father in heaven has any. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 152; pp. 208-209 of the 1962 edition)

The teachings of Brigham Young certainly brought John D. Lee to a terrible end. Juanita Brooks observed that “John D. Lee lamented the fact that he must bequeath to his children a legacy of shame, but even he could not guess how this burden would grow with the years” (*John D. Lee*, p. 369). The Apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded the following in his journal in 1894: “It was asked if John D. Lee, a son of the mountain meadows murderer, who is a good man, and is called on a mission, should go. It was decided that he should go to England, but assume his mothers’ maiden name” (“The Daily Journal of Abraham H. Cannon,” April 26, 1894, vol. 18, p. 89).

John D. Lee’s descendants were very happy to learn that the Mormon leaders had reinstated him “to membership and to former blessings.”

## Responsibility For Massacre

William E. Berrett makes this statement concerning the Mountain Meadows Massacre:

For the deed at Mountain Meadows there is no excuse. The perpetrators were never held guiltless by the Church and the Church must not be condemned because of the vile deeds of a few of its members. (*The Restored Church*, p. 470)

In trying to clear the Mormon Church of any responsibility for the massacre, Mr. Berrett quotes a reference from the *Doctrine and Covenants* which states that it is wrong to kill. Mr. Berrett uses this quote to try to impress his readers with the idea that the Mormon Church has never sanctioned the shedding of blood. This, of course, is incorrect, for in our study of “Blood Atonement” many references were given which proved that the Mormon Church leaders were preaching the shedding of blood at the very time that the Mountain Meadows Massacre took place. The following are brief extracts from their sermons (“JD” stands for *Journal of Discourses*):

. . . have their blood spilt . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 53)  
 . . . atoned for by the blood of the man. (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 54)  
 . . . your own blood must atone for it; . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 3, p. 247)  
 . . . nearest relative must kill him! (George A. Smith, *JD*, v. 1, p. 97)  
 . . . I say kill him on the spot, . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 1, p. 108)  
 . . . you will be hewn down . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 3, p. 226)  
 . . . the penalty . . . is death on the spot. (B. Young, *JD*, v. 10, p. 110)  
 . . . their blood will surely be shed, . . . (H. C. Kimball, *JD*, v. 1, p. 375)  
 Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood?  
 (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 219)  
 . . . your blood should be spilled, . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 220)  
 . . . they will be destroyed . . . (H. C. Kimball, *JD*, v. 6, p. 126)  
 . . . cut their throats. (B. Young, *JD*, v. 2, p. 311)  
 . . . cutting people off from the earth . . . (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 53)



... put a javelin through both of them, ... (B. Young, *JD*, v. 3, p. 247)  
 ... death to both male and female. (O. Pratt, *The Seer*, p. 223)  
 ... we wipe them out of existence ... (H. C. Kimball, *JD*, v. 7, p. 19)  
 ... the heads of thieves taken off, or shot down before the public ...  
 (Orson Hyde, *JD*, v. 1, p. 73)  
 ... shed their blood. (J. M. Grant, *JD*, v. 4, p. 49)  
 ... have their blood shed, ... (J. M. Grant, *JD*, v. 4, p. 49)  
 ... let your blood be shed, ... (J. M. Grant, *JD*, v. 4, p. 51)  
 ... I will unsheath my bowie knife, ... (B. Young, *JD*, v. 1, p. 83)  
 ... spill his blood on the earth ... (B. Young, *JD*, v. 4, p. 220)  
 ... we will slay you, ... (H. C. Kimball, *JD*, v. 6, p. 351)  
 ... we will slay them. (B. Young, *JD*, v. 2, p. 322)  
 ... their heads chopped off, ... (B. Young, *JD*, v. 2, p. 186)

More references could be included, but these should be sufficient to prove that the leaders of the Mormon Church were not always opposed to the shedding of blood. Because of this they must share part of the blame for the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Juanita Brooks states: "1. While Brigham Young and George A. Smith, the church authorities chiefly responsible, did not specifically order the massacre, they did preach sermons and set up social conditions which made it possible" (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, p. 161; p. 219 of 1962 edition). On page 35 of the same book (1962 edition) Mrs. Brooks states:

Not only did George A. Smith carry significant orders to both the military and the Indians, but his preaching to the people in general was of such an inflammatory nature that it roused them to a high emotional pitch. Because of this, the fatal relationship between his visit and the massacre which followed scarcely a month later can hardly be overemphasized.

### Church Opposes Study

In the preface to her book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Juanita Brooks states:

... I was born into the church and have been raised in it. ... and have always been a loyal and active member. ... When one has served in and sacrificed for a cause over a long period of years, that cause becomes dear, ... Hence, in trying to present this subject with a desire only to tell the truth, I believe that I am doing my church a service.

Juanita Brooks' desire to tell the truth about the Mountain Meadows Massacre has not been shared by the leaders of the Mormon Church. On page 216 of her book (1962 edition) Mrs. Brooks makes the following statement:

... Charles W. Penrose wrote the account which came to be the accepted story of the church, his whole purpose being to clear the name of Brigham Young from any implications of guilt. Since that time a number of reputable Mormon scholars have begun research on the subject, only to be turned away from it for one reason or another. Two of these men have said that they discontinued because they were "counseled" with such vigor to leave it alone that they felt sure that to continue would cost them not only their positions in church schools, but their membership in the church itself.

Mrs. Brooks even criticizes Joseph Fielding Smith, who became the tenth President of the Church, for not using the information he had available when he wrote an account of the massacre. She states:

An even better illustration, perhaps is *Essentials in Church History*, by Joseph Fielding Smith. In the 1945 edition Smith devotes one chapter to the massacre, in which, without mentioning names, he can hardly find language strong enough or words vigorous enough to condemn the participants. He quotes one footnote, and one only, Bancroft's statement that it "was the crime of an individual, the crime of a fanatic of the worst stamp." Yet in the collections of the historian's office of the L.D.S. Church, records of which he is the

custodian, there is ample evidence that this was definitely **not** the crime of a single individual, nor the responsibility of only one man. Even the most superficial research would show the utter ridiculousness of such a statement.

It seems that, once having taken a stand and put forth a story, the leaders of the Mormon Church have felt that they should maintain it, regardless of all the evidence to the contrary. In their concern to let the matter die, they do not see that it can never be finally settled until it is accepted as any other historical incident, with a view only to finding the facts. To shrink from it, to discredit any who try to inquire into it, to refuse to discuss it, or to hesitate to accept all the evidence fearlessly, is not only to keep it a matter of controversy, but to make the most loyal followers doubt the veracity of their leaders in presenting other matters of history. This is especially true in dealing with college students and people trained in research. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, pp. 160-161; pp. 217-218 of the 1962 edition)

In the new edition of her book (printed in 1970), Juanita Brooks gives this information concerning the site of the Mountain Meadows Massacre:

In April, 1966, representatives of the Mormon Church purchased from Mr. Ezra Lytle the two and one-half acres upon which the monument stands. At once the leaders adopted a policy of "discouraging" visitors. On June 2, 1966, the Forest Service sign and also the Old Spanish Trail sign on the opposite side of the road disappeared. Although forest rangers at both Enterprise and Cedar City were notified, the place was still unmarked as late as December 2, which meant that for one full season, tourists searched in vain for the monument.

Nor was any work at all done on the access road to the place, so that by January, 1967, it was totally impossible for any car to reach the site. Sometimes after August 4, 1966, the picnic table in the valley was lifted out by heavy equipment and hauled away, with a report to the forest ranger at Cedar City that it had been washed down by a flood. That this report was false was amply evident to every one of the several persons who went to investigate.

By early summer of 1967 the furor of tourist groups and traveling clubs forced the County Commission to repair the road and to keep it open and passable. This they continue to do. (*The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 1970, Author's Statement—II, page xxiv)

Obviously, the Mormon Church leaders are trying to cover up the truth about the Mountain Meadows Massacre. J. Forney, who was Supt. of Indian Affairs for the Utah Territory, stated that the Mountain Meadows Massacre was "a crime that has no parallel in American history for atrocity." The Mormon Church does not want to take any responsibility for this crime, even though the leaders of the church were preaching at that time that it was not only acceptable but sometimes pleasing in the sight of the Lord for blood to be shed. Brigham Young even referred to this as a "doctrine." Brigham Young was sustained as the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator of the Mormon Church, and the people were told to follow his teachings "right or wrong." Is it any wonder, then, that after hearing Brigham Young's "doctrine" of Blood Atonement some members of the church did not see anything wrong with killing a company of emigrants?

For those interested in making a thorough study of the massacre we highly recommend Juanita Brooks' book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*.



## 34. Mormonism and Money

The Mormon Church requires 10 per cent of the income of its members for tithing. With this money the Mormon Church has become one of the richest churches in the world for its size. The *Doctrine and Covenants* threatens those who do not comply with the law of tithing with destruction. In section 64, verse 23, we read:

Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; **for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming.**

Ernest L. Wilkinson, formerly President of the Brigham Young University, threatened the members of the faculty as follows:

When I am called upon this year to pass on proposed promotions in academic rank for members of the faculty, I hope I do not have to refuse any on the ground that the nominee does not adhere in practice to one of the qualifications approved by the faculty of this institution for advancement in academic rank namely: "Adherence to the principles and teachings of the Gospel as taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," one of which is the **payment of tithing**. And I trust that such payment will be voluntary, for we do not want any person on this faculty to share his income with the Lord because of any coercion or compulsion. Should there be any member of the faculty who does not voluntarily desire to pay his tithing, **the honorable and manly thing for that person to do is to resign his position**. We shall be strong as individuals and collectively as a faculty only to the extent we exercise our free agency by freely choosing the commandments and revelations of the Lord. (*The Principle and Practice of Paying Tithing*, from an address made to the members of the B.Y.U. faculty, September 25, 1957, p. 24)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Mormon Church, made these statements concerning tithing:

We have said pay your Tithing. And we have said to the Bishops that if any man refuses to pay his Tithing, **try him for his fellowship**; and if he still refuses, **cut him off** from the Church . . .

In regard to the Law of Tithing, the Lord has given the revelation I have already referred to, and made it a law unto us, and let all who have gathered here and refuse to obey it, be disfellowshipped; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, pp. 283, 285)

We have had trouble with men who refused to pay their Tithing, but the time has now come when a man that will not pay his Tithing is not fit to be in the Church. (*Ibid.*, p. 309)

Joseph Smith would not allow a person to participate in the temple ceremony unless he paid tithing. Erastus Snow stated:

. . . the Prophet Joseph instructed the brethren in charge, to the effect that none should be allowed to participate in the privileges of the House of God excepting those who shall produce a certificate from the General Church Recorder, certifying to the fact that they had paid up their tithing. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, p. 337)

The Mormon bishops are still instructed to ask those who are

seeking a temple recommend if they pay their tithing. This appears as question number three in the Temple Recommend Book.

### Church Funds For Private Gain

It is a well known fact that a person who has money to invest stands a very good chance of becoming rich. Brigham Young and other Mormon Church leaders used the church funds and became wealthy. The Mormon writer Leonard J. Arrington stated:

Brigham Young and other church authorities, when need required it, drew on the tithing resources of the church, and at a later date repaid part or all of the obligation in money, property, or services. **No interest seems to have been paid** for the use of these funds. . . . This ability to draw, almost at will, on church as well as his own funds, was a **great advantage to Brigham Young** and was certainly one of the reasons for his **worldly success**...while Brigham Young was probably the **largest borrower** of funds from the trustee-in-trust, he was certainly **not** the only one. ("The Settlement of the Brigham Young Estate," 1877-1879, Reprinted from the *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 21, number 1, February 1952, pp. 7, 8)

Brigham Young's practice of using church funds for private speculation may have led others to do the same. In a sermon delivered June 15, 1856, Brigham Young stated:

I have **proof** ready to show that **Bishops** have taken in thousands of pounds in weight of tithing which they have never reported to the General Tithing Office. We have documents to show that Bishops have taken in hundreds of bushels of wheat, and only a small portion of it has come into the General Tithing Office; they **stole it to let their friends speculate upon**. If any one is doubtful about this, will you not call on me to produce my proof before a proper tribunal? I should take pleasure in doing so, but we **pass over** such things in mercy to the people. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 342)

An organization which takes in as much money as the Mormon Church is bound to present temptation to those who take care of the money. During the last few years a great deal of money has been stolen by employees of the Mormon Church. In one instance more than half a million dollars was stolen by two of the church's bookkeepers. On January 29, 1969, the *Salt Lake Tribune* printed an article which contained the following statements:

Preliminary hearing for two men charged in connection with the theft of more than half a million dollars from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints started Tuesday, . . .

Kay and Darrow are accused of thefts occurring over a period from Sept. 18, 1967, to Oct. 10, 1968. Police have recovered **more than \$72,000** in cash and cancelled checks **totaling \$604,199.65**.

On January 27, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that both these men were found guilty of taking "more than a **half million dollars** from the church offices. . . ."

At about this same time another theft of nearly \$72,000 was reported. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for May 22, 1969, said that “the former manager of the credit union operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” was arraigned “on two charges of forgery and one of grand larceny in connection with the theft of nearly \$72,000 from the LDS Church Office Credit Union.”

### Young Becomes Rich

Just after Joseph Smith’s death, Brigham Young made this statement: “I want my support and living by the church hereafter, so that I can give my whole time to the business of the church” (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 257). In 1851, however, Brigham Young claimed that he did not receive anything from the church. Hubert Howe Bancroft states:

In July 1859 Horace Greeley visited Brigham, who said: “I am the only person in the church who has not a regular calling apart from the church’s service, and I never received one farthing from her treasury. If I obtain anything from the tithing-house, I am charged with and pay for it, just as any one else would . . . I am called rich, and consider myself worth \$250,000; but no dollar of it was ever paid me by the church, nor for any service as a minister of the everlasting gospel.” (*History of Utah*, p. 351)

Although Brigham Young claimed that his riches came because of his ability, the evidence shows that he used his position as President of the Church to become rich. We have already shown that he used tithing funds for purposes of speculation and did not pay interest to the church, and Orlando W. Powers, who served as associate justice of the supreme court of Utah, claimed that Young even had access to funds in the treasury of Salt Lake City:

After the Liberal Party had secured control of the city of Salt Lake, I procured an investigation to be made of the city records, which had been written up by the Mormon city recorders from the earliest time, . . .

The leading officials of the church seem to have had access to the city’s treasury. On one occasion Brigham Young borrowed from the city of Salt Lake \$10,000 . . . In 1873 he borrowed \$14,000. The records show that other leading church officials at times borrowed from the city. (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 804-805)

John Cradlebaugh, who served as associate justice of the Second Judicial District in early Utah, made these comments about Brigham Young:

Brigham himself is king, priest, lawgiver, and chief polygamist. . . . He selects for himself the choicest spots of land in the Territory, and they yield him their productions, none daring to interfere.

The timber in the mountains for a great distance from Salt Lake City belongs to him, and it is only by delivering each third load, as he shall order, that the gates are open and the citizens allowed to pass up City creek canon to obtain it. . . . The cattle on a thousand hills exhibit his brand. He fixes his pay—he pays himself. (“Utah and the Mormons,” a Speech of Hon. J. Cradlebaugh, delivered in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863, as printed in Appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, February 23, 1863, pp. 121-122)

The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft gives this information:

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the proceedings of the assembly is the liberality with which valuable timber and pasture lands and water privileges were granted to favored individuals. By act of December 9, 1850, the control of City Creek and canon was granted to Brigham Young, who was required to pay therefor the sum of five hundred dollars. A month later the right to the timber in the canons of the mountain range that lay to the west of the Jordan was bestowed on George A. Smith. To Ezra T. Benson was granted the control of the timber in the canons and mountains at the entrance of Tooele Valley, of the canons between that point and Salt Lake Valley, and of the waters of Twin and Rock Springs in Tooele Valley. To Heber C. Kimball were given the waters of North Mill Creek

canon—all these grants, with the exception of the first, being made without consideration. (*History of Utah*, p. 451)

On page 675 of the same book, Bancroft says that “Brigham was certainly a millionaire, . . .” On page 674 we find this interesting information: “In the records of the internal revenue office at Washington his total income for 1870 is stated at \$25,500, in 1871 at \$111,680, and in 1872 at \$39,952.” Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information concerning Brigham Young: “In Utah he longed for more wives, additional converts, and greater power. In God’s and his church’s name he made the Great Basin his private possession” (*The Lion of the Lord*, p. 139).

On page 247 of the same book, Hirshon states:

Within months of his migrations to Utah a thousand dollars in debt, Young by his own admission was rich. “Before I had been one year in this place,” he bragged in 1850, “the wealthiest man who came from the mines, Father Rhodes, with seventeen thousand dollars could not buy the possessions I had made in one year!” During the 1860’s the prophet’s personal income averaged \$32,000 a year, and in the 1870 census he declared personal property worth \$102,000 and real estate valued at \$1,010,600.

Brigham Young himself made the following statements:

In the early history of this Church, Joseph Smith was accused of being a speculator. So far as I am concerned, I never denied being a speculator; for in one sense of the word, it is one of the greatest speculations ever entered into by man. In building up the kingdom of God, I am decidedly **for self**, and so are you. If you wish to obtain wealth, power, glory, excellency, and exaltation of every kind, be for God and truth, and he will give to you more than your hearts can conceive of. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 155)

I made a statement yesterday, which I can make again with all propriety—that in my judgment it would take more than I have got to pay my back Tithing, and **I have got as much, probably, as any man in the Church.** (*Ibid.*, vol. 16, p. 70)

I have about as many buildings as anyone in this Territory, . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 17, p. 362)

Brigham Young once said:

I remarked that I should count myself a poor hand to dictate this people and hold the position I occupy in the providence of God, unless I was capable of maintaining myself and family without assistance from the Church, though I have had a great deal given to me by the members of the Church. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 346)

While it is probably true that a great deal was given to Brigham Young by members of the church, there is evidence to show that Young could be very demanding in his request for gifts. In a letter to Samuel Brannan, Mr. Young stated:

If you want to continue to prosper, do not forget the Lord’s treasury, lest He forget you; for with the liberal; the Lord is liberal. And when you have settled with the treasury, I want you to remember, that Bro. Brigham has long been destitute of a home and suffered heavy losses and incurred great expense in searching out a location and planting the church in this place, and he wants you to send him a **present of twenty thousand dollars in gold dust**, to help him in his labors. This is but a trifle when gold is so plenty, but it will do me much good at this time.

I hope that Bro. Brannan will remember that, when he has complied with my request, my council will not be equal with me unless you **send \$20,000 more** to be divided between Bros. Kimball and Richards, who like myself are straitened; **a hint to the wise is sufficient**, so when this is accomplished, you will have our united blessing, and our hearts will exclaim “God bless Bro. Brannan and give him four fold, for all he has given us.”

Now Bro. Brannan if you will deal justly with your fellows and deal out with liberal heart and open hands, making a righteous use of all your money, the Lord is willing you should accumulate the rich treasures of the earth and the good things of time in abundance; but should you withhold,



when the Lord says give; your hopes and pleasing prospects will be blasted in an hour you think not of—and no arm can save” (Letter by Brigham Young, “Journal History,” April 5, 1849, pp. 3-4, as cited in *Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 191).

Harold Schindler made this comment concerning Brigham Young’s letter to Samuel Brannan: “. . . Young’s letter smacked more of a demand than a request” (*Ibid.*, p. 191).

Brigham Young’s worldly example with regard to riches has had a very bad effect on the Mormon leaders who have followed him.

### Joseph F. Smith’s Testimony

In the *Reed Smoot Case*, Joseph F. Smith, the sixth President of the Mormon Church, gave the following testimony:

Mr. Tayler. What is your business?

Mr. Smith. My principle business is that of president of the church.

Mr. Tayler. In what other business are you engaged?

Mr. Smith. I am engaged in numerous other businesses.

Mr. Tayler. What?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institution.

Mr. Tayler. Of what other corporations are you an officer?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of the State Bank of Utah, another institution.

Mr. Tayler. What else?

Mr. Smith. Zions Savings Bank and Trust Company.

Mr. Tayler. What else?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of the Utah Sugar Company.

Mr. Tayler. What else?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of the Consolidated Wagon and Machine Company.

Mr. Tayler. What else?

Mr. Smith. There are several other **small** institutions with which I am associated.

Mr. Tayler. Are you associated with the Utah Light and Power Company?

Mr. Smith. I am.

Mr. Tayler. In what capacity?

Mr. Smith. I am a director and **president** . . .

Mr. Tayler. A director and the president?

Mr. Smith. Yes, sir.

Mr. Tayler. Had you that in mind when you classified the others as small concerns?

Mr. Smith. No, Sir; I had not that in mind.

Mr. Tayler. That is a large concern?

Mr. Smith. That is a large concern.

Mr. Tayler. Are you an officer of the Salt Lake and Los Angeles Railroad Company?

Mr. Smith. I am.

Mr. Tayler. What?

Mr. Smith. **President** and director.

Mr. Tayler. Of what else are you **president**?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of the Salt Air Beach Company.

Mr. Tayler. What else, if you can recall?

Mr. Smith. **I do not recall just now.**

Mr. Tayler. What relation do you sustain to the Idaho Sugar Company?

Mr. Smith. I am a director of that company and also the **president** of it.

Mr. Tayler. Of the Inland Crystal Salt Company?

Mr. Smith. Also the **same position** there.

Mr. Tayler. The Salt Lake Dramatic Association?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of that and also a director.

Mr. Tayler. Are you president of any other corporation there?

Mr. Smith. **I do not know. Perhaps you can tell me. I do not remember any more just now.**

Mr. Tayler. It would seem that the number has grown so large that it would be an undue tax upon your memory to charge you with naming them all.

Mr. Tayler. What relation do you sustain to the Salt Lake Knitting Company? Did I ask you ask you about it?

Mr. Smith. No, sir; you did not.

Mr. Tayler. The Salt Lake Knitting Company?

Mr. Smith. I am **president** of it, and also a director.

Mr. Tayler. The Union Pacific Railway Company?

Mr. Smith. I am a director.

Mr. Tayler. Are you an official of any mining companies?

Mr. Smith. Yes, sir.

Mr. Tayler. What?

Mr. Smith. I am the vice-president of the Bullion, Beck and Champion Mining Company.

Mr. Tayler. The *Deseret News*?

Mr. Smith. No, sir.

Mr. Tayler. You have no business relation with that?

Mr. Smith. No, sir.

Mr. Tayler. Is the *Deseret News* the organ of the church?

Mr. Smith. Well, I suppose it is in some sense the organ of the church. It is not opposed to the church, at least.

Mr. Tayler. It has for years published, has it not, at the head of its columns, that it is the organ of the church, or the official organ of the church?

Mr. Smith. Not that I know of.

Mr. Tayler. Do you know who own it?

Mr. Smith. How is that?

Mr. Tayler. Do you know who own it?

Mr. Smith. I know who owns the building that it is in.

Mr. Tayler. Who owns the building in which it is published?

Mr. Smith. The church.

Mr. Tayler. The church?

Mr. Smith. Yes, sir.

Mr. Tayler. Tell us what you know about the owners of that newspaper.

Mr. Smith. It has been for a number of years past owned by a company—an incorporated company.

Mr. Tayler. What is the name of the company?

Mr. Smith. The *Deseret News* Publishing Company.

Mr. Tayler. Do you know who its officers are?

Mr. Smith. Now, it is not owned by that company.

Mr. Tayler. Oh, it is not?

Mr. Smith. No; it is not.

Mr. Tayler. What do you know—

Mr. Smith. But I say for years it was owned by a company of that kind.

Mr. Tayler. What do you know about its present ownership?

Mr. Smith. I presume that the present ownership is in the church.

Mr. Tayler. You suppose the present owner is the church?

Mr. Smith. Yes, sir; the church.

Mr. Tayler. I do not want to have any misconstruction put upon your use of the word “presume” because you do not know that it is so owned?

Mr. Smith. I really do not know so that I could tell you positively.

Mr. Tayler. Who would know?

Mr. Smith. I presume I could find out.

Mr. Tayler. Could you find out before you leave Washington?

Mr. Smith. Perhaps so.

(*Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, pp. 81, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88)

Some time later Joseph F. Smith testified as follows:

Mr. Tayler. In what form does your church have title to the *Deseret News* property?

Mr. Smith. It owns the deed.

Mr. Tayler. I am speaking now of the newspaper, not the building.

Mr. Smith. The press; yes. I would like to state that when I was asked that question before, Mr. Tayler, I was not aware of the fact that I have since learned from my counsel here that during the trusteeship of Lorenzo Snow the *Deseret News* plant was transferred from the *Deseret News Company* to Lorenzo Snow, trustee, in trust. . . .

Mr. Tayler. So that it is now in you as trustee in trust?

Mr. Smith. Now **I own it as trustee in trust**. Furthermore, I will say that I have discovered since yesterday that there is published on the second or third page of the *Deseret News* the statement that it is the organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, . . . (*The Reed Smoot Case*, vol. 1, p. 158)

### Over \$1,000,000 a Day

Joseph F. Smith's testimony was given about seventy years ago. Since that time the Mormon Church has become even more involved in business. The following is taken from an article which appeared in *Newsweek*:

The biggest commercial enterprise in the West, excepting only the massive Bank of America in California, is a strictly non-commercial organization called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, better known as the Mormons. . . . income pours in from the church's vast collection of business and real-estate investments, . . . All told, the cash flow reaches an estimated **\$1 million a day**—enough to finance the Mormon's schools, missionary work, temple-building, and other church expenses, and still leave millions to plow back into other worthy commercial investments. . . .

But even true believers might be surprised by the latest investment, announced last week in New York. The Mormon church purchased (for \$1.3 million) a plot of land in the heart of Mid-town Manhattan as a site for a "30-or 40-story" skyscraper—to include a chapel, auditorium, library, church administrative office, along with offices or apartments for public rental. . . . Moyle believes just as firmly that "the church can do anything anyone else can do" in the way of investing. . . . the church . . . is now putting up a brand-new \$3.6 million suburban outlet for its Z C M I store. It is building a seventeen-story annex on the Hotel Utah, . . . (*Newsweek*, "Latter-Day Profits," January 22, 1962, pp. 67-68)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart seems willing to admit that the church brings in more than a **million** dollars a day:

Today the LDS Church is in excellent financial condition, having one of the greatest incomes of any private organization in the United States. **More than a million dollars per day** in tithing and other funds pour continuously into its treasury. (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 183)

The records which show where the tithing is spent are kept secret from the Mormon people. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of Brigham Young University, made this statement:

Dr. Talmage told me that he showed this man [R. C. Webb] even the records where the tithing money went, which is something **even you cannot get**, except for your own accounts, today, but he felt inspired to do it. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., p. 6)

Neil Morgan wrote the following in an article entitled "Utah: How Much Money Hath The Mormon Church?":

The church has attained—through faithful tithes and shrewd investments and business operations—a spectacular wealth. It is becoming, if it is not already, the richest church of its size in the world. Unquestionably it controls the greatest aggregation of capital in the states of the Rocky Mountain area. . . . this thriving empire of Zion . . . encompasses at least seventy-one major pieces of downtown Salt Lake City commercial property owned by the church, and a hefty number of the city's businesses. . . . Until recent years, the annual public statement by the church itemized disbursements; they soared above \$55,000,000. In more recent years disbursements **have not been made public**. The income of the church has not been announced in any recent public report. . . .

The reticence of the Mormon church to discuss its wealth is understandable. Most Mormons are people of modest income, whose rigid ten percent tithing is not the end of their financial obligation to the church. They give heavily of their time and remaining funds to the construction of temples and churches, and to the church welfare program. A poor Mormon farmer near the hamlets of Moroni, Ephraim or Manti—educated to the high standards of his church—might occasionally bristle at some family sacrifice necessary to meet his tithing if the extent of church wealth were known to him. (*Esquire*, August, 1962, pp. 86-91)

Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of the Seventy, tries to justify the church's involvement in business by stating:

Since the kingdom of God on earth is concerned with temporal as well as eternal salvation, there are of course banking, insurance, industrial, agricultural and other business enterprises in which the Church has an interest. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, p. 141)

In 1960 the Mormon Church leaders announced some fantastic building plans. The headline of the *Deseret News* for October 7, 1960, read: "Pres. McKay Opens Conference; Vast Building Plans Disclosed." In the article which followed these statements appeared:

A dramatic multi-million dollar building program for the Church . . . was disclosed Friday.

The program, covering a period of many years, calls for:

—Erection of a 38-story office building on the administrative square bordered by State, South Temple, Main and North Temple Streets.

—Construction of a modernistic 11-story Archives Building on the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and North Temple Streets. . . .

—Building a larger . . . Temple Annex building . . .

—Addition of a 17-story annex to the Hotel Utah . . .

A plaza with a fountain will be centered in the block behind the new Administration Building.

A reflecting pool on an axis across Main Street from the Temple will mirror the historic building.

To tower 500 feet above ground level, the new office building will be the first structure on the block to go up, Mr. Mendenhall said. . . . the skyscraper will provide more than a million square feet of office space, with 30,000 square feet on each floor.

It will require about 20 elevators, Mr. Mendenhall said. . . . (*Deseret News*, October 7, 1960)

According to the *Deseret News* for May 6, 1961, the Mormon Church had even greater plans. Not only were they going to build a 38-story office building, but also a new Genealogical building which was "expected to be the largest genealogical research center in the world," and the 11-story Archives Building had been increased to 15 stories.

The church has gone ahead with the skyscraper, but some of the other plans appear to have been either postponed or canceled. The skyscraper is not as tall as originally announced, but it is certainly expensive. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for December 12, 1971, contained this information:

The new office building of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . . is the biggest building in Utah, and certainly bigger than any building in Idaho or Wyoming . . .

The 28-story building cost \$31 million. Setbacks at the 26th level will contain landscaped observation decks. . . . Gardens will be installed on the decks.

The reader will notice that this skyscraper cost over a **million dollars a floor**.

Wallace Turner gives this information regarding the church's involvement in business matters:

In all particulars, it is difficult to discuss the financial status of the LDS church. Precise information is lacking. The church has a policy of secrecy on financial matters that

makes it difficult to check the accuracy of reports picked up from non-church sources. . . .

Most Mormons try hard to pay the tithe . . . They are a devout people, and their religion demands so much else of them that the sacrifice of the tithe can be carried without flinching.

The economic impact of paying is community-wide. Its meaning can be illustrated by one example given to me by a highly reliable source in Salt Lake City. He spoke of a small Mormon settlement with which he was acquainted. He said that of the two score families, seven were on relief and three or four tithed only occasionally, leaving about twenty-nine or thirty families to carry the load. Yet the tithing income to the general authorities in Salt Lake City from this village was about \$9000 a year.

This is very important money. It is about all that the relatively poor people of that little settlement could afford for outside investment. When they surrendered this for the good of their souls, it meant that an equivalent amount of work was not going to be done somewhere in the social-economic structure of their village. It meant that they could not invest in new machines, new homes, or even in stock ownership. Such figures must be multiplied many times, and such examples repeated over and over as the church each year amasses its millions and millions.

What happens to all of this money? Only a dim picture filters through to the outside world of the decision-making process. Even the network of pipelines through which the money goes out is not well understood except in the top reaches of the LDS Establishment. . . .

No one outside the top administrative levels of the church can say in detail where the money goes. . . . It costs something to operate the bureaucracy in Salt Lake City, but not so much as might be expected, since so much work is done for nothing, and much of the rest is done at prices far below the going rate for the talent involved. . . .

There are many other church-owned properties in downtown Salt Lake City. By one reliable estimate, the church owns thirty acres of downtown property. Periodically, a struggle can be seen by which the Saints seek to recover a bit of land alienated from their control. The Zions Securities Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of the church, takes the lead in these operations. Spokesmen for the church always point out that Zions Securities pays taxes on what it earns.

In addition to the Hotel Utah, the church owns the Hotel Temple Square and the Hotel Utah Motor Lodge. Not long ago it turned the New Ute Hotel into a hostelry for missionaries. It owns the new Kennecott Building on the site of a bank which the church once owned . . .

In addition to the network of chapels, office buildings, and other real estate holdings which are the dominant realty interest of Salt Lake City, the Saints also have a set of business holdings that are essential to supplemental programs of the church. These include a newspaper, the *Deseret News*, . . . KSL radio and KSL-TV, both wholly owned by the church . . . and interests in KBOI-TV in Boise, KID in Idaho Falls, and KIRO radio and KIRO-TV in Seattle . . .

It is through the *Deseret News* that the LDS church holds 300,000 shares of stock in the Times Mirror Corporation, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, one of the nation's most important newspapers and by far the best published in the West. There are about 5,500,000 shares of common stock so that the church's ownership amounts to about 5.5 per cent. . . . The Mormon ownership traces back to the purchase by the *Times* and the *News* of the Hawley Pulp and Paper Company at Oregon City, Oregon, after World War II. This venerable paper plant was renamed Publishers' Paper, built up, and has become a major source of newsprint. Early in 1965 Times Mirror Corporation exchanged the large block of its stock for the 32.3 per cent of Publishers' Paper owned by the *News*. This made the LDS church an important stockholder in the *Los Angeles Times*. In early 1966, the stock was worth approximately \$18,675,000. . . .

The church also owns the Deseret Bookstores which provide an outlet for the various publications of the church, as well as for

commercially printed books of other publishers. . . . the nineteen-story Kennecott Building was opened in 1965, built by the church to be filled with offices of the copper mining company. . . . The church owns about 60 per cent of Utah and Idaho Sugar Company; . . . The church owned about 15 per cent of Amalgated and traded it for a block of U. & I. owned by Floyd Odum, the investor and business manager. Odum sold his Amalgated, but the church kept its U. & I. so that today it dominates the beet sugar company.

The Mormons own the Beneficial Life Insurance Company. . . . The church also has the Home Fire Insurance Company. . . .

Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI) goes back to the foundations of the religious colony in the desert. Today, it is one of the most progressive department stores in Salt Lake City . . . The church owns about a third of the stock, which is enough for control. But the management is not controlled by the church in the same sense that it controls, say, the *Deseret News*.

In 1952 the church took an interesting step to assure the *News* of a clear field in the afternoon newspaper market in Salt Lake City. It bought out the competing *Telegram* which had been operated by the morning *Salt Lake Tribune*, owned by generations of Catholics and once viciously anti-Mormon. . . . Soon after this purchase, the *Tribune* and the *Deseret News* formed a joint printing, circulation and advertising solicitation company—the Newspaper Agency Corporation . . .

At one time the church owned about two-thirds of the stock of the Hotel Utah. This other stock was called in and bought up a year or so before the hotel corporation borrowed \$4 million from Salt Lake banks in the 1960s for a modernization program. . . .

Over the years, the Saints have acquired huge ranch properties, some of which are operated as a part of the welfare program, some of which are not. The Canadian ranches include about 80,000 acres near Cardston, Alberta, where thousands of head of feeding cattle are kept. The proceeds go toward costs of new chapels and other building programs in Canada. Originally, the ranches were bought because tithing money from the thousands of Canadian Saints could not be taken out of Canada. . . .

The Deseret Farms in Florida were bought in 1950. This amounted to about 220,000 acres of swampland. The land was drained. The insect pests were destroyed. About 30,000 head of cattle were put for feeding. (*The Mormon Establishment*, Boston, 1966, pp. 105-119)

However, no one should mistake the underlying truth that in Salt Lake City one must get along with the LDS church in order to be reasonably successful in big enterprise. It is unquestionably true that the major corporations doing business in Utah always have an eye cocked and an ear turned for messages from the First Presidency. . . . There are prominent men in the capital of the Saints who were born into the LDS church but have not set foot inside one of its chapels for decades. Yet, they daily deal in the currency of being Mormons. They would never withdraw from the church, for to do so would be disastrous to their business operations. . . .

When all of these things have been said; when the position of the church against credit and in favor of careful financial management has been enunciated from the top; when the glorious achievements in philanthropy, education and health care of the Saints have been set forth—

After all of these, there still remains a computation printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune* in May, 1965. Utah's bankruptcy rate jumped in a year by 38 per cent, while the national increase was only 10 per cent. The bankruptcy proceedings in Utah wiped out debts of about \$10 million that year. There was one bankruptcy for every 714 persons, compared to one nationally for every 1100 persons. Almost all of these were filed for individuals who were overly extended in installment buying.

Finally, one of the financial experts I talked with said that he sees the Mormon country as a debtor area, kept that way by the heavy financial demands of the church on its people. . . .



One Mormon in an important administrative job said that one year he kept track of the demands on his money. He found that if he had met all of them, it would have amounted to 35 per cent of his income for the church and its related activities.

Another man of equal stature in the same field said he could not imagine such a figure would be accurate. He doubted if it could be much over 15 per cent. Certainly, he said, no higher than 20 per cent.

“Unless,” he qualified, “they were building some new meeting houses in his ward. He would be expected to contribute heavily.”

Yet a different Mormon told of borrowing \$500 which it took him a long time to repay. This was the amount he was told to contribute to a new church building. It was proper for him to borrow his contribution but improper for the LDS ward to borrow.

He since has quit going to church. (*Ibid.*, pp. 133-136)

On January 4, 1969, the Church Section of the *Deseret News* printed an article in which the following appeared:

An agreement in principle to purchase the corporate stock of Deseret Farms of Florida, Inc., has been entered into between The GAC Corp., a multi-million-dollar diversified eastern U.S. firm, and Zions Securities Corp., real estate arm of the Church. . . . The proposed purchase price would be in the neighborhood of \$100 million.

The Church property consists of approximately 260,000 acres, including buildings, timberlands, citrus groves and 60,000 head of cattle, and has been up for sale almost three years.

The *Deseret News*, Church Section, for February 7, 1970, however, announced that the “sale of some 265,000 acres of land owned by Deseret Farms of Florida, Inc., in central Florida has been cancelled.”

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for November 15, 1970, gave this interesting information concerning the church’s Zions Securities Corporation:

In the founding days of Salt Lake City . . . the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints founded and funded many commercial enterprises.

By the 1920s, however, the church leadership deemed it wise to separate the ecclesiastical from the temporal.

Thus was created Zions Securities Corp., one of several semi-autonomous enterprises that conduct their dealings with the church—at arm’s length distance. . . .

Vice president and general manager of Zions Securities Corp. is 53-year-old J. Howard Dunn, . . .

As the chief operating officer, Mr. Dunn runs Zions as any other executive runs a corporation—more or less free to make his own operating decisions within certain guidelines set down by the church’s First Presidency. . . .

Zions Securities Corp. owns the Kennecott Building, the Salt Lake Industrial Center, the Eagle Gate Apartments and ZCMI and is the developer and owner of the new ZCMI Center. . . .

It owns 20,000 acres of farm land in Florida. It also is owner and manager of the Village of Laie in Hawaii, site of the Church College of Hawaii and the Polynesian Cultural Center.

It also owns substantial acreage in the downtown area of Salt Lake City, . . . Zions employs 130 persons locally. In addition it has about 25 to 30 employe[e]s in Hawaii. . . .

While the corporation is concerned with earnings, this is not an end in itself. Its ownership of lands in the downtown area is in part calculated to assure the qualitative land use and development that will complement the city—the world center for the church. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, November 15, 1970)

Zions Securities Corp. recently purchased the fourteen-story J.C. Penney Building: “Though ZUB remains the landlord, it sold the \$7.5 million building to Zions Securities Corp., real estate arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, November 3, 1971).

On May 28, 1969, the *Salt Lake Tribune* printed the following concerning a shopping mall planned for the ZCMI block:

ZCMI President Harold H. Bennett Tuesday unveiled preliminary plans for a major downtown shopping mall in the ZCMI block. . . .

Mr. Bennett said ZCMI would be a tenant in the mall and that the development is being handled by Zions Securities Corp., the real estate arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The development will center about an interior mall and will have some 70 stores. It will also provide parking for 2,000 cars. . . . (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 28, 1969)

ZCMI had a very good year in 1970. The *Deseret News* for May 1, 1971, reported:

ZCMI increased its sales by 17 per cent and its after-tax profits by 26.4 per cent last year, the department store’s annual report showed today.

The report said sales amounted to \$36,440,268 compared with \$31,147,168 in 1969. . . .

The company has main offices in downtown Salt Lake City and branch stores in Ogden, the Cottonwood Mall, and the Valley Fair Shopping Center. It plans to be in a new 163,000 square-foot store in an Orem shopping center by fall, 1972.

Concerning the downtown ZCMI project . . . the company said demolition of old structures should begin this June. . . .

The report was signed by President Joseph Fielding Smith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who is board chairman, and by Harold M. Bennett, who is president. (*The Deseret News*, May 1, 1971)

The plans for expanding ZCMI had originally included “a 20-story office tower,” but the *Salt Lake Tribune* for August 31, 1971, says that it will be a 27-story building:

Zions Securities Corp. has decided to include construction of a 27-story high-rise office building as part of the ZCMI center construction plan, . . .

An apparent low bid of \$36,652,000 for construction of the center, including the tower, was submitted . . .

The tower would provide about 300,000 square feet of office space for lease. Estimated cost of the tower would be about \$9 million.

On August 7, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

NORTH SALT LAKE—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has signed a letter of intent to purchase the Valley Music Hall for an undisclosed sum. . . .

The theater-in-the-round was originally valued at \$1.5 million . . . and was hailed as the largest of its kind in the world. . . .

If the sale is approved, the church would use the building for a regional meeting center of church-related programs, according to N. Eldon Tanner, . . .

The sale also would include 10 acres of land, including a 1,500-car parking lot, and option for 10 additional acres.

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for November 2, 1971, disclosed that the church’s Zions Securities Corp. owns the Lyric Theater: “The theatre and three adjacent structures housing an electric shop, antique shop and small hotel are owned by Zions Securities Corp.”

Several years ago the Mormon Church purchased the Forest Dale Golf Course property from Salt Lake City. This purchase caused a great deal of controversy at the time, and according to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, some city officials were displeased with the arrangement:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent a check for \$6,850 as final payment to Salt Lake City for the Forest Dale Golf Course property, 2400-9th East.

The golf course property was sold in an agreement with the city and Corporation of the President of the LDS Church Jan. 14, 1959. . . .

The golf course was sold to the church by the city because church officials had proposed construction of a junior college on the property. But since that time no construction was ever started and the church later leased the golf course to the city for \$4,500 per year. . . .

Mayor J. Bracken Lee told the commission he had always desired that the city buy the golf course back. But, he said, it appears this is going to be impossible. . . .

Public Safety Commissioner James L. Barker Jr.

said the church should build a college or let the city repurchase the land for a similar amount for which it paid. He said it was sold to allow the church to build the college and it certainly would not have been sold to any private developers. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 16, 1970)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for December 16, 1971, announced that the Mormon Church had finally decided to sell the Forest Dale Golf Course back to the city:

The Church [sic] of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has agreed to sell Forest Dale Golf Course back to the city for \$750,000, . . .

The city has been attempting for years to repurchase the nine-hole course. The church bought it from the city in 1959 for \$567,680 . . . The city has been renting the facility for \$4,500 a year.

The Mormon Church has apparently had some coal properties for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 7, 1971, reported that “Utah Power & Light Co. disclosed Monday that it has signed an option agreement with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to buy church coal properties near Orangeville, Emery County.”

The *Deseret News*, Church Section, for January 9, 1971, printed an article which contains the following statements:

Purchase of a 25,000 square-foot building site near New York City’s Lincoln Center has been announced by the First Presidency. . . .

The First Presidency reported a study is currently in progress to determine the best structural use to make of the site in light of the needs for a church facility and the conditions in the real estate market in New York City in general and in Lincoln Center in particular. . . .

A visitor’s center to acquaint interested persons with the doctrines, practices, cultural activities, and history of the Church, together with the offices of the Eastern States Mission also may be included in the new church facility. . . . church leaders noted their pleasure at having obtained a location in the cultural center of New York City . . .

This is the second time the Church has purchased a parcel of land in downtown New York City. In . . . 1962, the First Presidency announced that the Church had purchased a parcel of land in downtown New York City . . .

The announcement then said a 35 to 40-story building would be constructed for use by the Church . . . as well as leasing the rest of the building for offices and apartments.

The plans for the building didn’t materialize and the property was later sold. (*Deseret News*, January 9, 1971)

The Mormon Church owns the majority of the stock in the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, and the President of the Mormon Church also serves as chairman of the board. On January 25, 1971, the *Wall Street Journal* announced that the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company was to be involved in an antitrust suit:

Three sugar buyers have leveled civil antitrust charges against Amalgamated Sugar Co. and Utah-Idaho Sugar Co. Utah-Idaho Sugar is 50.5% owned by the Mormon Church.

The action was filed in Federal District Court in Salt Lake City . . .

The antitrust action accuses Amalgamated and Utah-Idaho of conspiring to fix the price of sugar and sustain and fix artificial freight charges, in violation of the Sherman Act. . . .

The suit further alleges that the defendant companies, in violation of the Robinson-Patman Act, discriminated, against buyers in 16 Western states by charging “phantom freight” on sugar shipments. Phantom freight is a term used to designate a freight charge that is higher than the actual delivery cost.

According to the complaint, the defendants used a “multiple-basing point system” whereby a buyer in Salt Lake City, for example, paid a prespecified freight charge regardless of where the shipment actually originated. (*The Wall Street Journal*, January 25, 1971)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for June 30, 1971, gave the following information concerning the Utah-Idaho Sugar Co:

Utah-Idaho Sugar Co. announced Tuesday it will enlarge its Moses Lake, Wash., factory, making it the largest in the United States. . . .

Stockholders also approved acquisition of the Prior Land Co. in Yakima, Wash., in anticipation of long-range land development by the company, U-I now has diversified farming operations in Idaho and Washington which have proven profitable above expectations, Mr. Cannon said. . . .

He said that company counsel has not yet fully researched and answered the antitrust action on sugar pricing filed against U-I and Amalgamated Sugar Co., . . .

The company is held 52 percent by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . .

President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was re-elected chairman of the board. President Smith was not at the meeting, however. President N. Eldon Tanner, second counselor in the First Presidency, and U-I vice chairman, conducted the meeting in behalf of the chairman.

*Business Week Magazine* for March 14, 1970, gave this interesting information concerning Zions First National Bank:

At the intersection of Main and Temple in Salt Lake City stands a heroic-size statue of Brigham Young, arm outstretched. Mormon wags are fond of noting that while the statue’s back is to the temple grounds of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, the outstretched arm points to a bank.

The bank is Zions First National, started nearly a century ago by Brigham Young himself, to encourage thrift among the Mormons. With \$263-million in assets, the bank is Utah’s third largest, still far behind First Security Bank of Utah . . . Zions First National is owned by Zions Utah Bancorporation, the state’s only one-bank holding company. . . . ZUB has carried diversification about as far as any one-bank holding company, anywhere. It does a modest real estate business in Salt Lake City, leases equipment (mostly to smaller businesses), has a stake in a local savings and loan association, runs a chain of small-loan offices in Utah and Colorado, and owns three industrial banks in Colorado. . . .

The very rich Mormon Church (just how rich is a closely-guarded secret) sold its controlling interest in Zions First National a decade ago to Zions Investment Co., which later became ZUB. It still has minority interest in ZUB, which helps in heavily-Mormon Utah. In rural Utah, where the population is 70% Mormon, Zions First National tends to be the No. 1 bank. And a big slice of church deposits wind up in the bank.

“It definitely gives them an edge on competition,” notes Willard L. Eccles, who with his half-brothers, heads First Security Corp., which owns First Security Bank. **“They’ve got five Apostles on their board. We’ve only got two.”** . . .

The bank Young founded in 1873 was Zion’s Savings Bank & Trust Co. In 1957, that bank merged with two other church-controlled banks to form Zions First National Bank. In 1960, the Mormon Church sold 50.1% of Zions First National to Zions Investment Co. for \$10-million. “Because of the competitive nature of the banking business,” says Simmons, “the church was competing with its own members.” So the church got out of banking, though not out of big-time finance.

The church has an interest in office and apartment buildings, hotels, a department store, a newspaper, several radio and television stations, and even a “sizable” position in the Times-Mirror Corp. in Los Angeles. Next, the church will build a \$30-million shopping center in Salt Lake City. . . .

Meanwhile, the bank keeps its close ties to the Mormon Church, doing among other things a fair international business for the church. In fact, the bank has a number of foreign customers, a holdover from the days when European converts deposited money in what was the church

bank. “The sun,” quips Simmons, “never sets on a Zions customer.” (*Business Week*, March 14, 1970, pp. 110, 112)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for February 13, 1971, reported that Zions First National “now has 25 banks spanning 350 miles from St. George to Centerville, . . .” Harold B. Lee, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, is Chairman of the Board of Zions First National Bank. An advertisement published in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on April 6, 1971, shows that six of the Mormon leaders serve on the board of directors. Their names are as follows: Joseph Fielding Smith (President of the Mormon Church), Harold B. Lee (a member of the First Presidency), Delbert L. Stapley (an Apostle), Ezra T. Benson (an Apostle), Hugh B. Brown (an Apostle), and Gordon B. Hinckley (an Apostle).

### Tax Problems

During the past few years the Mormon Church has had some problems over taxation. The *Deseret News*, Church Section, printed an article which contained this information:

Several blocks from Temple Square . . . stands an undistinguished, flat-topped office building that houses the Church Legal Department.

In this unimposing building, Wilford W. Kirton, general counsel or head legal adviser, supervises a devoted team of lawyers and office personnel who perform a function vital to the advancement of the Church in this modern age. . . .

The Salt Lake office is headquarters for 13 attorneys who are primarily concerned with specialized areas within North America. Two other attorneys are on three-year tours of duty . . .

One of the principal functions of the department deals with the acquiring of property throughout the world in connection with Church buildings and chapel sites. . . .

An increasing field of activity for the department is in the area of taxation.

“The problems of taxation are now becoming an increasingly difficult problem for the Church,” explained Mr. Kirton. “Churches, heretofore, have been exempt from tax. But now, some aspects of tax are being applied to the Church. Laws are changing, making the Church subject to taxation.”

According to Mr. Kirton, the Church has always paid corporate taxes on its business holdings, while stake farms and other welfare projects, as charitable projects, have been exempt. Now, there are increasing cases where welfare farms are being assessed taxes under new laws. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, January 9, 1971, page 7)

Zions Securities Corp., which is owned by the Mormon Church, seems to be having a dispute with the Internal Revenue Service over taxes. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported:

WASHINGTON—Zions Securities Corp., the financial arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, claims the church was overcharged by \$2,825,174.26 by the Internal Revenue Service for the years 1962 through 1967.

A case filed in the U.S. court here involves differences between Zions Securities and IRS on allowances for such items as depreciation, interest, contributions, capital gains, capital loss carryover and property sales and exchanges. . . .

The 1970 IRS notice to Zions Securities also held that in 1962, 1963 and 1964 “you engaged in transactions either with your parent, corporation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, relating to the sale or transfer of real property which were not arm’s length deals.”

Among the items at issue are also a claim that the Commissioner of Internal Revenue erroneously determined that interest paid by the taxpayer (Zions Securities) to the corporation of the president of the Church of Jesus Christ [sic] of Latter-day Saints and Corporation

of the presiding bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints “did not represent interest paid on a bona fide indebtedness.” . . .

One of the biggest items of difference is depreciation deduction claims which for the six-year period are in excess of \$1,500,000. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, April 30, 1971)

On July 1, 1971, the *Salt Lake Tribune* printed the following:

BOISE (AP)—Use of land rather than ownership, determines whether it is exempt from the property tax in Idaho, the State Board of Tax Appeals ruled Wednesday.

It said that in the case of farms operated by the welfare program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the purpose is not simply to provide food for the needy.

“Very little of the commodities produced on the farms in question went directly to needy persons,” the board said.

By far most of them were sold and the proceeds used to pay for operating expenses and repayment of loans used to acquire the farms or cattle, with the balance going into general welfare funds of the church, which might be used to buy clothing or other necessities or for cash distribution to the needy.

The board affirmed action by boards of equalization in Bannock and Bingham counties, which had refused to grant tax exemption for four church-owned farms in Bannock County and six in Bingham County.

LDS Church officials in Salt Lake City said they had no comment on the matter pending further study of the decision.

The board’s ruling could be appealed to district court, either in Ada County or in the county where the owner of the land resides.

The board said that a 1970 law which granted tax exemption for property “directly related to the charitable purpose for which” a charitable organization was formed does not apply to the farms.

“The growing of crops,” the board said, “is not part of the charitable purpose for which the charitable corporations here involved exist, nor is it directly related to such purpose. The crops or the proceeds are, of course, revenue derived from the land.

“While it is indispensable that such revenue must be used exclusively for charity to gain exemption, this is not sufficient. It is the use to which the land is put that determines its status as exempt or non-exempt.

“Here the land was used for commercial purposes and unless such use was directly related to the charitable purposes of providing for the needy, it is not exempt.”

On October 1, 1971, the *Salt Lake Tribune* printed an article which contained the following:

TACOMA, WASH. (AP)—The question of a tax exemption for properties of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Pierce County has been taken under advisement by the Board of Equalization after an extended hearing.

Jerry Fulton, director of the county assessor’s Exempt Properties Division, said the Mormons’ exemption was denied last May because both local church officials and those at the Salt Lake City, Utah, headquarters refused to report certain financial information.

The information sought would show whether the local properties are paid for and supported entirely by donations or in part by funds from commercial ventures, he said.

Atty. G. Perrin Walker developed testimony from church officers, notably Owen H. Dickson of Enumclaw, president of the Mount Rainier LDS Stake, that church rules forbid the disclosure of any information regarding tithing and welfare offerings . . .

Fulton said all other denominations represented in the county have provided the requested information.

As it stands, the assessor has placed all LDS property in Pierce County on the tax rolls, where it will remain unless the oBard [sic] of Equalization or the courts decide otherwise. (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 1, 1971)



## Control of News Media

The Mormon Church's attempt to buy many radio and television stations has caused some concern among the Gentiles. The *Deseret News* for September 5, 1964, printed an article which contained the following:

A merger of the three electronic communications companies owned or controlled by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints into a single company to be called the Bonneville International Corporation, was announced Friday.

The new company includes KSL Television and Radio, Salt Lake City; KIRO Television and Radio, Seattle, Wash.; and WRUL International shortwave stations in New York. It will be headquartered in Salt Lake City. . . .

The Church owns approximately 82 per cent of the stock in KSL Inc., 99 per cent of KIRO, Inc., and 100 per cent of WRUL operations. (*Deseret News*, September 5, 1964)

Commissioner Robert T. Bartley, of the Federal Communications Commission, gave the following information in a letter written to a man in Utah in 1967:

I am pleased to furnish the following answers to your recent questions about broadcast facilities of the Mormon Church.

I voted against granting consent to the assignment of FM Station WRFM, New York City, from William H. Reuman to International Educational Broadcasting Corporation (of the Mormon Church), . . .

In my opinion, an adequate showing had not been made that operation of the station by the multiple, absentee owner would better serve the public interest than continued operation by the local, individual licensee.

Broadcast facilities in which the Mormon Church has ownership interest are as follows:

### Salt Lake City, Utah

KSL (AM) 50,000 watts

KSL (FM) 13 kilowatts

KSL (TV) 33.1 kilowatts, visual  
18.2 kilowatts, aural

### Seattle, Washington

KIRO (AM) 50,000 watts

KIRO (FM) 16.5 kilowatts

KIRO (TV) 316 kilowatts, visual  
158 kilowatts, aural

### Idaho Falls, Idaho

KID (AM) 5,000 watts, day; 1,000 watts, night

KID (FM) 41 kilowatts

KID (TV) 100 kilowatts, visual  
60.3 kilowatts, aural

### Boise, Idaho

KBOI (AM) 5,000 watts

KBOI (FM) 17.5 kilowatts

KBOI (TV) 65 kilowatts, visual  
33 kilowatts, aural

### New York City, New York

WRFM (FM) 20 kilowatts

### Scituate, Massachusetts

WNYW (International Station)

50,000 watts for each of its transmitters.

Pending is an application to move the station to New Jersey and increase power of each transmitter to 250,000 watts.

I have no record of proposed acquisitions by the Church.

The request of KSL for operation with 750,000 watts is involved in a basic policy determination by the Commission which has not been concluded. (Letter from Commissioner Robert T. Bartley, Federal Communications Commission, dated January 3, 1967)

Just a month after Commissioner Bartley wrote the letter cited above, the *Salt Lake Tribune* announced that the church was considering the purchase of two more radio stations in Kansas City:

Arch L. Madsen, president of Bonneville International Corp., Friday announced acquisition of two Kansas City radio stations pending approval by Federal Communications Commission.

Mr. Madsen said the corporation, broadcast arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has contracted for the purchase of KMBC-AM and KMBR-FM. . . . Purchase price was \$2,000,000. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, February 4, 1967)

On July 19, 1967, Dr. John J. Flynn, of the University of Utah, charged that the "public communications media in Salt Lake City is in the hands of a cartel":

WASHINGTON—A University of Utah law professor charged Wednesday that joint business operations of Salt Lake City daily newspapers resulted in "news suppression" and discourages competition by other newspapers.

Dr. John J. Flynn, associate professor of law, testified before the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly subcommittee in opposition to a bill which would grant limited anti-trust exemption to joint commercial operations of newspapers or mergers of competing newspapers. . . .

Since 1952, he said, the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Utah's two major newspapers, "have been united in the Newspaper Agency Corporation, a combination the proposed legislation—S. 1312—would sanction." . . .

"The only honest description that can be applied to the Salt Lake City market—measured by the daily and Sunday newspapers, the commercial television stations, and the major network-affiliated radio stations, is that the public communications media in Salt Lake City is in the hands of a cartel," Dr. Flynn asserted. . . .

"The pessimism and fear expressed by this conclusion may seem paranoid, until one realizes the control the ownership of the *Deseret News* and *Tribune* exercise over other forms of news media," Dr. Flynn said.

"The Mormon Church-owned *Deseret News* also owns KSL-TV (Channel 5), a CBS affiliate, and KSL Radio, a CBS radio affiliate.

"The *Tribune* owns 50 per cent control of KUTV (Channel 2), an NBC affiliate. The remaining 50 per cent is owned by the Glasmann family, the owners of the sole newspaper in Utah's second largest city, Ogden. . . .

"The newspapers involved in the Newspaper Agency Corporation have interlocking ownership with three television stations and a community of economic interest with the other newspaper, the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, and one other major radio station," Dr. Flynn charged. . . .

He noted that both newspapers "actively campaigned" editorially for the civic auditorium and sports arena. . . .

He said that several parcels of land in the area where the auditorium was to be constructed were owned by the Mormon Church, "owners of the *Deseret News*." The owners of *The Tribune*, he said, are also major landowners in the area and, he said, both papers had an economic interest in passage of the bond issue. (*Deseret News*, July 20, 1967, p. 12A)

On August 10, 1967, the *Deseret News* printed an article in which the following appeared:

WASHINGTON—Utah witnesses presented sharply divergent testimony Wednesday before the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee on a proposed bill to limit antitrust prosecutions of joint newspaper printing and business agencies.

Utah Atty. Gen. Phil L. Hansen charged that both Salt Lake City newspapers "have been above the law for some time" and said his office was instituting investigation of both papers.

### DENY CHARGE

Both George L. Nelson, legal counsel for the *Deseret News*, and John W. Gallivan, publisher of the *Salt Lake Tribune* and president of the Newspaper Agency Corporation which prints both papers, denied Mr. Hansen's charges. . . .

"I think they (Salt Lake City newspapers) have been above the law for some time now," Mr. Hansen charged. He told the subcommittee that his office was instituting investigation of both papers, "with the firm and vigorous intention to bring state or U.S. antitrust cases" against them.

## “DESPITE LOSSES”

The Utah attorney also criticized practices of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which he said would continue to run the *Deseret News* “despite losses” if the Newspaper Agency Corporation were dissolved. “Let’s keep the profits and the prophets separated,” he declared. . . .

Thursday, Mr. Hansen told a reporter his antitrust suit against Salt Lake City’s major newspapers would include efforts to obtain financial records of the Mormon Church.

Hansen—who claims the *Deseret News* and *Salt Lake Tribune* control a communications cartel—said he also will try to gain access through the courts to financial records of two other communications holdings. . . . (*Deseret News*, August 10, 1967)

Since Hansen is no longer Attorney General for the State of Utah, it is unlikely that anything more will come of this matter.

## No Paid Ministry?

In 1851 the Mormon Church claimed that the church leaders did not receive a salary. We know, however, that by 1889 they were receiving a regular monthly salary. In the journal of L. John Nuttall, under the date of January 30, 1889, the following appears: “Bp Preston Called & submitted a report of the committee on Salaries & c. They now suggest that the Tithing of all the Church Employees also the **Apostles** and clerks be deducted from their **salary** monthly” (Journal of L. John Nuttall, pp. 349-350 of typed copy at Brigham Young University).

This reference may come as a shock to many members of the Mormon Church who believe that the Apostles do not receive any remuneration for their service to the church. The Book of Mormon condemns a paid ministry in the strongest terms, and for this reason many members of the church are led to believe the Apostles do not receive a salary. Several years ago a man who had worked in the Church Financial Department told us that the Apostles received \$12,000 a year from the church. He did not know, however, how much the members of the First Presidency were paid. We would assume that it is somewhat more. Another man who had been employed in the Financial Department told us that the General Authorities could buy things and charge them to the church. He stated that one of the General Authorities had the ceiling lowered in his home and charged the bill, amounting to thousands of dollars, to the church. There seems to be no end to the advantages which the Mormon leaders receive. The *Deseret News*, Church Section, for May 22, 1971, printed an article which contained this interesting information:

High on the cliffs above Emerald Bay in Laguna Beach sits a modest, yet attractive white frame home.

The view of the Pacific Ocean from the sun deck is almost magnetic . . .

This is the home of the President of the Church when he is in California on Church business or for a needed rest. . . .

In early 1950, the Church purchased the home and an adjoining lot. . . . President David O. McKay used the home when on Church business in California, or just to relax from the heavy responsibilities . . .

Now, President Joseph Fielding Smith and his wife, . . . stay in the home while in the Golden State.

In April, President Smith, accompanied by his wife, his secretary, D. Arthur Haycock and his wife, flew to California for a 10-day working vacation.

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, denied that the Mormon leaders are becoming wealthy from their positions in the church:

The idea that ministers of religion should depend on a salary and donations furnished by their congregations comes out of a long practice in the religious world. It was not so in the beginning when ministers labored with their hands for a living and blessed the people by encouraging words and spiritual counsel. . . . The idea that in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the Authorities are

breaking the rules and engaging in selfish enterprises for the purpose of getting wealthy, is an erroneous notion. (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 3, pp. 76-77)

In spite of this denial, we have good reason to believe that Joseph Fielding Smith and many other Mormon leaders have become very rich because of their positions in the church. Besides receiving a regular salary and other benefits from the church, the General Authorities appoint themselves to head the various businesses owned by the church. Writing in 1947, Joseph H. Weston stated:

Many of the higher officials of the church have risen to their present eminence via a route on which they found themselves handling business affairs of the church. . . .

Generally speaking, income from investments goes toward payment of what salaries the church officials get, . . .

**Higher officials** of the Mormon church are members of the **Boards of Directors** of several corporations of national scope, . . .

Against the advice of all his conferees in the church, President Wilford Woodruff again forcibly injected the church into the beet sugar business in 1890. . . .

That was the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. **Some of the General Authorities always have been officials or directors of the sugar firm**, which is understandable, considering the holdings that the church has in the business. The church president usually has also been president of the sugar company. At the present time, J. Reuben Clark, a member of the first presidency, and Albert E. Bowen, one of the council of twelve apostles, are members of the company’s executive committee, while **George Albert Smith, head of the church, is president of the sugar corporation.** (*These Amazing Mormons*, pp. 49-50)

The positions held in the church by the Mormon leaders seem to have a definite influence on the positions they hold in businesses controlled by the church. For example, on January 24, 1970, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that Joseph Fielding Smith had become “the tenth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” Just a month later the *Deseret News* printed an article which contains this statement: “The election of President Joseph Fielding Smith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as a director and **chairman** of the Utah-Idaho Sugar Co. board of directors was announced today” (*Deseret News*, February 26, 1970).

It is interesting to note that Joseph Fielding Smith was 93 years old at the time he was elected to this position with the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. As if this is not enough to show the influence of the church upon this company, the same article contained these statements:

Harold B. Lee, first counselor in the First Presidency of the Church was elected a director and vice chairman of the board, according to Rowland M. Cannon, company president.

The board accepted the resignation of Elder Hugh B. Brown of the Council of the Twelve who had been a director and vice chairman. (*Ibid.*)

The reason for Hugh B. Brown’s “resignation” and Harold B. Lee’s appointment is probably related to a difference of opinion with regard to the church’s anti-Negro doctrine. Brown had served as First Counselor to David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church, and had tried to get the church to change the anti-Negro doctrine so that Negroes could hold the Priesthood. Joseph Fielding Smith, on the other hand, has stated that Negroes are “an inferior race” (*The Way to Perfection*, 1931, pp. 101-102). On January 25, 1970, Wallace Turner wrote the following: “When the Mormon presidency passed this week to Joseph Fielding Smith, a 93-year-old strict theologian, it ended for a time the hope of church liberals for a change in the practice of refusing membership in the priesthood to Negroes” (*New York Times*, January 25, 1970). In the same article Mr. Turner stated: “Among the first acts taken by the new president was the selection of a set of councillors who do **not** include Hugh B. Brown,



a councillor to Mr. McKay and the liberal voice in the hierarchy.”

Joseph Fielding Smith selected Harold B. Lee as his First Counselor, and Lee seems to have taken Brown's position as “a director and vice chairman of the board” at the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. Joseph H. Weston admits that the leaders of the Mormon Church receive salaries, but he makes it appear that they are underpaid. On page 28 of his book, *These Amazing Mormons*, he states:

General authorities and officers of the church devote full time to its activities. The remuneration which they receive is a **pittance** compared with salaries that services of such a high order would command in any other field. . . . the first presidency and the twelve apostles receive salaries **that are very small**, compared to what similar duties would command in business or industry.

While this statement may have been true when Mr. Weston wrote his book in 1947, it is certainly not true today. In 1964 we published the following information in our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*:

Insurance companies in Utah are required to submit a report showing the salaries that their officials receive. The general public are allowed to examine this report which is kept at the State Capital Building. The Mormon Church owns the Benefic[i]al Life Insurance Company, and many of the General Authorities of the Mormon Church are on the board of directors. We have copied some of the salaries received by leaders of the Mormon Church for the year 1963. They are as follows:

David O. McKay, President of the Church _____	\$13,400.00
Hugh B. Brown, Member of First Presidency _____	9,200.00
Henry D. Moyle, Member of First Presidency _____	6,750.00
Nathan Tanner, Member of First Presidency _____	1,700.00
Joseph Fielding Smith, Apostle _____	6,200.00

Henry D. Moyle died during the year, and Nathan Tanner moved into the First Presidency. This is probably the reason that Henry D. Moyle's salary was not as high as it was in 1962 (in 1962 it was \$9,200) and also why Nathan Tanner received only \$1,700.

Upon the first visit we made to the State Capital Building, in regard to these salaries, we were informed by one of the employees that the salaries paid to the directors of the Beneficial Life Insurance Co. were “unusually high.” We were also told by another employee that insurance companies are the only companies that have to report the salaries received by their directors and officers. Therefore, to our knowledge, there is no way to find out how much the church authorities are being paid by the other companies owned by the church.

As we have already shown, Joseph F. Smith (the sixth President of the Mormon Church) testified that he was President of 12 companies. Now, if the President of the Mormon Church today received a salary from 12 companies, and that salary amounted to \$13,400 (as David O. McKay receives from Beneficial Life) he could make \$160,800. Then if we were to add on the monthly salary received from the church he could make over \$170,000 a year. We are not saying that the President of the Mormon Church makes this amount, however, it would be very possible for him to make this much or even more under the present setup. A mimeographed sheet circulated in 1962 suggested that the Mormon Church may have the highest paid ministry on the face of the earth:

Inasmuch as their services to said institutions are but nominal, and they hold those positions solely because they are Church Officials, would it be presumptuous on our part to conclude that we **in the LDS Church have the dubious distinction of having the highest paid ministry on the face of the earth.**

(*Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* Salt Lake City, 1964, pp. 384-385)

The same mimeographed sheet which we cited in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* gives some interesting information concerning how the salaries of the Mormon leaders increased at Beneficial Life Insurance Co. For instance, in 1952 David O. McKay was receiving only \$5,055.00. By 1957, however, his salary was increased to \$7,025.00. In 1960 he received \$10,066.00. The next year (1961) his salary jumped to \$12,950.00. The mimeographed

sheet ends at this point, but our investigation of the records reveals that in 1962 David O. McKay's salary was increased to \$13,400.00. At this point we began to publish this information to the world, and in 1966 Wallace Turner included it in his book, *The Mormon Establishment*, page 104. We wondered if the Mormon leaders would dare to increase their salaries after this information became available to the general public. We have now examined the records for 1969 and find that in the seven year period between 1962 and 1969 the salaries have remained exactly the same. The figures are as follow:

David O. McKay, President of the Church _____	\$13,400.00
Hugh B. Brown, Member of First Presidency _____	\$9,200.00
Nathan Tanner, Member of First Presidency _____	\$9,200.00
Joseph Fielding Smith, Member of First Pres. _____	\$6,200.00

The fact that the Mormon leaders received raises in 1960, 1961 and 1962, but never received any after this would seem to show that they were embarrassed by the publication of this information.

In examining the list for 1969 we find that most of the Apostles are listed, and their salaries range from \$1,400 to \$6,200. The Assistant Apostles receive \$1,400. Victor L. Brown, of the Presiding Bishopric, receives \$5,000. We do not know how much work the Mormon leaders do for Beneficial Life Insurance Company to receive these salaries, but we doubt that David O. McKay could have done a great deal toward the end of his life. He was 96 years old at the time of his death. He had been very ill in 1969, yet he still received \$13,400.00 for his services.

We have not had the time to find out just how many companies the Mormon leaders hold positions in, but we have clipped a few items from the local newspapers which are of interest. The *Deseret News* for September 5, 1964, stated that the Bonneville International Corporation was formed by a “merger of the three electronic communications companies owned or controlled by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” In the same article we find the following:

Office[rs] and directors of Bonneville International are President David O. McKay, chairman of the board; President Hugh B. Brown, vice president of the board; President N. Eldon Tanner, consultant; Arch L. Madsen, president; Elder Richard L. Evans, vice president; Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, vice president; Elder Thomas S. Monson, vice president; James B. Conkling, William F. Edwards, D. Lennox Murdoch, David Lawrence McKay, Edward M. Grimm, Stanley G. McAllister; Robert W. Barker, secretary; and Blaine W. Whipple assistant secretary and treasurer. (*Deseret News*, September 5, 1964)

The church's Hotel Utah also has a board of directors which includes Mormon leaders. In the *Deseret News* for June 2, 1967, we find the following:

Guiding the destiny of the Hotel Utah and the men behind the \$3.1 million improvement program are the hotel's officers and directors.

President David O. McKay of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is chairman of the board with President Hugh B. Brown and President N. Eldon Tanner, counselors in the First Presidency, as vice chairmen. . . .

Members of the board of directors of the hotel include President McKay, President Brown, President Tanner, Mr. Backman, Mr. Adams, Bishop Brown, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Jones and Mr. Simmons.

Other directors are President Thorpe B. Isaacson of the First Presidency; LeGrand Richards, member of the Council of Twelve; Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy, all of the LDS Church; . . . (*Deseret News*, June 2, 1967)

Church officials are also included on the board of directors for the church's *Deseret News*:

Four new members were elected to the board of directors



of the Deseret News Publishing Co. Wednesday, said George L. Nelson, president.

They are:

- N. Eldon Tanner, second counselor in The First Presidency,...
- Bishop Victor L. Brown, . . .
- Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve and former manager of the Deseret News Press.
- Elder Marvin J. Ashton, first assistant general superintendent of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. (*Deseret News*, May 5, 1965)

On July 2, 1971, the *Salt Lake Tribune* gave this information:

The Deseret News Publishing Co.'s board of directors has announced the appointment of Gordon B. Hinckley, member, Council of Twelve...as president and chairman of the newspaper's executive committee.

He succeeds Mark E. Petersen, also on the Council of Twelve . . . Mr. Hinckley also replaces Mr. Petersen on the board of directors of Newspaper Agency Corp.

Thomas S. Monson, Council of Twelve, was named vice president and vice chairman of the executive committee, . . .

ZCMI also has a board of directors which includes Mormon leaders. In the *Salt Lake Tribune* for May 28, 1969, we find the following:

All officers and directors were re-elected. These include David O. McKay, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, chairman of the board; Hugh B. Brown and N. Eldon Tanner, first and second counselors in the First Presidency of the LDS Church, vice chairmen of the board.

The Mormon Church has also formed a corporation with a board of directors to operate their ranches in Florida and Georgia. The *Deseret News*, Church Section, January 16, 1965, contained the following:

President N. Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency returned to Salt Lake City Friday after a three-day visit to Melbourne, Fla., where he attended the board of directors meeting of Deseret Farms, Inc. The corporation operates the Church ranches in Florida and Georgia.

On February 7, 1970, the *Deseret News*, Church Section, reported that "President N. Eldon Tanner" was "vice president of Deseret Farms of Florida."

We have already shown that the Mormon leaders are on the board of directors at Beneficial Life Insurance Company and the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. A careful examination of the business news reported in the *Salt Lake Tribune* or the *Deseret News* for the last ten years would, no doubt, reveal a great deal more about this subject. If the church continues to buy up businesses, there is probably no end to the riches which the Mormon leaders will be able to obtain.

Ralph L. Foster wrote the U.S. Treasury Department asking information regarding the salaries that the Mormon Church leaders receive. They replied that they could not furnish this information unless they had written permission from the persons who filed the returns. Mr. Foster wrote to the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards asking for this permission. LeGrand Richards replied on June 28, 1963:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 23rd. I have **no authority** to grant you the permission you asked in your letter to contact the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C., to learn the income of the general authorities of the Church. . . . most of the general authorities have made great sacrifice financially in order to accept the call that has come to them to devote their entire time to Church work. We have many employees who are receiving more,

considerably more, compensation than the general authorities since their's is a spiritual call. . . .

If the facts were known, there would be no intelligent, successful Latter-day Saint seek for an appointment as one of the general authorities of the Church because of the remuneration they receive as such. (Letter from Apostle LeGrand Richards to Ralph L. Foster, June 28, 1963, photomechanical reprint of the original letter in *The Book of Mormon on Trial*, between pages 20 and 21)

In a letter to Morris L. Reynolds, LeGrand Richards wrote:

I now have your letter without date just received, asking for information about the allowances to officers of the Church. This information **I do not desire to give to you**, nor any other information that smacks like it might be used against the Church, . . . (Letter from LeGrand Richards to Morris L. Reynolds, dated September 6, 1966)

It is interesting to note that in his book, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, page 256, LeGrand Richards states that the "ministers of the churches of the day have justified themselves in **preaching for hire**, . . ." Now, we know that LeGrand Richards receives a salary from Beneficial Life Insurance Company and probably more from other church businesses. This is in addition to his regular salary from the church. How can he condemn the ministers of other churches when he receives far more compensation than they do? Is it any wonder that he refuses to give any information about "the allowances to officers of the church"?

## Church or Business?

The great wealth of the Mormon Church is becoming very apparent. Neil Morgan made this statement:

In Boise, Idaho, a responsible citizen told me: "The Mormons aren't a church anymore; they're a **business**." (*Esquire*, August 1962, p. 91)

The Mormon leaders might do well to consider the following statement which was made by Jesus himself: "My kingdom is **not** of this world: . . ." (John 18:36)

The Bible does not say anything about Jesus trying to build a temporal kingdom or manage large business concerns; instead, it says that he had no place to lay his head.



## Now \$4 Million a Day?

On page 519 of this book we quoted the Mormon writer John J. Stewart as saying: “More than a million dollars a day in tithing and other funds pour continuously into its treasury.” Since we published this the church had become even more involved in business. Two reporters for the Associated Press, Bill Beecham and David Briscoe, were assigned to “investigate the business interests” of the Mormon Church. According to *Utah Holiday*, March 22, 1976, “the resulting story won an award from the Society of Professional Journalists—Sigma Delta Chi—as the best single piece of print journalism in Utah in 1975, the story was never carried in Utah newspapers. *Utah Holiday Magazine* asked Briscoe and Beecham to prepare a new story, using additional material.” We cite the following from that article:

Today, the LDS church is a religious and financial empire with a following approaching 3.5 million people throughout the world, assets in the billions of dollars and an income in contributions and in sales by church-controlled corporations estimated at more than \$3 million a day. . . .

There has never been an accounting of modern church income or wealth. The church’s last disclosure of expenditures was made 17 years ago, when it was reported in a church General Conference that \$72,794,306 was spent the previous year on the church’s far-reaching religious and social programs.

Asked by two Associated Press reporters why this information is now withheld, President N. Eldon Tanner of the church’s First Presidency said, “It was determined that continued publication of the expenditure was not desirable.” He did not elaborate. Asked about church income, he replied, “I don’t think the public needs to have that information.” President Tanner acknowledges that one of his assignments in the church as First Counselor is to oversee the church’s financial interests. . . .

Church holdings, as outlined in the Associated Press report, would rank the church among the nation’s top 50 corporations in total assets—those with \$2 billion or more. Church property includes more than 5,000 mostly-religious buildings throughout the world, a 36-story apartment house in New York City, a 260,000 acre ranch near Disney World in Florida, a village in Hawaii and an estimated 65 acres of business and religious property in downtown Salt Lake City, including a \$33 million headquarters building.

Most of the business property is held in the name of either Zions Securities Corp., a real-estate holding company, or the Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is tax-exempt. Zions is a subsidiary of Deseret Management Corp., which oversees several other church businesses. The church’s broadcasting interests are under Bonneville International Corp. Welfare farms and other religious properties are held by a corporation headed by the Presiding Bishop. Several other church corporations and holdings exist independently. . . .

Today, Mormon leaders have direct control of a business empire more extensive than that controlled from the headquarters of any other U.S. church. . . . evidence shows tithes, other contributions and business income from hotels, insurance companies, department stores, book stores, factories, media outlets and other holdings provide more than an estimated \$1 billion a year for the church and corporations it controls.

The AP estimate, which does not attempt to measure the church’s net income or profits, includes \$550 million in tax-exempt contributions and upwards of \$450 million in business income. It is assumed the greater part of business income covers the corporations’ operating and other expenses. . . .

The AP calculations of contributions to the church are based on

several different computations and appear to be conservative when compared with amounts received by other religions that tithe and release financial statements to their members. . . .

The AP estimate of gross business income (sales income) exceeding \$450 million includes:

- \$237 million in sales by Utah-Idaho, Inc., in which the church holds an approximately 50 per cent and controlling interest. Formerly called Utah-Idaho Sugar Co., the firm has controlling interest in Gourmet Food Products, Inc., . . .

- \$57 million in sales by five ZCMI department stores, in which the church holds a controlling interest (about 30 percent). . . .

- \$79 million in premium and interest income to three insurance companies wholly owned by the church—Beneficial Life Insurance Co. with \$21.4 million in assets, Utah Home Fire and Insurance Co. with assets of \$23.2 million. Beneficial has the industry’s top rating.

- \$16 million in estimated income to the *Deseret News* as its theoretical share of sales by Newspaper Agency Corp., . . .

- \$4 million estimated revenue for KSL Television, . . . Added to this, would be millions more in sales by the church’s other television station KIRO in Seattle, and 11 radio stations . . . owned by Bonneville International Corp., which also has other media-related interests.

- \$10 million in sales by Deseret Book, which has seven stores in Utah and Southern California. . . .

- \$10 million in estimated sales by Deseret Press, which has 360 employees . . .

- \$6 million from Utah Hotel Co., which owns the 406-room Hotel Utah, 186-room Temple Square Hotel and 160-room Utah Motor Lodge. . . . based on current room rates and estimates of occupancy from hotel industry sources. . . .

- \$4 million in sales by the non-profit Deseret Industries . . . It has stores in Utah, Idaho, Nevada, Southern California and Arizona and employs 1,340 handicapped persons.

Other church interests include:

- Deseret Gymnasium, a tax-free recreation complex in Salt Lake City, . . .

- Beehive Clothing Mills, with plants in Utah, England and Mexico that manufacture temple clothing and garments worn only by church faithful.

- A 260,000-acre ranch near Disney World, Florida, . . .

- A 36-story apartment building in New York City, which also contains religious facilities.

- A village in Hawaii.

The ZCMI Center, which unlike ZCMI itself is wholly owned by the church. The mall includes the 20-story Beneficial Life office tower.

- A computer firm, which handles church work and outside business.

- Dozens of commercial buildings in Salt Lake City, including the Kennecott, Union Pacific, J.C. Penney’s, Utah Power & Light, Constitution, Medical Arts and Beneficial Life buildings and a 10-story parking garage under construction.

- The total income figures for the church and its corporations reaches \$1 billion without considering rental of commercial buildings and apartments, real estate transactions, interest and dividends from investments not made public, large individual donations, or royalties to the Tabernacle Choir for its record albums. . . .

Among the church’s largest holdings in Brigham Young University . . . The university has a campus in Hawaii . . . In addition, the church owns Ricks College...and LDS business college . . . It owns secondary schools with more than 16,000 students in Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay, American Samoa, Western Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, Tahiti, and Tonga. . . .

Among the church’s newest and least-known holdings is Deseret Trust Co., which has more than \$47 million in donations to the church by wealthy individuals, many of them non-members. . . .

Since no accounting is given, it is as difficult to tell where Mormon money goes as to determine how much there is. . . .

The most recent change in the church's financial posture came last year when President Kimball stepped down from the boards of several church corporations, dividing chairmanships of the boards among his two counselors. President Tanner said at the time the move did not signal a decreased involvement of the church in business affairs but an increased need for its top leaders to devote more time to spiritual duties. (*Utah Holiday*, March 22, 1976, pp. 4-7, 9-11)

The *Salt Lake Tribune* for July 2, 1976, reported that Mormon President Spencer W. Kimball "was asked on the NBC *Today* show about an Associated Press estimate last year that the church and corporations it controls bring in more than \$3 million a day. . . .

"He neither disputed nor confirmed the AP estimate that would place the church among the nation's top 50 corporations in total assets."

In 1980 Michael Parrish published an article which contained this statement:

. . . the AP came up with revenues of some \$3 million a day in 1975. David Briscoe, of the AP news team, recently said he thought the figure would exceed \$4 million today. (*Rocky Mountain Magazine*, January-February 1980, p. 23)

### Only a "Modest Living Allowance"?

On page 525 of this book we pointed out that "Besides receiving a regular salary and other benefits from the church, the General Authorities appoint themselves to head the various businesses owned by the church." When Apostle Mark E. Petersen was asked if it was true that the General Authorities "receive a very good salary," he replied:

You ask if we receive "a very good salary." We receive **no salary at all**. Those of us who still do not operate our own private businesses do receive a **very modest living allowance**, in many cases not half of the amount that we pay to many of our hired office people. . . . I receive a small living allowance, only a fraction of the amounts paid to some of our hired help. (Letter written by Apostle Mark E. Petersen, dated June 17, 1977)

While we have no way of knowing about Mark E. Petersen's finances, new evidence has come to light which shows that the past two Presidents of the Church (Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee) were very wealthy at the time of their deaths. Writing in *New West*, Jeffrey Kaye reveals:

. . . despite claims that the few paid officials are given mere "living allowances," records show that past church leaders were not exactly just "getting by" at the time of their deaths.

For instance, Harold B. Lee, the head of the church before Spencer Kimball, left an estate worth almost \$711,000 when he died in December, 1973. At the time of his death, he was drawing payroll checks from the church, a church-owned insurance company and a church-controlled department-store chain. According to Salt Lake County probate files Lee's predecessor, Joseph Fielding Smith, left a Utah estate valued at just short of \$1 million when he died in 1972. (*New West*, May 8, 1978, p. 39)

The Mormon scholar D. Michael Quinn has done some very interesting research concerning the wealth of the General Authorities. In his unpublished Ph. D. dissertation for Yale University he wrote:

. . . estate executor George Q. Cannon recorded in his journal that members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles were critical of Young's liberal use of church funds (even though some of that use may have been for church projects):

Some of my brethren, as I have since learned since the death of President Brigham Young, did have feelings concerning his course. They did not approve of it, and felt opposed, and yet they dare not exhibit their feelings to him, he ruled with so strong and stiff a hand, and they felt that it would be of no use. In a few words, the feeling seems to be that he transcended the bounds of the authority which he legitimately held. I have been greatly surprised to find so much dissatisfaction in such quarters. It is felt that the funds of the Church have been used with a freedom not warranted by the authority which he held . . .

That feeling finally resulted in a decision by the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, ruling in the absence of an organized First Presidency, on January 4, 1882 to establish a fixed salary for every one because they did not want to allow "any man in the Church President or Apostle to draw funds from the Church without limit for their own use or any other purpose."

Although that decision was consistent with revelations providing for financial support of the hierarchy, it nevertheless challenged a strong antipathy to salaried ministers that dated back to the Joseph Smith era. . . . "Hireling priest" was an epithet the Mormons frequently hurled at the ministers of the rest of Christendom, and it was a designation the General Authorities were reluctant to have applied to themselves. . . .

Despite the discomfort of many of the General Authorities, a salary or allowance system continued without significant interruption from 1882 onward. . . .

Another source of personal income to the hierarchy derived from General Authority leadership in business corporations. It has been observed that men did not receive financial remuneration for serving as officers and directors of church business corporations during the Brigham Young period. Once the federal campaign destroyed Mormon political hegemony, however, it became more common for General Authorities to be paid for their services to church-owned, controlled, or affiliated business enterprises. By the twentieth century, financial remuneration for General Authorities serving as officers and directors in such firms was the general policy. . . .

The best illustration of the corporate side of General Authority finances is George Albert Smith, an apostle from 1903 to 1945, and President of the Church from then to his death in 1951. As a member of the Quorum of the Twelve in 1915, for example, he was a director of three church enterprises (Utah Savings and Trust Company, Utah Home Fire Insurance Company, and ZCMI) for which he received a total of \$1,260 in directors fees out of his annual income of \$5,088. His allowance from the church in that year was \$1,800. This same general proportion continued throughout his service as an apostle, but in the first year of his service as President of the Church his income jumped more than 500%. This increase was a direct result of George Albert Smith's sudden advancement to corporate positions that were functions of his new role as President of the Church. An undated statement indicates that as President of the Church George Albert Smith's monthly income of \$2,307.85 came from the following sources:

General Authority allowance	\$650.00
Utah State National Bank	225.00
Zions Savings Bank	150.00
U-I Sugar Company	307.85
Beneficial Life Insurance Co.	300.00
Heber J. Grant & Company	150.00
Utah Home Fire Insurance Co.	200.00
Hotel Utah Company	75.00
ZCMI	250.00

Because corporate leadership in church business enterprises by General Authorities was a function of their position in the hierarchy, the opportunities for financial improvement were the highest for the President of the Church, and decreased at



subordinate echelons.

A less stratified and less formal source of income became available to General Authorities because their positions in the hierarchy gave them a status of trust within the Mormon community. Many businesses that were not controlled by the church seemed to include General Authorities on boards of directors because of the prestige these men lent to the organizations, rather than because of the amount of stock the man held or his business acumen. Another source of income derived from the position of the General Authorities as doctrinal and ecclesiastical experts within Mormonism. . . . Not all General Authorities who did publish actually sought or received financial remuneration for their writings, but for those who did, the income could be substantial. When Joseph Fielding Smith died, after a publication career that had begun even before his appointment as an Apostle in 1910, his uncollected royalties (apparently for a six month period) were \$9,636.48. Relatively few of the General Authorities obtained these indirect benefits, but membership in the Mormon hierarchy made such opportunities possible. (“The Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: An American Elite,” unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, May, 1976, pp. 127-133)

On page 149 of the same dissertation, Dr. Quinn reveals:

Although by now it is evident that extreme wealth for Presidents of the Church was almost axiomatic, there were still differences of degree. The greatest wealth in the period 1914-1972 centered in a father-son combination of direct descent from the founding Mormon family of Smiths. Joseph F. Smith (1918) died with a net worth of \$415,180, and in consideration of the shrinking dollar over the century, his wealth was relatively greater than his son’s, Joseph Fielding Smith (1972), which was \$509,030 (in liquid assets). Considering that both men were employed in clerical positions when they entered the hierarchy at twenty-six and thirty-three years of age, respectively, their rise to wealth was inseparably connected with the opportunities given them by their positions in the hierarchy.

In a footnote at the bottom of the same page, Quinn informs that “Joseph Fielding Smith gave a total of \$210,000 in cash gifts during the two years prior to his death, which were subject to probate and inheritance tax due to Utah’s then current law about gifts in anticipation of death. See his estate file at Salt Lake County Probate Clerk’s office.”

### Mormon Financial Empire Continually Expanding

On July 3, 1976, the *Salt Lake Tribune* published an article containing the following:

LAIE, Hawaii—The Polynesian Cultural Center here, the most popular paid tourist attraction in the Pacific, is enlarging its facilities to include a full 40 acres and three major new buildings.

A non-profit organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the complex was visited by more than 850,000 persons last year.

On December 10, 1980, the *Tribune* reported:

The Polynesian Cultural Center plans to file suit in federal court in Hawaii to challenge the Internal Revenue Service’s revocation of its tax-exempt status.

Under ownership of the Mormon Church, the center had been considered tax-exempt until the IRS revoked that status in spring 1979. . . . the suit seeks a refund of \$591,000 in taxes and interest the center paid for the 1978 tax year alone.

On March 4, 1979, the *Tribune* revealed:

The purchase of the block immediately north of the Salt Lake City-

County Building for a proposed development project, first reported Jan. 25 in *The Tribune*, has been consummated.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, through its real estate arm, Zions Securities Corp., has announced purchase of the 6.9 acres within the block—now mostly a parking lot.

Cost of the acquisition was not disclosed, but the property is valued between \$4 million and \$5 million.

In January, *The Tribune* learned that partners Paul Mendenhall and David Horne of HOMCO Investment Corp. were near to closing a deal to purchase the block . . .

HOMCO was involved in the negotiations with an unnamed backer, now identified as Zions Securities Corp. . . .

Because the remaining 3.1 acres in the block are owned by several different parties, HOMCO has asked the Salt Lake City Redevelopment Agency to help it secure the rest of the block through the condemnation process, if necessary.

On September 17, 1980, this interesting item appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

The Mormon church will not grow tobacco on a 2,755-acre tobacco farm it bought near Hopkinsville for more than \$4 million, outbidding Texas oil billionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt in the process.

The church offered \$4,275,000 for the property, topping Hunt’s best offer by \$25,000. . . .

Fears said the church will continue to raise wheat, soybeans and corn, with the profits going “to the church treasury in Salt Lake City.”

### More on Control of Media

On page 524 of this book we printed a letter from Robert T. Bartley, of the Federal Communications Commission, which listed some radio stations owned by the church in Boise, Idaho. Al G. Vuylsteke, General Manager of KBOI AM & FM, has indicated that the church no longer owns these stations. This does not mean, however, that the church is getting out of the communications field; on the contrary, since 1972 it has bought stations in larger cities such as Kansas City and Los Angeles. The church owns its radio and television stations through a subsidiary known as Bonneville International Corp. On July 15, 1975, the *New York Times* carried a full-page advertisement concerning the Mormon Church’s radio and television stations. It was claimed in this advertisement that the church’s stations WRFM and KBIG were “the two most listened to FM’s in the nation.” A list of twelve radio and television stations appeared in this same advertisement.

By 1977 the church had acquired all of the FM stations that it was possible to legally hold. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for January 26, 1978, reported:

KSL-FM radio station formally became a property of Simmons Family Inc., Wednesday with its transfer from Bonneville International Corp. . . .

Bonneville International is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, . . .

Bonneville International sold the station to comply with FCC multiple ownership regulations which limit holdings by any one corporation to seven FM stations.

Bonneville wanted to buy KAFM in Dallas, Tex. It had seven FM stations. So, it put KSL-FM on the block last spring.

Mormon Church Historian Leonard J. Arrington and his assistant Davis Bitton give this important information:

Through a subsidiary corporation, Bonneville International, the church owns thirteen commercial radio and

television stations. These include KSL-AM and KSL-TV in Salt Lake City; WRFM in New York; KBIG and KBRT-AM in Los Angeles; KIRO-AM and KIRO-TV and KSEA-FM in Seattle; WCLR in Chicago; KMBZ-AM and KMBR-FM in Kansas City; KAFM in Dallas; and KOIT-FM in San Francisco. In addition to the holdings of Bonneville International, the church owns three noncommercial educational stations. KBYU-TV and KBYU-FM are operated by Brigham Young University, and KRIC-FM by Ricks College. A subsidiary of Bonneville International, BEI Products Inc., with headquarters in Los Angeles evaluates, creates, and produces commercial entertainment films, television specials or packages, and other productions. Another subsidiary, Bonneville Productions, produces commercials and public service announcements.

The Public Communications Department, which is involved in Mormon broadcasting activities, is an international network, with 1,200 stake and mission public communications directors and coordinators. Charged with spotlighting the church—its people, programs, and beliefs—before the eyes of the world via the news media, motion pictures, and television and radio programming, the department designs and produces displays for the thirty or

more Latter-day Saint visitors' centers, supports the production of church pageants and dramas, and sponsors a variety of television family programs.

Whether the church's system of communications—book publishing, periodicals, radio, television—is vast and powerful or moderate and reasonable depends on one's point of view and the basis of comparison. (*The Mormon Experience*, 1979, pp. 270-71)

Since the Mormon Church has almost unlimited funds to work with, it is able to exert a great deal of influence throughout the world. For example, the church has recently spent millions of dollars advertising in the *Readers Digest*. The following appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 13, 1979:

**It takes a lot** of money to advertize in the *Readers Digest*—about \$65,000 a page—but consider what you're getting: a shot at one-quarter of the homes in America. . . .

**One advertiser** that bought this message is the Mormon Church, which ran a 12-page detachable insert in the current issue of the *Digest*—the April issue—to explain the basic beliefs of the Mormons. The \$800,000 ad expresses some thoughts which are close to the *Digest's* philosophy.



## 35. Speculation, Illegal Banking and Counterfeiting

In 1837 the *Messenger and Advocate*, a Mormon publication, reprinted an article written by S. A. Davis, Editor of *The Glad Tidings*, and *Ohio Christian Telescope*. In this article Mr. Davis said that the Mormons “seem to have too much worldly wisdom connected with their religion—too great a desire for the perishable riches of this world—holding out the idea that the kingdom of Christ is to be composed of ‘real estate, herds, flocks, silver, gold,’ &c. as well as of human things” (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 3, p. 490).

### Speculation

Joseph Smith made the following statement concerning conditions in the church in 1837:

At this time the spirit of speculation in lands and property of all kinds, which was so prevalent throughout the whole nation, was taking deep root in the Church. As the fruits of this spirit, evil surmisings, fault-finding, disunion, dissension, and apostasy followed in quick succession, and it seemed as though all the powers of earth and hell were combining their influence in an especial manner to overthrow the Church at once, and make a final end. . . . many became disaffected toward me as though I were the sole cause of those very evils I was most strenuously striving against, and which were actually brought upon us by the brethren not giving heed to my counsel. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 487-488)

While it is true that a “spirit of speculation” filled the church, this reference makes it appear that Joseph Smith was not involved. Actually, Smith was as deeply involved as anyone. Ebenezer Robinson made this statement:

A spirit of speculation was poured out, and instead of that meek and lowly spirit which we felt had heretofore prevailed, a spirit of worldly ambition, and grasping after the things of the world, took its place. Some farms adjacent to Kirtland were purchased by some of **the heads** of the church, mostly on credit, and laid out into city lots, until a large city was laid out on paper, and the price put up to an unreasonable amount, ranging from \$100 to \$200 each, according to location. (*The Return*, vol. 1, no. 7, July, 1889, typed copy)

Robert Kent Fielding made these comments in his Ph.D. dissertation for Indiana University:

Even as late as 1835, . . . in the Kirtland area, there were only twenty-one Mormons who held property of their own. . . . Some however, had evidently bought farms or sites with an eye open to the possible appreciation of land values as population grew. Joseph Smith invested in four acres containing twenty-four rods of road across from his store on the heights, . . . for four hundred dollars; . . .

The Mormon stress on gathering heightened the speculative fever.

. . . The most important sales in 1836, were made to five persons who evidently intended to profit by selling housing lots to the incoming Saints. It was for them a season of preparation. First to act was John Boynton, apostle of the Church. . . .

Next to act was Jacob Bump, the master mason, . . .

The third person to prepare himself for subdivision was John Johnson. . . .

Joseph Smith Jr., Prophet to the Church, was the next person to make preparations to sell inheritances to the incoming Saints. He already owned more than one hundred and forty acres of land adjoining the temple besides his four acres of business property on the Chillicothe Road. Now he associated himself with Jacob Bump and Reynolds Cahoon to make two more large acquisitions. The first was from Peter French. The old farmer, after selling out to the Mormons . . . had moved, . . . to a new site . . . On October 4, he again profited from the Church as he signed a contract with Smith and his associate, agreeing to sell his two hundred and forty acres of land for nine thousand seven hundred seventy-seven dollars and fifty cents. Barely two weeks passed before these associates bought again, this time from non-Mormon Alpheus Russell. . . . When he was offered twelve thousand nine hundred and four dollars for his one hundred and thirty-two acres, it was more than his puritanism could stand and the Yankee in him succumbed to the offer. The partners were evidently speculating, for both of these purchases were made on mortgage contracts which covered the full purchase price. Smith made two other smaller purchases by himself. He bought an eight-acre farm from Samuel Canfield for one hundred and sixty dollars and recorded it in the name of his wife, Emma, and an additional thirteen acres in a different location, from the same seller, for five hundred dollars.

The Prophet’s uncle, John Smith, in association with Jared Carter and Oliver Granger, was the last of the five big land purchasers. . . .

As the Saints gathered in Kirtland, the tempo of land sales gradually increased. There was no uniformity of prices; they ranged from a low of twenty dollars per acre to a high of thirty-five hundred dollars which Joseph Smith paid to Jacob Bump . . . One of the higher prices was the eight hundred dollars which Smith charged David Elliott for a half acre plot. Likely many lands were bargained for which never reached the stage of deed records. In view of the recorded prices, the Prophet’s warning to his congregation, delivered in December, to beware of falling victim to speculators and extortioners, was eminently justified. How he accounted for his own conduct is not a matter or [of?] record.

Through the early months of 1837, Smith was busy trying to effect the largest real estate promotion of them all in order to bring some kind of regularity into his rapidly growing but poorly organized city. (“The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio,” unpublished Ph.D. dissertation by Robert Kent Fielding, Indiana University, 1957, typed copy, pp. 202-204, 206-208, 211-212)

Fawn M. Brodie gives this interesting information:

To the chaos of Ohio’s banking system was now added Joseph’s Safety Society. . . . most of the subscribers paying in Kirtland boom-town lots at five and six times normal value. According to the *Painesville Telegraph*, Joseph estimated his own land in Kirtland at \$300,000, and stated that the whole capital stock of the bank was comprised in land lying within two square miles. (*No Man Knows My History*, New York, 1957, p. 195)



The Mormon writer Max Parkin made these statements concerning the speculation in property:

This trend towards making excessive profit from speculation in the buying and selling of lands in Kirtland was indulged in by prominent **leaders of the church** as well as others, which became a factor in their dissidence and distrust. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, BYU, 1966, p. 286)

That **Joseph Smith** participated in the buying and selling of land in Kirtland there can be no doubt; . . . However, the point that is not clear is Smith's motive for doing so. . . . It could well be that Smith's land purchases were made for the Church or to provide for the needs of the Saints rather than for personal gain, as Fielding infers. (*Ibid.*, p. 288, footnote)

The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt evidently did not feel that Joseph Smith's motives were right in these transactions, for he wrote a letter to Joseph Smith in which he censured both Smith and Rigdon "in regard to certain business transactions." Max Parkin states:

The spirit of speculation—and the problems caused by it—also had an effect upon Parley P. Pratt, who admitted that a complaining spirit temporarily alienated him from the Prophet Joseph. . . .

While in the extreme of his anxiety and **distrust** on May 23, 1837, Parley wrote a letter to Joseph Smith severely criticizing him for the course he and Rigdon had taken in certain business matters associated with the current speculation in property. . . .

After his defection from the Church, Warren Parrish sent a copy of Pratt's letter to the editor of *Zion's Watchman*, . . . Richard Livesey, . . . had the letter reprinted in his anti-Mormon pamphlet in Preston, England, in 1838. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, pp. 287, 288, 290)

This letter was dated May 23rd, 1837. Max Parkin has reproduced it from Livesey's printing in his *Conflict at Kirtland*, pp. 372-373:

Pres. J. Smith, Jr.

Dear Brother,—As it is difficult to obtain a personal interview with you at all times, by reason of the multitude of business in which you are engaged, you will excuse my saying in writing what I would otherwise say by word of mouth.

Having long pondered the path in which we as a people, have been led in regard to our temporal management, I have at length become fully convinced that the **whole scheme of speculation in which we have been engaged, is of the devil**. I allude to the covetous, extortionary speculating spirit which has reigned in this place for the last season: which has given rise to lying, deceiving and taking advantage of one's neighbor, and in short, every evil work.

And being as fully convinced that **you, and President Rigdon, both by precept and example, have been the principle means in leading this people astray**, in these particulars, and having myself been led astray and caught in the same snare by **your example**, and by **false prophesying and preaching**, from your own mouths, yea, having done many things wrong and plunged myself and family, and others, well nigh into destruction, I have awoken to an awful sense of my situation, and now resolve to retrace my steps and get out of the snare, and make restitution as far as I can.

And now dear brother, if you are still determined to pursue this **wicked course**, until yourself and the church shall sink **down to hell**, I beseech you at least, to have mercy on me and my family, and others who are bound with me for those three lots (of land) which you sold to me **at the extortionary price of 2000 dollars**. For if it stands against me it will ruin me and my helpless family, as well as those bound with me: for yesterday president Rigdon came to me and informed me, that you had drawn the money from the bank, on the obligations which you held against me, and that you had left it to the mercy of the bank, and could not help whatever course they might take to collect it; not withstanding the most **sacred promise** on your part, that I should not be injured by those writings. I offered

the three lots for the writings; but he wanted my house and home also.

Now, dear brother, will you take those lots and give me up the writings, and pay me the 75 dollars, which I paid you on the same? Or will you take the advantage of the neighbor because he is in your power? If you will receive this admonition of one who loves your soul, and repent of your **extortion and covetousness** in this thing, and make restitution, you have my fellowship and esteem, as far as it respects our dealings between ourselves.

But if not, I shall be under the painful necessity of preferring charges against you for extortion, covetousness, and taking advantage of your brother by an undue religious influence. For it is this kind of influence which led us to make this kind of trades in this society. Such as saying it was the will of God that lands should bear with such a price; and many other prophesyings, preachings and statements of a like nature.

Yours with respect,  
P. P. Pratt

In August, 1838, the Mormon Church published a letter in which the Apostle Parley P. Pratt claimed that the letter cited above was "not a true copy" of the one he had written (see *Elders' Journal*, pp. 50-51). His statement can hardly be taken seriously, however, since he admits that he did "write a letter in **great severity and harshness censuring them both** [Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon], **in regard to certain business transactions** . . ." The Apostle Parley P. Pratt went on to state:

This letter was intended as a **private admonition**, it was never intended to be made public. But I have been long convinced, and have freely acknowledged both to these men and the public, that it was **not calculated to admonish them in the spirit of meekness, to do them good, but rather to injure them and wound their feelings**, and that I much regretted having written it, I have asked their forgiveness, and hereby do again. (*Elders' Journal*, pp. 50-51)

The Apostle Parley P. Pratt's original letter was dated May 23, 1837. It is interesting to note that just six days later the Apostle Orson Pratt (Parley P. Pratt's brother) and Lyman E. Johnson accused Joseph Smith of "lying and misrepresentation." Chad J. Flake, Special Collections Librarian at Brigham Young University, has published the following document:

To the Bishop & his council in Kirtland, the Stake of Zion.

We prefer the following charges against Pres. Joseph Smith, Jr. viz. for **lying and misrepresentation**. Also for **extortion**—And for speaking disrespectfully against his brethren behind their backs.

Lyman E. Johnson. Orson Pratt. Kirtland, May 29th 1837. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 327)

## The Kirtland Bank

John Whitmer, one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning conditions in Kirtland:

In the fall of 1836, Joseph Smith, Jun., S. Rigdon and others of the leaders of the Church at Kirtland, Ohio, established a bank for the purpose of speculation, and the whole Church partook of the same spirit; they were lifted up in pride, and lusted after the forbidden things of God, such as covetousness, and in secret combinations, spiritual-wife doctrine, that is plurality of wives, and Gadianton bands, in which they were bound with oaths, etc., that brought division and mistrust among those who were pure in heart, and desired the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 20, pp. 21-22)

William E. McLellan, who had been an Apostle, made this statement concerning the Kirtland Bank:

Soon, therefore, it is determined that a Kirtland Bank must be established, to hold their treasures; and to aid

them to get more. So eager were they, and so sanguine of success, that they did not even wait to get a charter from the State, but seemed to think that everything must bow at their nod—thus violating the laws of the land in which they live, which in the end brought upon them swift destruction. (*Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, March, 1847, p. 7)

This statement concerning the Kirtland Bank appears in Joseph Smith's *History*:

On the 2nd of November the brethren at Kirtland drew up certain articles of agreement, preparatory to the organization of a banking institution, to be called the "Kirtland Safety Society." President Oliver Cowdery was delegated to Philadelphia to procure plates for the institution; and Elder Orson Hyde to repair to Columbus with a petition to the legislature of Ohio, for an act of incorporation, which was presented at an early period of their session. . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 467-468)

Robert Kent Fielding says that "Even under the most advantageous conditions, the year 1837 was no proper time to start a bank. Even a cursory reading of the newspapers of the time indicates the fact that the country was far extended on credit and that there was a desperate shortage of specie—conditions portentous of depression."

However this may be, Oliver Cowdery "succeeded at a great expense in procuring the plates" which were to be used to print the bank money. Orson Hyde, however, was not successful in obtaining the charter. Joseph Smith made this statement concerning Hyde's failure to obtain it:

... because we were "Mormons" the legislature raised some frivolous excuse on which they refused to grant us those banking privileges they **so freely granted to others**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 468)

Robert Kent Fielding, on the other hand, claims that the reason the Mormons did not obtain a charter was "by no means as simple as Smith indicated":

The reason the Mormons did not get their charter is by no means as simple as Smith indicated. As a matter of fact, the legislature did not refuse the charter; there is no evidence to sustain the idea that **it was even asked to grant one**. No bills to establish a Mormon bank were ever considered by the legislature. It is conceivable, as Smith suggests, that religious prejudice was present. It may have operated to prevent the introduction of a petition for a charter, but it is **not likely**. Prejudice seems more like a **ready excuse** than a valid reason. The county delegates to the legislature were Senator Ralph Granger of Fairport and Representatives Seabury Ford of Burton, and Timothy Rockwell of Painesville. . . . Political prejudice is another possible inference for refusal to ask for a charter. All of the delegates were Whigs whereas the Mormons were Democrats. However, the legislature itself had a Democrat majority in each house. It seems most likely that they persuaded Hyde of the uselessness of submitting a petition in view of the control of the legislature by the anti-bank Democrats. In any case, no new banking privileges were granted to any petitioners by the state legislature in its 1836-37 session.

Even if the legislature had been willing to grant charters to any of the seventeen applicants or to the Mormons, it is unlikely that they could have acted in time to help the Mormon situation. Their sessions commenced on the fifth day of December and ended the following April third. Under the best of circumstances it is not likely that a charter could have been obtained before late March when most bills were passed. The Mormons could not wait. ("The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland Ohio", pp. 179-181)

Max Parkin states that Willis Thornton "said that there was one charter issued during that session by the legislature." But whether there was one charter granted or none—as Fielding indicates—Joseph Smith's statement that they were "freely granted to others" is certainly not true. And since at least sixteen applications were turned down, it seems unfair of Joseph Smith to charge the legislature with religious prejudice.

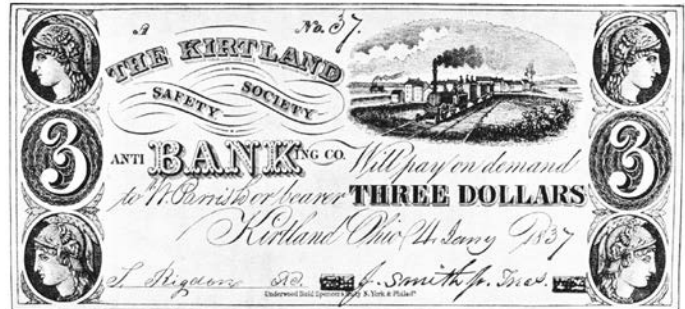
Be this as it may, the Mormons were in trouble when they found that they could not obtain the charter. Robert Kent Fielding makes this statement on page 181 of his dissertation:

When news came that no charter was to be had, the Mormon situation became desperate. The old problems remained and the expenses already undertaken in anticipation of forming a bank offered new ones. Quick action seemed necessary and a decision was made to put an end to [to?] the projected Kirtland Safety Bank Company and form, in its place, a joint stock association for the management of the common concerns of the Stock holders.

Max Parkin gives this interesting information:

To avoid wasting the money expended on the production of the bank plates the necessary prefix, "anti," and suffix, "ing Company," added to the name "Bank"—to read "Anti-Banking Company"—was stamped on the bills. This was more adaptable to the three dollar note than to the others which did not conveniently receive the alteration. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, page 214)

Below is a photograph of the three dollar note.



The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts makes this statement about the alteration of the notes:

In issuing their notes the "Kirtland Safety Society" doubtless **made a mistake** in that they used the notes printed from the plates prepared for their anticipated bank issue, using a stamp to make the notes read—Anti-Bank-ing Co., instead of "Kirtland Safety Society Bank." This to avoid the necessity of incurring the expense of making new plates; . . . (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 401)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin gives this interesting information:

The firm was expected to grow to an enormous size, for it was established with a capital stock "not to be less than four millions of dollars." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 214)

On page 301 of the same book, Mr. Parkin states:

At the time of the bank's inception, it was capitalized at four million dollars. Critics have found fault with this enormous figure because the capitalization of all the banks in the state of Ohio at that time was only nine and one third million.

The Mormon Apostle Willard Richards wrote the following in a letter to his sister:

If you had remembered it is written that the "Riches of the Gentiles shall be given to the Saints of the Most High," perhaps you would not have asked the question. . . . There is a banking co. here, \$4,000,000 capital, and may be extended to an indefinite amount. Private property is holden & **Kirtland bills are as safe as gold** . . . (*Intimate Disciple—A Portrait of Willard Richards*, p. 155)

Robert Kent Fielding makes this statement concerning the four million dollar figure:

As it was projected, there was never the slightest chance that the Kirtland Safety Society anti-Bank-ing Company could succeed. Even though their economy was in jeopardy, it could scarcely have suffered such a devastating blow as that which they were themselves preparing to administer to it. There were many good reasons why banking—or anti-banking, was not the solution to their problems; proper notice of any one of them should have directed their efforts in more hopeful directions.

The Safety Society proposed no modest project befitting its relative worth and ability to pay. Its organizers launched, instead, a gigantic company capitalized at four



million dollars, when the entire capitalization of all the banks in the state of Ohio was only nine and one third million. Such presumption could not have escaped the notice of bankers who would realize that such a capital could not be paid in, and would have been led to examine its capital structure more closely. They would have noted, upon exami[n]ation, that according to the articles of incorporation capital stock was to be paid in by subscription but that the amount of the first subscription was not stated and further payments were left to the discretion of the company managers. Furthermore, total issuance of notes was not prescribed, nor was the relation of notes to capital and assets. The members, to be sure, pledged themselves to redeem the notes and bound themselves individually by their agreement under the penal sum of one hundred thousand dollars. But there was no transfer of property deeds, no power of attorney, no legal pains and penalties. To a banker, the articles fairly shouted: "this is a wildcat, beware!" ("The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio," typed copy, pp. 182-183)

The Mormon writer Stanley B. Kimball gives this interesting information:

The Chicago Historical Society owns the original Stock Ledger (and Index to the ledger) of the Kirtland Safety Society, . . .

This source has been little used, if at all, and throws much light on this complicated phase of Mormon history. . . . The following cursory analysis of this ledger reveals that the 200 individuals subscribed for various numbers of shares (from 3,000 to 5) with the face value of from \$150,000 to \$50 and paid for them in cash amounts varying from \$4,887.00 paid in by Joseph Smith to \$.52 by Alex Valier.

The grand totals eloquently reveal the inherent weakness of the project—200 persons subscribed to 79,000 shares worth at face value approximately \$3,854,000 at \$50 par value per share which was paid for with only \$20,725 in specie. Heber C. Kimball, for example, subscribed to \$50,000 worth of shares for only \$15 in cash. Other important Mormons paid in correspondingly small sums: Brigham Young, \$7.00; Lorenzo Snow, \$7.97; Wilford Woodruff, \$5.25; Erastus Snow, \$5.25. A few others, however, were able to come up with larger amounts: Parley P. Pratt, \$102.00; Hyrum Smith, \$169.00; Vinson Knight, \$262.00; Emma Smith, \$315.00; Joseph Smith, Sr., \$323.00; and W. J. Peterson, \$785.00. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, pp. 531-532)

Stanley B. Kimball has found evidence to show that the Ohio Senate finally did consider and reject a request to establish the "Kirtland Safety Society Bank," but he gives the date as February 10, 1837. This is more than a month after the Mormons had given up the idea and had decided to start an "Anti-Banking Company" (see *History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 470-471).

Although the Gentiles may have been skeptical of Joseph Smith's bank, many of the Mormons believed that it could not fail. Max Parkin says that the "confidence that the Saints had in the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company resulting from the solicitation of Joseph Smith and other leaders, no doubt prompted many to invest in it. The Saints demonstrated considerable optimism in the future of the bank and believed it would eventually become a **great financial institution**. The fact that this confidence was principally derived from the Prophet Joseph, unfortunately, led some Saints to make the unfounded conclusion that the bank could not fail because of its divine approbation" (*Conflict at Kirtland*, pp. 295-296).

On page 300 of the same book, Max Parkin says:

There can be no doubt that the Prophet and others encouraged the Saints to have confidence in the bank. Sidney Rigdon considered the Saints who refused to accept the bank currency as "covenant breakers," who by refusing "Kirtland Currency which was their temporal salvation" had put strength into the hands of their enemies.

Wilford Woodruff, who later became the fourth President of the Mormon Church, related the following:

Joseph then arose and like the lion of the Tribe of Judah poured

out his soul . . . When speaking of those who had professed to be his friends and the friends of humanity but who had turned traitors, **opposed the currency** and consequently the prosperity of Kirtland, he proclaimed that the **Lord would deal with them**. ("Journal History," under the date of April 9, 1837, as quoted in "The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland Ohio," typed copy, p. 236)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin says that "early in the year, word began to circulate that the bank was established by **divine revelation**" (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 297). In footnote 40 on the same page, Max Parkin states: "On January 27th the *Painesville Telegraph* printed a letter over the unidentified signature of 'Servantes' to the effect that the Kirtland bank was established by revelation."

In a meeting held September 3, 1837, John F. Boynton (who had been an Apostle in the Mormon Church) claimed that he understood that the bank was established because it was the will of God:

Elder Boynton again rose and still attributed his difficulties to the failure of the bank, stating that he understood **the bank was instituted by the will of God, and he had been told that it should never fail, let men do what they would**. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 509-510)

Warren Parrish, who had been an officer in the bank and had apostatized from the church, made this statement:

I have listened to him [i.e. Smith] with feelings of no ordinary kind, when he declared that the **audible voice of God, instructed him to establish a banking—anti banking institution**, who like Aaron's rod **shall swallow up all other banks** (the Bank of Monroe excepted,) and grow and flourish and spread from the rivers to the ends of the earth, and survive when all others should be laid in ruins. (*Painesville Republican*, February 22, 1838, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 297)

Wilford Woodruff, who remained true to the church and became the fourth President, confirmed the fact that Joseph Smith claimed to have a revelation concerning the bank. Under the date of January 6, 1837, he recorded the following in his journal:

I also herd [sic] President Joseph Smith, jr., declare in the presence of F. Williams, D. Whitmer, S. Smith, W. Parrish, and others in the Deposit office that **he had received that morning the word of the Lord upon the subject of the Kirtland Safety Society**. He was alone in a room by himself and he had not only [heard] the voice of the Spirit upon the Subject but even an **audible voice**. He did not tell us at that time what the Lord said upon the subject but remarked that if we would give heed to the commandments the Lord had given this morning all would be well. ("Wilford Woodruff's Journal," January 6, 1837, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 296)

On page 297 of the same book, Max Parkin quotes Wilford Woodruff as saying:

May the Lord bless Brother Joseph with all the Saints and support the above named institution and protect it so that every weapon formed against it may be broaken [sic] and come to nought while the **Kirtland Safety Society shall become the greatest of all institutions on earth**.

In January, 1837, Joseph Smith published the following in the *Messenger and Advocate*:

In connexion with the above Articles of Agreement of the Kirtland Safety Society, I beg leave to make a few remarks to all those who are preparing themselves, and appointing their wise men, for the purpose of building up Zion and her Stakes. It is wisdom and according to the mind of the Holy Spirit, that you should call at Kirtland, and receive counsel and instruction upon those principles that are necessary to further the great work of the Lord, and to establish the children of the Kingdom, according to the oracles of God, as they are had among us. And further, we invite the brethren from abroad, to call on us, and **take stock in our Safety Society**. And we would remind them



also of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah, . . . which are as follows: “Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, and to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold (**not their bank notes**) with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, . . .”

J. SMITH jr.

(*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 3, p. 443)

## Disaster

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states that the Kirtland Safety Society “became bankrupt” (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 1966, p. 110). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this comment: “The ‘Kirtland Safety Society’ enterprise **ended disastrously**” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 401-402).

Under the date of July 7, 1837, we find the following statement in Joseph Smith’s *History*:

Some time previous to this I resigned my office in the “Kirtland Safety Society,” disposed of my interest therein, and withdrew from the institution; being fully aware, after so long an experiment, that no institution of the kind, established upon just and righteous principles for a blessing not only to the Church but the whole nation, would be suffered to continue its operations in such an age of darkness, speculation and wickedness. (*History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 497)

In the *Messenger and Advocate*, July, 1837, we find the following:

1st Relative to the paper, purporting to be bank bills issued in this place, we say there is much of it in circulation, . . . We are aware that the currency of any paper circulating as money, depends on one simple fact, to make it so.—The public mind must be impressed with the belief that it can be converted into the precious metals, to the same amount that is stamped on the bill or bills; . . . What then is our duty under existing circumstances? Shall we all unite as one man, say it is good and make it so by taking it on a par with gold and silver? We will answer no, for the simple reason that we are few in number, compared with the world of mankind by whom we are surrounded. . . . Shall we then take it at its marked price for our property? We answer no. Our enemies far out number us, . . . if they receive any of our paper they receive it at a discount, and return it upon us again as soon as may be, and if we receive it at par we give them, voluntarily and with our eyes open, just that advantage over us, . . . (*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 3, pp. 538-539)

In the August, 1837, issue of the *Messenger and Advocate* we find the following statement by Joseph Smith:

### CAUTION

To the brethren and friends of the church of Latter Day Saints, I am disposed to say a word relative to the bills of the Kirtland Safety Society Bank. I hereby warn them to beware of speculators, renegades and gamblers, who are duping the unsuspecting and the unwary, by palming upon them, those bills, **which are of no worth, here**. I discountenance and disapprove of any and all such practices. I know them to be detrimental to the best interests of society, as well as to the principles of religion.

JOSEPH SMITH Jun.

(*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 3, p. 560)

After the Kirtland Bank failed, the Mormon leaders tried to blame the apostates. In an article published in the *Elders’ Journal* (edited by Joseph Smith) Warren Parrish, who is referred to as “mamma Parrish,” was accused of stealing more than \$25,000 from the bank:

But this is not all concerning mamma Parrish, The next business we find him in, is robbing the Kirtland Bank of **twenty five thousand dollars** at one time, and large sums at others, the managers had in the mean time, appointed him as Cashier, and F. G. Williams as President, and they managed the institution with a witness. Parrish stole the paper out of the institution, and went to buying bogus or counterfeit coin with it, . . . (*Elders’ Journal*, August, 1838, p. 58)

Fawn M. Brodie made this interesting observation concerning this matter:

If the bank needed a final blow to shatter what little prestige it still held among the faithful, it received it when Warren Parrish resigned as cashier, left the church, and began openly to describe the banking methods of the prophet. Parrish was later accused of absconding with \$25,000, but if he took the sum it must have been in **worthless bank notes**, since that amount of specie in the vaults would have saved the bank, at least during Joseph’s term as cashier. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 198)

Mrs. Brodie is probably correct in this matter because the *Elders’ Journal* said that it was “paper”—not specie—that Warren Parrish was accused of stealing.

Robert Kent Fielding stated:

A further excuse for failure was evolved... The story was told that Warren Parrish, . . . had stolen twenty five thousand dollars of the bank’s money, . . . It is most likely that the story is not true, for no valid record exists which charges him with culpability; . . . He may have retained possession of money printed by the society after it had declined in value. . . . It is known that Brigham Young, who had no official position in the bank, had large quantities of Kirtland notes, and that they were the official currency among the Saints soon after their arrival in Salt Lake Valley. Yet, he is not accused of fraud or theft. (“The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio,” Thesis, Indiana University, 1957, pp. 195-197)

By the year 1864 the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith had built up the story until it was absolutely ridiculous. He stated:

Warren Parrish was the teller of the bank, and a number of other men who apostatized were officers. They took out of its vault, unknown to the President or cashier, a **hundred thousand dollars**, and sent their agents around among the brethren to purchase their farms, wagons, cattle, horses and every thing they could get hold of. The brethren would gather up this money and put it into the bank, and those traitors would steal it and send it out to buy again, and they continued to do so until the plot was discovered and payment stopped. It was the cursed apostates—their stealing and robberies, and their infernal villainies that prevented that bank being conducted as the Prophet designed. If they had followed the counsel of Joseph, there is not a doubt but that it would have been the leading bank in Ohio, probably of the nation. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p. 11)

Although the Mormon leaders tried to shift the blame for the failure of the bank onto the apostates, there is evidence that they themselves were to blame. Robert Kent Fielding said:

. . . the issuance of Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Bank-ing Company notes commenced on January 6. Smith advised his Church members to bring their silver and gold (not their bank notes) and take stock in the company; but with a commendable caution, he wisely went to Painesville the day prior to the opening of business, where he and Rigdon signed a note for **three thousand dollars** from the Bank of Geauga, payable in forty-five days. The bank was obviously begun on a shoe string, and a **borrowed one at that**, but no one knew how thin and worn the string was until it was revealed that even the plates from which the notes had been printed had been purch[a]sed on credit. (“The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio,” typed copy, p. 190)

In a footnote on the same page, Mr. Fielding tells that the engravers who had made the plates which were used to print the bank notes had to sue to recover their money:

Underwood, Bald, Spencer and Hufty, engravers, sued for recovery of \$1450 and were awarded damages in April of 1839. The account was settled piecemeal by land sales under sheriff’s condemnations. Almon W. Babbitt, as agent for Joseph Smith, filed a “paid in full” receipt in April, 1841.

Robert Kent Fielding also states:

The Mormon Bank did not die a quick death. . . . The signal for its demise was given when Samuel D. Rounds

entered suit for himself and for the State of Ohio, under the 1816 statute for illegal banking. In Separate suits he sought convictions against Sidney Rigdon, Warren Parrish and Newell K. Whitney on the same charge. Unless that case could be won, there was not a chance for survival of the bank. When Smith's demurrer to the d[e]claration of the plaintiff was overruled by the court in June, even though the case was continued for jury trial, he must have known that the bank was finished. Smith does not mention the trial in his journal, but likely it loomed large in his estimate of the total situation. . . . Even the faithful Saints refused to accept Kirtland notes at par after July, 1837. So far in ruin was the Kirtland bank, as early as May, that it was unable to benefit by the general suspension of specie payments which came at that time throughout the nation.

The causes for the failure of the Mormon bank are sufficiently apparent in the errors incident to its founding, and were freely admitted in the official paper of the Church at the time. Later, however, neither the Mormons nor their enemies were content to see the rise and fall of the bank in terms of these facts. There is little to support the claims of the opponents of the Church that there was deception and fraud in the bank from beginning to end. On the other hand, the tendency of the Church to find excuses for failure which do not reflect quite so strongly upon the poor judgment of its leaders lacks substantial factual foundation. It is alleged that the fall of the bank was caused by the poor business conditions and the bank failures of 1837. It is evident from a study of the situation that, although the causes are similar, they are not identical; and it seems most probable that, if there had been no panic of 1837, the Mormon bank, launched and operated as it was, could not have endured for long. . . . The Saints were not the victims of the folly of others, but of their own folly. . . .

There has been a natural, although regrettable, tendency among the Mormons, to try any device to clear Joseph Smith of blame for the failure of the Bank, but he cannot logically be freed from some responsibility. The decision to establish a bank and later an anti-bank had been partly his. The bank had failed during the period in which he was one of its chief directing officials. He did not protest, so far as preserved accounts record, nor withdraw, until the ruin of the bank became a part of the general national ruin and identified with it. ("The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio," typed copy, pp. 193-197)

When the Sheriff arrived in Kirtland on February 10, with his summons for Joseph Smith to answer to Samuel D. Rounds and to the State of Ohio on the charge of illegal banking, there was widespread belief that the notorious Mormon hater Grandison Newel was behind it, that it was trumped up. . . . The plaintiff entered his plea in April term of court and Smith was scheduled to reply in June.

Meantime, Smith **knew the true condition of the bank, the three thousand dollars he and Rigdon had borrowed** from the Bank of Geauga to furnish specie for their own bank was gone and at length the forty-five day note came due. Smith and Rigdon evidently had no money to redeem it, for the bank brought suit for recovery. Realizing the effect a lawsuit for debts would have on the future of the bank, Smith bestirred himself with sufficient vigor so that by the time the case came to court in the March 21 term, a settlement had been arranged. . . .

It was natural that blame for the entire situation should be charged against the Prophet. They had gathered to Kirtland at his command; the idea of purchasing housing lots in the great subdivision scheme had his full support; he had inferred that the bank would not only succeed, but would one day be the most powerful institution of its kind. . . . the Church populace was genuinely disillusioned when the bank failed. It was difficult for them to comprehend that a man who claimed to have divine revelation in religious matters could fail so miserably in economic affairs. . . . No amount of shifting of blame could obscure the fact that a prophet had failed in a grand project. . . . As the Sheriff appeared ever more regularly with summons and as the fortunes and anticipations of one after another of the leaders faced the humiliating prospect of publicly acknowledged incompetence and bankruptcy, the discipline and sense of responsibility, which are the heart of all organizations, broke completely and plunged Mormondom into ecclesiastical anarchy. (*Ibid.*, pp. 233, 234, 237, 238)

In a thesis written at Brigham Young University, Gary Dean Guthrie stated:

The State legislature refused the Kirtland Safety Society its charter upon which the name of the bank was changed to Kirtland Anti-Banking Society. . . . Joseph and Sidney Rigdon were tried in court for violating the law, were found guilty and fined \$1,000. They appealed on the grounds that the institution was an association and not a bank; the plea was never ruled upon as the bank suspended payments and closed its doors. Other lawsuits followed. . . .

During the summer of 1837, Joseph spent much of his time away from Kirtland to avoid these lawsuits. . . . Apostles Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and John F. Boynton were rejected and disfellowshipped. . . .

The blame of the bank failure fell heavily on Joseph. He had issued a formal invitation to his followers to take stock in the venture and the institution had been organized outside the law. Heber C. Kimball later was to comment that at this moment, "there were not twenty persons on earth that would declare that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God." Six of the apostles came out in open rebellion. . . . Joseph first established the bank by revelation and then had to later admit that because of poor management and other internal and external conditions the project was a failure. ("Joseph Smith As An Administrator," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1969, pp. 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 88)

According to A. Metcalf, Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, said that "the Kirtland Bank **was a swindle**" and "About that time Harris began to lose confidence in Joe Smith, as a man of truth, honor and principle, yet he believed him to be a prophet of God" (*Ten Years Before The Mast*, as cited in *A New Witness For Christ In America*, vol. 2, p. 348).

Warren Parrish, who had been one of the bank's officers, charged Joseph Smith with deceit:

"I have been astonished to hear him declare that we had \$60,000 in specie in our vaults and \$600,000 at our command, when we had **not to exceed \$6,000 and could not command any more**; also that we had but about ten thousand dollars of our bills in circulation when he, as cashier of that institution, **knew that there was at least \$150,000.**" (Letter to *Zion's Watchman*, printed March 24, 1838, as quoted in *No Man Knows My History*, p. 197)

Fawn Brodie made this observation concerning the Kirtland Bank:

From its beginning the bank had been operating illegally. A state law fixed the penalty for such an offense at a thousand dollars and guaranteed informers a share of the fine. . . . on February 8 a writ was sworn out by Samuel D. Rounds. When the court convened on March 24, Joseph's lawyers tried to prove that the statute had not been in force at the time of the bank's organization, but they lost the case and Joseph was ordered to pay the thousand-dollar penalty and costs. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 198)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin says that "a fine of one thousand dollars each was executed upon Smith and Rigdon. A final decision was deferred on their defense that the Kirtland Safety Society was not a bank but a 'mutual savings association.' Inasmuch as some of the bank officials left the state within the next several months, the matter was never settled" (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 221).

Sidney Rigdon's son claimed that his father knew that it would not be legal to operate the bank without a charter but that Joseph Smith persuaded him to enter into the venture:

. . . Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were forced to leave Kirtland on account of their starting of the Kirtland Bank. My father opposed it. He said it **would not be legal** as they had no charter. He did not wish to have anything to do with it, but Joseph Smith thought differently and persuaded Father to sign bills as president and Joseph

signed them as cashier. They gave their notes for the bills; the bills came back to the bank faster than silver could be gotten to redeem them with. And the bank went down. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1966, pp. 27-28)

Regardless of who was to blame for starting the bank, both Smith and Rigdon were found guilty of illegal banking practices. For more information on the Kirtland Bank see our book, *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pp. 11-20.

## Bankruptcy

John Corrill made this statement:

And now I return to Kirtland with my story. After finishing the house of the Lord . . . the church found itself something like fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in debt, as near as I can recollect. . . . Notwithstanding they were deeply in debt, they had so managed as to keep up their credit, so they concluded to try mercantile business. Accordingly, they ran in debt in New York, and elsewhere, some thirty thousand dollars, for goods, and, shortly after, some fifty or sixty thousand more, as I was informed; . . .

During their mercantile and banking operations they not only indulged in pride, but also suffered jealousies to arise among them, and several persons dissented from the church, and accused the leaders of the church with bad management, selfishness, seeking for riches, honor, and dominion, tyrannising over the people, and striving constantly after power and property. (*A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 1839, pp. 26-27)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admits that the Mormons had purchased a large stock of goods on credit and were living on borrowed money:

We must now consider the calamitous events which befell the saints in Kirtland. . . . The mercantile establishments were enlarged and an **extensive stock of goods purchased on credit**. . . . The saints, also, it must be admitted, lived **extravagantly on borrowed money**. They had entered into the spirit of reckless speculation which for several years had been rife throughout the United States, and which expressed itself chiefly in land speculations and in excessive banking, culminating in the disastrous financial panic of 1837. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 398)

Reed Peck made this statement concerning the debts:

These men likewise engaged in heavy speculations in Banking Merchandising and other branc[h]es of business—. . . issued a large quantity of their paper in payment of debts and purchases of property; bought on credit heavy stocks of goods in Cleaveland Buffalo and N. York, and being \_\_\_\_\_ most unskillful persons in the world in managing to pay debts, were finally compelled to flee to Missouri, leaving their creditors minus about 30000 (independent of what they owed to their brethren) and Thousands of the “Kirtland Safety Society Bank” Bills not redeemed. . . . (*The Reed Peck Manuscript*, 1839, pp. 4-5)

Max Parkin admits that some of Joseph Smith’s bills were left unpaid in Kirtland:

. . . when the Prophet left Kirtland the following winter, he left behind **some unpaid bills** resulting from his mercantile business for which he had not received sufficient income to liquidate the purchasing costs. Some of the faithful Saints assisted him, but insufficient funds were raised, and he was forced to leave without clearing up all his outstanding debts. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 295)

Fawn M. Brodie gives this information:

The toppling of the Kirtland bank loosed a hornets’ nest. Creditors swarmed in upon Joseph armed with threats and warrants. He was terribly in debt. There is no way of knowing exactly how much he and his leading elders had borrowed, since the loyal Mormons left no itemized account of their own claims. But the local non-Mormon creditors whom he could not repay brought a series of suits against the prophet which the Geauga county court duly recorded. These records

tell a story of trouble that would have demolished the prestige and broken the spirit of a lesser man.

Thirteen suits were brought against him between June 1837 and April 1839, to collect sums totaling nearly \$25,000. The damages asked amounted to almost \$35,000. He was arrested seven times in four months, and his followers managed heroically to raise the \$38,428 required for bail. Of the thirteen suits only six were settled out of court—about \$12,000 out of the \$25,000. In the other seven the creditors either were awarded damages or won them by default.

Joseph had many additional debts that never resulted in court action. Some years later he compiled a list of still outstanding Kirtland loans, which amounted to more than \$33,000. If one adds to these the two great loans of \$30,000 and \$60,000 borrowed in New York and Buffalo in 1836, it would seem that the Mormon leaders owed to non-Mormon individuals and firms well over \$150,000. (*No Man Knows My History*, pp. 199-202)

Willis Thornton made this statement concerning the troubles that the Mormons had in Kirtland:

Their physical property, their homes, their farms, their stores and industries, their very temple itself, were **all about to be lost by foreclosure**. Church authorities have always described this as “legal persecution,” and there is no doubt that some of the creditors, like Grandison Newell, . . . got special pleasure out of enforcing their legal rights. On the other hand, the eastern merchants who had delivered thousands of dollars’ worth of goods which were sold at the Mormon stores, had a right to get such payment as they could, without the cry of persecution being raised. The plain fact is that the Mormons dissipated their physical “stake” in a riot of speculative excess. (*The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, January, 1954, p. 32)

After the Mormons left Kirtland, C. E. Emery, who had just arrived in the area, wrote the following to his parents:

We visited the great Mormon Temple that was built by Joseph Smith & Sidney Rigdon . . . they have proved themselves so basely dishonest in their dealings that they have been under the necessity of leaving [sic] their Temple and Village. The leaders left in the night in order to evade pursuit. (*Ibid.*, p. 30)

Joseph Smith admitted in his *History* that he fled from Kirtland in the night:

January, 1838.—A new year dawned upon the Church in Kirtland in all the bitterness of the spirit of apostate mobocracy; which continued to rage and grow hotter and hotter, until Elder Rigdon and myself were obliged to flee from its deadly influence, as did the Apostles and Prophets of old, and as Jesus said, “when they persecute you in one city, flee to another.” On the evening of the 12th of January, about ten o’clock, we left Kirtland, on horseback, to escape mob violence, which was about to burst upon us under the color of legal process to cover the hellish designs of our enemies, and to save themselves from the just judgment of the law. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 1)

Some years before the trouble in Kirtland, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the following appeared:

Behold, it is said in my laws, or forbidden, to get in debt to thine enemies;

But behold, it is not said at any time that the Lord should not **take when he pleases, and pay as seemeth him good**.

Wherefore, as ye are agents, ye are on the Lord’s errand; and whatever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord’s business. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 64, verses 27-29)

Joseph Smith’s enemies claimed that this revelation sanctioned the idea of borrowing from the Gentiles and not repaying the debts. The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe, on the other hand, claimed that Joseph Smith was completely honest in his business transactions:

A favorite charge against the Prophet by enemies of the latter-day work has been that he was not honest in business. Naturally, he and the Church were in business. . . .

In the normal course of business, money was occasionally



borrowed by Church members or by the Church itself to meet immediate needs, . . . Such dealings were of the usual, acceptable kind, wherever men do business with one another.

Joseph Smith, as the President of the Church, became of course, involved in all Church ventures, for which his signature was required. He also made purchases on his own account. . . .

One hundred years of diligent search by anti-Mormon writers have brought to light so few business clashes among Joseph Smith and the people of his day, as to be embarrassing to those who charge the Prophet with financial irregularity. No reliable evidence of dishonesty has yet been uncovered. There is no evidence that he at anytime attempted to escape his financial obligations. Instead, the evidence is that he sought to meet every honest obligation. For example, after leaving Kirtland where his life was in jeopardy, he made a list of his creditors and the amount he owed each. That was the method of an honest man. There was no subterfuge. (F. M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, p. 201.) Sooner or later, his honest debts were paid. (*Gospel Interpretations*, Salt Lake City, 1947, pp. 139-141)

Now, while it is true that Joseph Smith made a list of his creditors, he apparently did not intend to pay them, for in 1842 he tried to take out bankruptcy. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart states:

In the summer of 1842 he had reluctantly availed himself of the bankruptcy law passed by Congress, to dispose of a staggering debt load, . . . (*Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, p. 183)

Fawn M. Brodie states:

In the spring of 1841 he catalogued a list of his outstanding liabilities and found them to total over \$70,000, in addition to another \$33,000 carried over from Kirtland days. It is not surprising, therefore, that he looked with interest upon the bankruptcy law that Congress passed in 1841 to relieve the straits of the debtor class. (*No Man Knows My History*, p. 266)

On April 14, 1842, Joseph Smith recorded the following in his history:

Thursday, 14.—Calvin A. Warren, Esq., lawyer, from Quincy, arrived, and commenced an investigation of the principles of general insolvency in my behalf according to the statutes; for the United States Congress had previously instituted a general bankrupt law, . . . the law was as good for the Saints as for the Gentiles, and whether I would or not, I was forced into the measure . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 594-595)

On May 7, 1842, the following was published in *The Wasp* (a Mormon newspaper):

District Court of the United States,  
within and for the District of Illinois,

In the matter of the Petition of **Joseph Smith**, of Hancock County to be declared a **bankrupt** and to be discharged from his debts.

Notice is hereby given, that Joseph Smith, of Hancock county has filed his petition in this Court to be declared a Bankrupt and to be discharged from his debts under the Act of Congress, in such case made provided: and that an order has been duly entered in this Court appointing the 6th day of June next, at the District court room in the City of Springfield in this District, as the time and place for the hearing of said petition: all persons interested may then and there appear and show cause, if any they have, why the prayer of said Petition should not be granted.

Dated this 28th day of April A.D. 1842.

J. H. ROLSTON, WARREN & WHEAT, Solicitors for Petitioner.

Attest: James F. Owings Clerk.

(*The Wasp*, May 7, 1842)

## Fraudulent Acts

Shortly after Joseph Smith petitioned to be declared a bankrupt, John C. Bennett published his book *History of the Saints*. In this book he charged that Joseph Smith fraudulently transferred some of his property to others to avoid losing it (see *History of the Saints*, 1842, pp. 96-98; also *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 1, pp. 23-24).

J. Butterfield, United States Attorney for the District of Illinois, saw John C. Bennett's charges printed in the *Sangamo Journal* on July 15, 1842. He felt that an investigation should be made to see if Bennett's accusations were true. In 1840 Joseph Smith and four others had signed a promissory note to the United States Government for \$4866.38 which they had not paid off. Therefore, Butterfield proceeded to Nauvoo to make his investigation. After making the investigation, he wrote a letter to C. B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, in which he stated:

On the 8th day of Sept last I left Chicago for Nauvoo the place of residence of Joseph Smith & Hyrum Smith applicants for the benefit of the Bankrupt Act, in order to obtain the necessary evidence to oppose them as I informed you I should do in my letter of the 7th of Sept. last: Upon my arrival at Nauvoo I made a very full examination into the transfers of property made by Joseph Smith upon the eve of his application for the benefit of the said act, and I **succeeded beyond my expectations**; I found that after the passage of the Bankrupt Act, and after he had contracted the debt upon which the judg't. in favor of the United States was rendered against him, he made voluntary conveyances of real estate of an amount much more than sufficient to satisfy the said judgment to **his wife** and to his **infant children** and friends, without any consideration whatever: I found that **all the statements made by Gen'l. Bennett in relation to Joseph Smith's fraudulent transfers of his property were true**; and that there were **several other fraudulent conveyances** not mentioned by him.... I shall be ready to establish **such fraudulent acts on the part of Joseph Smith** as will prevent his discharge. (Letter by J. Butterfield, U.S. Attorney for the District of Illinois, to C. B. Penrose, Solicitor of the Treasury, dated Oct. 13, 1842, found in the National Archives of the United States, Records of the Solicitor of the Treasury, Record Group 206, microfilm copy)

The attempt to stop Joseph Smith from obtaining benefit of the Bankrupt Act was successful, for on August 6, 1844, Butterfield wrote C. B. Penrose a letter in which he stated: "I defeated Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet from obtaining the benefit of the Bankrupt Act."

Since Joseph Smith died in 1844, the matter was not settled until after his death. In a "Reference Service Report" from the National Archives, dated Sept. 23, 1963, we find that a judgment "was rendered against the widow of Joseph Smith and 104 other defendants . . . in which the decree of the court was satisfied by sale of the defendants' lands."

The Mormons were apparently still in debt when they left Nauvoo, for Brigham Young wrote a letter to "Babbit, Heywood & Fullmer Trustees, etc., on September 27, 1846, in which he stated:

The Church here, in general council with us this day, voted that the Temple, and all Church property at Nauvoo be sold . . . but, let your funds be ever so great, **pay no more money to the gentiles on old debts**. ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," Sept. 28, 1846, typed copy)

## Counterfeiting

In this chapter we have shown that Joseph Smith was guilty of "illegal banking practices" and "fraudulent transfers of his property." One of the most serious charges against him, however, was that he engaged in counterfeiting. Joseph H. Jackson made these serious charges in a booklet published in Warsaw, Illinois:

In order to fathom the depths of Joe's villany, I was obliged to appear to him as an abandoned wretch and outcast. When I told him I was a fugitive from justice, and had committed the darkest crimes, it seemed to give him the greatest confidence, . . .

About two days after . . . He then pressed me to stay, and enter into the manufacture of bogus; to which I consented, hoping to be able to get a clue to another branch of his villany. . . . he sent two hundred dollars to St. Louis for German plate, and went to work in a remote part of

the town to fit up for operation. . . . The first attempts at bogus-making were rather rough; but in October, Messrs. Barton and Eaton came on from Buffalo, . . . and brought with them a splendid press, . . . The press was put up in the south-east room, up stairs, of the house formerly occupied by Joe, being the same room where the Holy Order had previously met. The business was then rushed ahead in good earnest, and an excellent specimen of base coin produced. Soon the city was flooded with this money, . . . Joe had given out that the room occupied by the press, was rented to Messrs. Barton and Eaton, who were mechanics, and were making drafts for the machinery of a factory which they contemplated erecting. The press continued to run until they had manufactured about \$350,000. . . . All the twelve apostles, except Orson Pratt, and Eben [Heber?] C. Kimball, were engaged in this business, and frequently visited the room where the press was, and took turns in working it. . . . Joe told me, that in Ohio, he, Dr. Boynton, Lyman Wight, Oliver Cowdry, and Hyrum, were engaged in a bogus establishment on Licking Creek, but that their operations were cut short by the bursting of the Kirtland Bank. (*The Adventures and Experience of Joseph H. Jackson*: . . . , Warsaw, Illinois, 1846, pp. 10-12, 15)

Joseph H. Jackson said:

In the spring of 1843 I told Harmon T. Wilson, that I was determined to head Joe and in order to do so that I would go to Nauvoo insinuate myself into his favor, win his affection and confidence, and that if he really was a villain I would find it out, and at a proper season I would disclose all to him, that as an officer of the Law, he might have an opportunity to bring the scamp to justice. . . . The fact that Joe is engaged in counterfeiting, also came to my knowledge while in his confidence; . . . (*Warsaw Signal*, June 5, 1844)

Since Joseph H. Jackson was an adventurer and admitted that he deceived Joseph Smith to obtain his information, his story is somewhat suspect. On the other hand, Jackson's charges cannot be completely dismissed. We know that he was acquainted with Joseph Smith. Under the date of May 20, 1843, we find this statement in Joseph Smith's *History*:

Mr. Joseph H. Jackson representing himself as being out of employment and destitute of funds, he desired I would employ him and relieve his necessities. I took compassion and employed him as a clerk to sell lands, so as to give him a chance in the world. (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 400)

According to Joseph H. Jackson, he told Joseph Smith he was "an outlaw and fugitive from justice." That Smith felt that Jackson was a criminal is evident from a statement made by Brigham Young on January 27, 1845:

Cain was permitted to live, peradventure, he might repent . . . this is the reason that Brother Joseph **bore so long with Jackson** and others, that peradventure they might, notwithstanding they had been guilty of **murder** and **robbery**, come to the waters of baptism through repentance, and redeem a part of their allotted time. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 366)

Joseph H. Jackson's statement that Joseph Smith told him "that in Ohio, he, Dr. Boynton, Lyman Wight, **Oliver Cowdry**, and Hyrum, were engaged with others in a bogus establishment" is very interesting in light of the information found in the "Far West Record." As we have already shown, the Mormon leaders suppressed this record, but Leland Gentry, a Mormon scholar who was working on his thesis at the Brigham Young University, was permitted access to it. On page 117 of the "Far West Record," Leland Gentry found testimony given by Joseph Smith and Fredrick G. Williams that tends to link Oliver Cowdry, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, with the bogus business. Leland Gentry states:

[Fredrick G.] Williams, . . . testified that **Oliver had personally informed him of a man in the Church by the name of Davis who would compound metal and make dies which could print money that could not be detected from the real thing.** Oliver allegedly told

Williams that there was **no harm** in accepting and passing around such money, provided it could not be determined to be unsound.

**Joseph Smith's testimony was similar.** He claimed that a non-member of the Church by the name of Sapham had told him in Kirtland that a **warrant** had been issued **against Oliver** "for being engaged in making a purchase of **bogus money and dies** to make the counterfeit money with." According to the Prophet, he and Sidney Rigdon went to visit Oliver concerning the matter and told him that if he were **guilty, he had better leave town**; but if he was innocent, he should stand trial and thus be acquitted. "That night or next," the Prophet said, **Oliver "left the country."** (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, Brigham Young University, 1965, p. 146)

While this does not prove Jackson's charge that Joseph Smith was actually involved with Oliver Cowdry in the "bogus establishment," it certainly casts a shadow of doubt on Smith's character and makes the charge seem more believable. It would appear from Joseph Smith's own statement that he was almost an accessory after the fact, since he warned Oliver Cowdry to flee from the law if he was guilty.

Since we know that the Mormon leaders were engaged in "illegal banking practices" in Kirtland and that they were in serious financial trouble at the time, it is easy to see how they could become involved in counterfeiting. Reed Peck made this interesting observation:

These men . . . established a bank without a charter. . . . A bitter quarrel originated in these transactions between the Smith's and S. Rigdon on one part and the Cowderies Johnson and David Whitmer on the other. . . . Very many credible persons in the society have asserted that while the "money fever raged in Kirtland the leaders of the church and others were, more or less, engaged in purchasing and circulating" Bogas money or counterfeit coin and a good evidence that the report is not without foundation is that each of these contending parties accuses the other of this crime (*The Reed Peck Manuscript—An Important Document Written in 1839*, pp. 4, 5)

In a letter written by 84 Mormons in June, 1838, both Oliver Cowdry and David Whitmer were accused of selling bogus money:

Oliver Cowdry, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson, united with a gang of counterfeiters, . . . During the full career of Oliver Cowdry and David Whitmer's bogus money business, it got abroad into the world that they were engaged in it, and several gentlemen were preparing to commence a prosecution against Cowdry; he finding it out, took with him Lyman E. Johnson, and fled. . . . (Letter quoted in *Senate Document 189*, February 15, 1841, p. 8)

The reader will remember that Oliver Cowdry and David Whitmer were witnesses to the Book of Mormon. Now, if two of the three special witnesses to the Book of Mormon were involved in counterfeiting, and if Joseph Smith helped Cowdry to escape from the law as the "Far West Record" seems to show, how can we rely on their story concerning the "gold plates"?

At any rate, the charges of counterfeiting followed the Mormons to Nauvoo. Just before Joseph Smith's death, the *Warsaw Signal* contained a number of articles stating that the Mormons were involved in passing or making counterfeit coin:

There is a species of counterfeit, extensively circulated in this community, called Nauvoo Bogus. They are half dollars, dated 1828. They are a pretty good imitation of the genuine coin—so good, that some of our business men have been imposed upon by them. It is said they are manufactured in the City of the Saints. (*Warsaw Signal*, April 24, 1844)

COUNTERFEITING, &c.—On a former occasion, we stated that a species of counterfeit money—called Nauvoo Bogus, was extensively circulated in this vicinity. We have since heard the charge distinctly made by one who has had an opportunity of knowing the facts, that Joe Smith, . . . is engaged in this nefarious business. . . . the fact is notorious that bogus is made in Nauvoo. Here then, we have a band



of counterfeiters in our midst, who can defy the laws under the protection of a pretended prophet. . . . An officer of justice might as well go to perogatory to find a culprit as to Nauvoo, if Joe has taken him in charge. . . . (*Warsaw Signal*, June 5, 1844)

The Nauvoo Bogus factories are in full blast, judging from the quantity of base, and counterfeit coin in the city. Since the Mormons have learned they are safe as regards punishment by our laws, they seem bold in talking about their Bogus operations, &c. (*Ibid.*, June 12, 1844)

### Apostles Indicted

After Joseph Smith's death the non-Mormons continued to accuse the Mormon leaders of counterfeiting. On December 25, 1844, we find this statement in the *Warsaw Signal*:

The Latter-Brethren have lately carried on their Bogus operations extensively. Not less than a dozen farmers who have taken their pork to Nauvoo, have been paid in spurious coin, or counterfeit bills.

On January 8, 1845, the *Warsaw Signal* reported the following:

We learn, that last week an officer having a warrant from Gov. Ford, issued on a requisition from the Governor of New York, for one Eaton, who is the king of the Nauvoo Bogus Factory, went to the Holy City to make the arrest. This, the officer did . . . About 11 o'clock, the prisoner having procured a pistol by some means unknown, presented it to the officer, and swore he was going. . . . The house being surrounded by Eaton's friends, he was carried off in triumph and the officer mocked. And this is Holy Nauvoo, the residence of Gov. Ford's peaceful saints. (*Warsaw Signal*, January 8, 1845)

The reader will probably remember that Jackson claimed that a man by the name of Eaton came from Buffalo and helped Joseph Smith in the counterfeiting operation. Joseph Smith's mother speaks of "a man named **Eaton**, who was our friend, . . ." (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, London, 1853, p. 276).

The Mormon paper, *Nauvoo Neighbor*, admitted that some counterfeit coins might have been paid out in Nauvoo, but it denied that they were made by the Mormons:

Spurious.—The *Burlington Gazette* mentions spurious "half Eagles," and intimates that they came from Nauvoo. That such coin might pass through or be paid out in Nauvoo, we have no doubt;—for such tricks are as "plentiful as blackberries;" but they are made in other "diggings," and vended by some of the birds of passage, . . . (*Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 28, 1845)

Rumors of counterfeiting continued, and on December 2, 1845, the *St. Louis American* reported the following:

COUNTERFEITERS ARRESTED.—Two of the Nauvoo Saints were arrested in Burlington, Iowa on the 20th ult., for passing counterfeit money. Their names were Cyrus Chase and Rufus Adams, and each had passed on the same day a \$10 bill on the Lafayette Bank of Cincinnati. Other counterfeit money was found upon them. They were both committed for trial. (*St. Louis American*, December 2, 1845, typed copy)

On December 27, 1845, the *St. Louis American* contained this information:

During the last week, twelve bills of indictment, for counterfeiting Mexican dollars, and American half dollars and dimes, were found by the Grand Jury, and presented to the United States Circuit Court, in session in this city, against different persons in and about Nauvoo.

On January 9, 1846, the *St. Louis American* reported that "some of the leaders of the Mormon Church" were among those indicted on the charge of counterfeiting. Brigham Young and several Mormon Apostles were included among those indicted for that reason. On January 7, 1846, the *Warsaw Signal* contained the following:

During the last week, twelve bills of indictment, for counterfeiting Mexican dollars, and American half dollars and dimes, were found by the Grand Jury, and presented to the United States Circuit Court, in session in this city, against different persons in and about Nauvoo, embracing some of the "Holy Twelve," and other prominent Mormons, and other persons in league with them. From incidental remarks made by some of the witnesses in private conversation (not before the jury,) we are led to believe that a large amount of counterfeit coin of the above description, is, and has been for a long time past, circulating in the western country. . . . It was said that the Mormons had three presses for counterfeiting the coin named, and that Joe Smith worked most industriously at the business. In fact, Joe used to bo[a]st of his "mint." A short time previous to his death, in speaking of the power of his establishment to imitate the coin above named, he was repeatedly heard to say that "it would beat the mint," and seemed, with others of his confidential advisers, to exult at their ability to manufacture "land office money"—that being the term by which the better quality of their issues were distinguished.

There are said to have been three qualities of the spurious money manufactured which were sold for 75, 50 and 25 cents for the dollar. That for which the highest price was asked, is said to be so perfect as to escape the most rigid scrutiny of the eye—the outer coat being of pure silver, and the alloy so completely covered as to prevent detection in any other way than by cutting. . . . An officer has since been sent to Nauvoo to make the arrests; but we apprehend there is no probability of his success; for, whatever crimes these Mormons commit, the rest are all ready and willing if not bound by an oath to secrete the culprit, or aid his escape, either by fraud or force. The Court, it is understood, will continue in session this week, to give time to the Marshal to make his return. If those indicted are brought before the Court, they will probably be tried the present term; if not, they will be likely to go "unwhipt of justice."—[*Springfield Journal*, Dec. 25.] (*Warsaw Signal*, January 7, 1846)

### "Bogus Brigham"

Brigham Young had no intention of submitting to the law. The *Warsaw Signal* reported the following:

The best joke of the season was played off, last week, by the Saints, on the United States deputy Marshall for Illinois. It appears that Brigham Young and other Saints, were indicted at the late Term of the United States Circuit Court at Springfield, for Bogus making. On Tuesday of last week, the Deputy Marshall, accompanied by eight of the Hancock Guard, and Mr. Benson . . . went to the Temple, . . . and soon Mr. Benson pointed out Brigham, accompanied by some ladies, in the act of getting into a carriage. The Marshall immediately walked up and arrested him. The Saints learning what had been done assembled around the prisoner and swore that he should not be taken out of town. . . . After considerable bluster, the Saints began to cool off and the prisoner was taken to the tavern. The saints now began to show long faces and seemed very much affected. . . . As the officer and his posse left with their charge they broke out in such strains as these; "Farwell Brother Brigham." "We hope you will soon return." "May the Lord bless you Brother Brigham and grant you a safe deliverance." . . . On arriving at Carthage, the prisoner . . . was carefully watched. . . . G. W. Thatcher, Esq., went in to see him. Soon he returned with a very knowing look, and affirmed that there was no Brigham Young there, and the Prisoner was an entirely different personage.—An investigation was gone into and sure enough it turned out that the Saints had, by putting the cloak & cap of the apostle on a man who resembled him in figure and appearance, first deceived Mr. Benson, and then by playing well their part, had prevented any suspicion from arising in the minds of any of the company that they had got the wrong pig by the ear.—The Marshall on learning he had been hoaxed released the prisoner and now says the Saints may "have his hat." (*Warsaw Signal*, December 31, 1845)



Another article on the same page contained this information: “The U.S. Marshall, after being sadly humbugged in Nauvoo returned to the city to get the real Brigham, but it was no go. Of course Brigham could not be found.”

Although Brigham Young denied that he was guilty of counterfeiting, he admitted in the *History of the Church* that he had tricked the U.S. Marshal. Under the date of December 23, 1845, we find the following:

One-five p.m. Almon W. Babbitt came into the Temple and informed me that there were some federal officers from Springfield accompanied by several of the state troops in the city for the purpose of arresting some of the Twelve, especially Amasa Lyman and myself. . . .

William Miller put on my cap and Brother Kimball’s cloak and went downstairs meeting the marshal and his assistants at the door, as he was about getting into my carriage the marshal arrested him, on a writ from the United States court, charging him with counterfeiting the coin of the United States. . . .

The marshal put up at Hamilton’s Tavern, . . . William Backenstos was called in and he told them William Miller was not Brigham Young. . . .

Eight-twenty, I left the Temple disguised and shortly after Brothers Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, George A. Smith and Amasa Lyman left, to elude the vexatious writs of our persecutors. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 549-551)

Brigham Young felt that this was one of the “best jokes ever perpetrated.” In a discourse delivered July 23, 1871, he said:

I do not profess to be much of a joker, but I do think this to be one of the best jokes ever perpetrated. . . . I learned that a posse was lurking around the Temple, and that the United States Marshal was waiting for me to come down, . . . I saw brother William Miller leaning against the wall. . . . Said I to him, “Brother William, . . . will you go and do just as I tell you? If you will, I will serve them a trick.” . . .

Just as brother Miller was entering the carriage, the Marshal stepped up to him, . . . They both went to the Mansion House. There were my sons . . . and brother Heber C. Kimball’s boys, . . . all seemed at once to understand and partake of the joke. They followed the carriage . . . and gathered around brother Miller, with tears in their eyes, saying, “Father, or President Young, where are you going?” Brother Miller looked at them kindly, but made no reply, and the Marshal really thought he had got “Brother Brigham.” . . . So it continued, until an apostate Mormon, . . . asked the landlord where Brigham Young was. The landlord, pointing across the table to brother Miller, said, “That is Mr. Young.” Thatcher replied, “Where? I can’t see any one that looks like Brigham.” . . . the Marshal, in a rage, walked out of the room, followed by brother Miller, . . . and this is the real pith of the story of “Bogus” Brigham, as far as I can recollect. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 14, pp. 218-219)

## The Whittlers

While the Mormons remained in Nauvoo, the Mormon leaders were constantly bothered by the law. They claimed they could not allow themselves to be arrested because they might meet the same fate as Joseph Smith. Brigham Young recorded the following statements in the *History of the Church* for 1845:

Tuesday, 13.—. . . at Brother Hunter’s where we had retired to keep out of the way of writs reported to have been issued against us. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 408)

Monday, 23.—The sheriff came in with writs for a number of brethren and succeeded in arresting O. P. Rockwell and J. P. Harmon, but Rockwell got away from him. A constable from LeHarpe came in with writs for Brother Taylor, myself and others, but we kept out of the way. (*Ibid.*, p. 428)

Thursday, 23.—A detachment of the governor’s troops came in from Carthage to search for a **bogus press**. They searched Lucien Woodworth’s house in vain. (*Ibid.*, p. 485)

Sheriff Backenstos informed me that the United States deputy marshal was in town with writs for the Twelve and Brother George Miller. . . . the United States Deputy Marshal Roberts, went to the Temple in company with Almon W. Babbitt and searched for the Twelve and others. (*Ibid.*, p. 553)

The reader will notice that “Sheriff Backenstos” helped the Twelve escape from the U.S. Marshal. Robert Bruce Flanders states that Backenstos was “elected by Mormon votes” (*Nauvoo—Kingdom on the Mississippi*, p. 327). Flanders also states that Backenstos was “fiercely hated by the anti-Mormons both as a ‘corrupt bargain’ politician and a gentile traitor” (*Ibid.*, p. 328, n. 46).

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, threatened the officers who attempted to serve writs with death. Brigham Young stated:

Saturday, 12. . . . the U.S. deputy marshal for the district of Illinois arrived in town with writs for myself and others.

Sunday, 13.—Meeting at the stand. Elders Heber C. Kimball and John Taylor preached. Several officers attended meeting. Elder Taylor gave them to understand that if they made an attempt to serve writs on him it **would cost them their lives**, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 395-396)

Hosea Stout recorded these interesting statements in his diary:

Thursday Feb. 12th 1846. . . . At two was informed that some of the Carthage troops were in the city with writs for some of the brethren and me among the rest whereupon I called out all the troops belonging to our camp and agreed that if any of them came across the river after any of us as we were informed they intended that we would put them to death rather than be Harrassed as we have been after we had started to leave their cursed & corrupt government and also established a line of skiffs across the river . . . (*On The Mormon Frontier: The Diary Of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 121)

On April 23, 1845, the *Warsaw Signal* reported: “On last Tuesday week, A. S. Headleston, Constable of Carthage, having visited Nauvoo in order to serve some subpoenas, was visited by the gang of ‘whistlers and whittlers’ and escorted from the city.” John D. Lee gives this information concerning the “whittlers”:

Thus things grew worse the longer the Saints remained at Nauvoo. It was an unfortunate matter, and much of the trouble that came upon the Church was brought on through the folly and fanaticism of the Saints. I have seen relentless cruelty practiced by those who directed this cattle stealing. I cannot call it anything else, though they called it getting back what had been taken from them. It caused many strangers to come to the city to look for traces of their cattle. A company was organized, called the “**whittlers**.” They had **long knives**, and when any of these strangers would come to town, they would gather around him, and whittle; none of them saying a word, no matter what question was asked. They would thus watch any stranger, gathering close to him, until they finally ran him out of town. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photomechanical reprint of 1880 edition, p. 168)

Oliver B. Huntington recorded the following in his journal:

“I belonged to the ‘Whittling Society’ and the 6th of April helped whittle doctor Charle of Warsaw out of town. . . . no one liked the sight of **1/2 dozen large knives whittling about their ears** and not a word said.” (“Journal of Oliver B. Huntington,” vol. 1, p. 56, as quoted in *On The Mormon Frontier*, vol. 1, p. 33)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, made these statements:

And that State robbed us of the rights of freemen; and the only chance we had then, when they sent their scamps and rogues among us, was to have a **whittling society and whittle them out**. We could **not** get them out according to law, and we had to do it according to justice; and there was no law against whittling,—so we **whittled the scoundrels out**.

I remember that one of the legislators who had annulled our charter, named Dr. Charles, went to President Young, and says he, "Mr. Young, I am very much imposed upon by the people around here; there are a lot of boys following me **with long knives, and they are whittling after me wherever I go; my life is in danger.**"

Brother Young replied, "I am very sorry you are imposed upon by the people: we used to have laws here, but you have taken them away from us: we have no law to protect you **'your cause is just, but we can do nothing for you.'**" Boys, don't frighten him, don't." . . .

[Voice: "We still have **whittling societies.**"]

Yes, we still have whittling societies, as brother Kimball says. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, pp. 150-151)

It is obvious that the Mormon leaders used their "whittling society" to protect them from the law. For more information on this matter see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, pp. 58-60.

### Government Records

The United States Government has preserved some important records concerning the indictment of the Mormon leaders for counterfeiting. In a "Reference Service Report," dated December 11, 1963, Hardee Allen made these statements:

INQUIRY: Information about Records Relating to the Indictment

in Illinois of Brigham Young, Mormon Leader, and Apostles of the Mormon Church, 1845-1848, for counterfeiting.

Report: The records of the Solicitor of the Treasury (National Archives Record Group 206) contain a few summary references to the indictment, and proceeding thereunder, of Brigham Young and eleven other men on the charge of counterfeiting, the indictment having been presented in December 1845 in the United States Circuit Court for the District of Illinois. These references appear in form reports on suits brought and pending and on cases decided that the United States Attorney and the Clerk of the United States Circuit Court for the District of Illinois made periodically to the Solicitor of the Treasury. The National Archives can furnish negative photostats of the pertinent United States Attorneys' reports (from Reports of the U.S. District Attorneys, From 1845 to 1850), as follows:

1. Report of Suits Pending in the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Illinois at its December Term 1845, listing suits brought in that court on indictments for counterfeiting, dated December 17 and December 18, 1845, against Brigham Young and 11 other men, . . .

2. Report of Suits Pending at the June Term 1846, which identifies Brigham Young and most of the others charged with counterfeiting as "not arrested." 1 page; negative photostat, 75 cents.

Below is a photograph of a U.S. Government record which shows that Brigham Young and four of the other Mormon Apostles (Willard Richards, John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt and Orson Hyde) were indicted for counterfeiting.

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY OF THE UNITED STATES,										
District of _____ day of _____ 18__										
SIR: I herewith report the following SUITS PENDING at the _____ term of the _____ Court of the United States for the _____ District of _____ which term ended on the _____ day of _____ 18__										
To THE SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY.										
Note.—When the suit is in rem, state the thing seized, and the claimant's name, (if known) instead of the principal and money. Suits against Pourcasters, Mail Contractors, and their sureties, and against persons for violating the Post-Office laws, are not to be reported to the Solicitor of the Treasury.										
PRINCIPALS	SUBJECTS	FORM OF ACTION	WHEN BROUGHT	ON WHAT BROUGHT	NUMBER	DATE	WHEN DUE	AMOUNT CLAIMED		REMARKS
								Dollars	Cents	
Theodore Tuley		Indictment	Dec 17, 1845							This is an indictment for counterfeiting the current coin of the U.S. The defendant, who is the chief manufacturer of dies & medals at Danvers, from the testimony before the Grand Jury, it appears that counterfeiting coins have been largely carried on at that place for some years. The defendant lives at the source of the coin.
Augustus Barton		The Same	Dec 18, 1845							This is also an indictment for counterfeiting coins.
Willard Eaton		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above
John Hayes		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above
Brigham Young		Same	Dec 17, 1845							Same as above. He is the head of the Mormon Church and the chief of the twelve apostles of that sect.
Willard Richards		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above. He is also one of the twelve.
John Taylor		Same								Same as above. also one of the twelve.
Parley P. Pratt		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above. also one of the twelve.
Orson Hyde		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above. one of the twelve.
Joseph H. Jackson		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above
Carlos Gore		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above
Edward Donney		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above. He is in custody. continue on his affidavit.
John Taylor		Same	Dec 18, 1845							Same as above. High suit assigned.

*W. Williams, Secy. of the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Illinois, is hereby notified to be a true and correct abstract of the proceedings and proceedings in said court at the said term. The report of said court is to be filed in the records of this office. Dated 3<sup>d</sup> 1846.*

*Wm. H. Clark, Clerk of the Court.*



The United States Attorneys' reports in the records of the Solicitor of the Treasury do not show the disposition of the charges against Brigham Young and 10 others. These reports do not include any report for the December Term 1848, but the reports of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Illinois, which for the most part duplicate the United States Attorney's reports, do contain a report for the December Term 1848 which shows that the cases against Brigham Young and 10 others (not including Edward Bonney), indicted for counterfeiting, had been dismissed at that Term of the court. The National Archives can furnish negative photostats of the pertinent Clerks' reports (from Reports of the Clerks of the U.S. Courts, 1846 to 1850) . . .

In the same "Reference Service Report," Hardee Allen lists 16 reports that are related to these indictments and states that "The National Archives can supply negative photostats of any of these reports at the prices listed, or a 35 mm. microfilm of all of them (16 pages) for \$2.50." We have obtained a copy of this microfilm and find it rather revealing.

According to these records, Brigham Young and four of the other Apostles (Willard Richards, John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt and Orson Hyde) were indicted "for counterfeiting the current coin of the U.S." Among the list of others indicted we find the name "Joseph H. Jackson." This is very interesting, for Jackson, as we have already shown, admitted that he "consented" to help Joseph Smith in "the manufacture of bogus." Jackson also stated that "Barton and Eaton" were in on the bogus operation in Nauvoo. Among the list of those indicted we find the names "Augustus Barton" and "Gilbert Eaton."

Theodore Turley was also indicted. This comment concerning Turley appears in a handwritten note on the record showing the indictment: "This is an indictment for counterfeiting the current coin of the U.S. The defendant, who is the chief manufacturer of dies &c resides at Nauvoo. From the testimony before the Grand Jury, it appeared that counterfeiting coin has been largely carried on at that place for some years. The defendant evades the service of process." It is interesting to note that when the Mormons condemned the *Nauvoo Expositor*, they relied upon the testimony of Theodore Turley:

. . . the Mayor [Joseph Smith]...called upon Theodore Turley, a mechanic, who being sworn, said that the Laws (William and Wilson,) had brought **bogus dies** to him to fix. (*History of the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 434-435)

Joseph Smith was certainly acquainted with Turley, for he made this statement in the *History of the Church* under the date of March 10, 1843: "I told Theodore Turley that I had no objection to his building a brewery" (*History of the Church*, vol. 5, p. 300).

Under Brigham Young's leadership, Theodore Turley became a member of the Council of Fifty (*Quest for Empire*, p. 224). Under the date of November 16, 1845, Brigham Young recorded that Turley had been arrested for counterfeiting: "I learned that Elder Theodore Turley has been arrested at Alton on a charge of bogus-making" (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 525). On November 24, 1845, Brigham Young recorded: "The council wrote Elder Theodore Turley who is now in jail awaiting his examination" (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 532). Turley apparently received help to pay his bail and then fled west with the Mormons. A U.S. Government record dated January 12, 1847, contains this statement concerning Turley: "The deft in this case is beyond the reach of process—proceeding against his bail have been had—further proceedings useless." Under the date of March 28, 1846, Brigham Young recorded the following in his "Manuscript History":

I met my captains of Tens at the Post Office at 3:40 p.m.; immediately after which Theodore Turley came into the Council and reported that Edward Bonney, Haight and another man had been in pursuit of him for two or three days, they had followed him

from Richardson's Point within five or six miles of this place, but by several meanderings and disguises he had escaped them; that his family were at Richardson's Point, and had not team sufficient to bring them on. ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," March 28, 1846, typed copy)

On November 28, 1847, Brigham Young recorded this statement in the *History of the Church*: "I met with the Twelve and high council in the forenoon, Theodore Turley and Joseph Fielding were voted members of the high council" (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 620).

Among the list of those indicted we find the name "Peter Hawes." Klaus J. Hansen shows that he was a member of the "Council of Fifty under Joseph Smith" (*Quest For Empire*, p. 223). The "Manuscript History of Brigham Young" makes it very clear that Peter Haws was involved in the "bogus" business after the Mormons left Nauvoo, for Brigham Young wrote the following under the date of May 12, 1846:

While I was standing with Prest. Kimball at his tent, an outcry was heard from Peter Haws' Camp; we repaired thither and found that Haws and Thomas Williams and two others had a quarrel about some property, etc. that Haws had let Williams have some **bogus money** on shares and Williams had not paid him his share of the profits. I reproved them for dealing in base coin and told Haws he could not govern himself, his family, or a company; and unless he repented and forsook such dishonesty, the hand of the Lord would be against him and all those who partook of such corruption. ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," May 12, 1846, typed copy)

In the *History of the Church*, the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts refers to this incident, but he does not tell that it was Peter Haws who was involved:

The matter of counterfeit money spoken of in the above remarks, is again referred to in the Manuscript History of Brigham Young. It appears that the man who had the counterfeit money in his possession had let another brother have some of it on shares, which he was to exchange among the settlers north and south of the line of march in exchange for goods, etc. This man had not shared the profits with the man who gave him the bogus and hence a quarrel between them. President Young being brought to the scene of the quarrel reproved them for dealing in base coin and told the originator of the trouble that he could not govern himself, his family or a company; and unless he repented and forsook such dishonesty the hand of the Lord would be against him and all those who partook of such corruption. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 609)

The fact that Brigham Young rebuked Peter Haws can hardly be taken very seriously, since Haws continued to serve in the "Council of Fifty in Colonial Utah, 1847-49" (*Quest for Empire*, p. 225). When we find that both Peter Haws and Brigham Young were under indictment for counterfeiting at the time this occurred, it throws a new light on the whole incident.

Another suspicious reference to counterfeiting which mentions Peter Haws is found in the "Manuscript History of Brigham Young," under the date of April 5, 1846. We will refer to this later.

## A Rapid Exodus

According to the United States Government records, the Mormon leaders were indicted for counterfeiting on December 18, 1845. While they remained in Nauvoo they hid from the U.S. Marshal. In 1846 they fled from Nauvoo and headed west. While the anti-Mormons were demanding that the Mormons leave Illinois, the indictments for counterfeiting apparently speeded things up. The Mormon writer Kenneth W. Godfrey made this statement: "Warrants pending for the arrest of Brigham Young and other leaders on charges of counterfeiting were among the reasons for the early departure of the Saints from the 'city of Joseph' in February rather than in the spring as originally proposed" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, p. 215). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gives this very interesting information:



This threat of the use of federal authority to affect the arrest of the church authorities, relative to alleged counterfeiting of United States money, and even to prevent the migration of the saints to the west, was wickedly put forth and fostered by Governor Ford (really to play upon the fears of the church and hasten its departure from Illinois) and quite widely discussed in the press of both state and nation.

Relative to the charge of counterfeiting and the threatened arrests of the twelve therefor, Governor Ford said:

Indictments had been found against nine of them in the circuit court of the United States for the district of Illinois, at its December term, 1845, for counterfeiting the current coin of the United States. The United States marshal had applied to me for a militia force to arrest them; but in pursuance of the amnesty agreed on for old offenses, believing that the arrest would prevent the removal of the Mormons, and that if arrested there was not the least chance that any of them would ever be convicted, I declined the application unless regularly called upon by the president of the United States according to law. It was generally agreed that it would be impolitic to arrest the leaders and thus put an end to the preparations for removal when it was notorious that none of them would be convicted; for they always commanded evidence and witnesses enough to make a conviction impossible. But with a view to hasten their removal they were made to believe that the president would order the regular army to Nauvoo as soon as the navigation opened in the spring. This had its intended effect; the twelve, with about two thousand of their followers, immediately crossed the Mississippi before the breaking of the ice. But before this the deputy marshal had sought to arrest the accused without success.

There is not the slightest evidence in existence that “the twelve” were in any way connected with alleged counterfeiting operations at Nauvoo, it was clearly a “trumped up charge,” so far as they were concerned. It appears that some counterfeiters **had located at Nauvoo** but were routed by the diligence of the church leaders against them and their illegal traffic. These were the parties who made the charges of counterfeiting against the brethren at Springfield. . . .

The passage from Ford’s History discloses that fact, that by the subterfuge of making the twelve believe—if they did believe it—the United States army would be sent to Nauvoo in the spring to make arrests... Governor Ford himself was a party to those annoyances . . . (*A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 2, pp. 532-533)

On January 26, 1846, Samuel Brannan wrote Brigham Young a letter in which he stated:

Mr. Benson thinks the Twelve should leave and **get out of the country first and avoid being arrested** if it is a possible thing, but if you are arrested you will find a staunch friend in him, . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 588-589)

We know that the Mormons left Nauvoo in February, 1846, and it seems obvious that the indictments for counterfeiting caused the early departure and much hardship to the Mormon people. The Mormons continued west until they were outside the territorial limits of the U.S. Klaus J. Hansen observed:

Likewise, there can have been no question that, in the fall of 1845, Brigham Young knew that the area to which he hoped to move the Saints was not part of the United States. In an “Epistle to the Brethren of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Scattered Abroad Through the United States of America,” Young admonished his followers that removal beyond the boundaries of the United States was a test of orthodoxy: . . . This letter indicates that Young had not contemplated the possibility that the United States would take over in the near future the region where the Saints hoped to establish the kingdom of God. The Mexican War, however, changed these calculations. (*Quest for Empire*, pp. 114-115)

Of the twelve men indicted for counterfeiting, we know that at least seven of them went west. Five of these men were Apostles;

Brigham Young became the second President of the Church and John Taylor the third. All seven of the men who went west served in the secret Council of Fifty.

## Bogus Makers Go West

On January 24, 1846, Brigham Young made these statements:

A set of bogus-makers who recently commenced operations in this city, who are determined to counterfeit coin here by wagonloads . . . are determined to be revenged upon us, because we would not permit them to pursue their wicked business in Nauvoo, they have scattered through the country circulating their bogus money and spreading lies and every species of falsehood, saying that we are engaged in bogus-making in order thereby to conceal their crimes, and screen themselves from observation and punishment, and at the same time be avenged upon us for not consenting to the establishment of their bogus mints at Nauvoo. (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 574)

If the Mormons were not involved in counterfeiting, the exodus from Nauvoo should have ended the matter. We have already shown, however, that as they headed west the charges of counterfeiting continued, and Brigham Young frankly admitted that Peter Haws, a member of the Council of Fifty, was involved in this business. In a letter written April 5, 1846, Brigham Young stated: “. . . I have some men in the company that are thieves and **bogus makers** and bogus men any way you may put them, . . .” (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” typed copy). On April 12, 1846, Brigham Young stated:

But there had been some things done which were wrong. There were **among us** those who were passing counterfeit money and had done it all the time **since** we left Nauvoo. There were men among us who would steal; . . . (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 608)

William Hall, who had been a member of the church, made these statements concerning counterfeiting among the Mormons:

The bogus money, as next in dignity, claims our consideration. In this brother Turley shone conspicuous. . . . at “bogus” he could not be surpassed. A press was prepared, and the money, composed of zinc, glass, etc., coated with silver, was executed in the best style. The people at large were liberally endowed with it; . . .

When leaving Illinois for Council Bluffs, I hauled in my wagon, for some distance on the way, a bogus press. The secret object of the leaders, even at that time, was the valley of the Salt Lake. The press was afterwards sold on a credit in Missouri, but the vender was afraid afterward to go for his money. (*The Abominations of Mormonism Exposed*, Cincinnati, 1852, p. 20-21)

During my sojourn among them, . . . I had occasion to seek employment among the farmers of Missouri, . . . I labored, a short time, for one who lived on the disputed territory, and one day he told me that he had just sold a yoke of oxen and a cow for, I think, thirty-five dollars. . . . He showed me the money (paper money) and asked me if I thought it was good. I inquired of whom he had received it, but he could not recollect the man. I asked him to describe him. He did so. I pronounced the name of Tom Williams. That was the name. I said if he got the money from him, I expected it was bad, as he was a notorious cheat, and seldom dealt in any other than counterfeit money. . . . I advised him to go down to the camp, and go right to Brigham Young, and demand from him the cattle, stating that he had got some bad money from Williams, . . . I told him he must never mention my name, and if he should see me in camp or elsewhere, not to recognize me, or I might be in danger. I told him, moreover, that he must not accept any thing like the former price, but exact sixty or sixty-five dollars for the oxen, and ten dollars for the cow. That they must have the cattle, and were then afraid of a fuss with the people of Missouri, and would give him a good price in specie, if he insisted on it.

He went down to camp, and went to Brigham Young and told him of the bad money, . . . Brigham Young sent for Williams, and after hearing what he had to say, told him

to bring the cattle to him. He told him he had parted with them to Brother Hawks [Haws?]. Young told him peremptorily to go and get them of brother Hawks, and bring them to him. . . . The cattle were brought, and Young said he would give the price for them in good gold and silver. The man told him that would not do now, he would not take it. He was asked how much he would take. "Sixty-five dollars for the oxen, and ten for the cow," he replied. Young studied a few minutes: he did not want to raise a noise for fear of the Missourians, who threatened to stop them, and then continued: "You must be an honest man! I think you are an honest man; your countenance looks like an honest man's." He paid the money, and the man departed. . . .

At Garden Grove, in Southern Iowa, somewhere near or on the disputed territory, we buried two bogus presses, which I carried in my own wagon, with a barrel of rosin, and materials belonging thereto, amounting in weight to about one thousand pounds. The reason assigned for this proceeding was, that they would want them on their return, as they would be available to press **good money**. The inference was, that when they returned, it would be as conquerors of the United States, and that then, having the political power in their hands, they would coin good money. Garden Grove had its name given to it by the Mormons. (*Ibid.*, pp. 79-81)

Notice that Hall claims that a man by the name of Tom Williams passed bogus money on a farmer, and that the farmer came to Brigham Young seeking justice. This seems to be confirmed by the "Manuscript History of Brigham Young." Under the date of April 5, 1846, we find the following:

SUNDAY, 5—Morning clear, ground white with frost. . . .  
The following was received:

President Brigham Young:

Mr. Cochran an old acquaintance of mine from Kentucky sold Mr. Williams a yoke of oxen, cow and chain for which he received fifty dollars, part of which he apprehends is spurious, he wishes us to assist him in getting it changed, as he thinks the young man passed it without knowing the fact, will you please to give him such aid as is in your power to affect the object he has in view.

George Miller.

I replied as follows:

Brother George Miller:

What in the name of the Lord did you think when you referred Mr. Cochran to me to assist him or render him what assistance I could? I will tell you what assistance I might render him, it is this, **I have some men in the company that are thieves and bogus makers** and bogus men any way you may put them, and unless they can do something to bring distress upon the saints, they are in torment like a worm in the fire.

Now brother Miller you go to the man or send some one that did the trading and have him settle the matter forthwith, or we must suffer, and I pray my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ that the man or men who will persist in such things may be cursed henceforth and go down to hell speedily, that the saints may not be cursed by his or their wickedness any more.

Let Williams deliver the property to the old man Cochran and settle the matter forthwith. Brother P. **Haws** will attend to this matter; there is some one that knows about it and it will all come out.

N. B. Brother Miller I want you to explain the reason why you should refer old man Cochran to me for satisfaction when you knew at the same time he was swearing vengeance against the whole camp, unless he could get satisfaction. As much as to say that I was knowing as well as accessory to the game played by those thieves, **bogus men and makers of your camp**. I was told by some of the brethren that you were heard to describe my omnibus and that carriage that I ride in. I want you and all the brethren east to come up with the main camp as soon as the traveling will allow.

("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," April 5, 1846, typed copy)

Hall's statement that the Mormons "buried two bogus presses, which I carried in my own wagon" is very interesting. Although we have no other evidence that bogus presses were buried, it is interesting to note that Hosea Stout says that "cannon balls had been buried" on the way to Utah (see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, p. 67).

Mrs. Mary Ettie V. Smith gives this information concerning counterfeiting:

It was well known to me, although young at the time, as it was to every Mormon at Nauvoo, that great numbers of cattle and hogs were in the habit of wandering from the surrounding country into the city, and were appropriated by the Saints; and the same with other property that could be concealed. Another thing that increased the prejudice against our community, was the great amount of bogus money afloat about that time, and in some cases traced directly to the Mormons. It so happened that while at Nauvoo, and afterwards, I had an opportunity to know something of this bogus manufacture.

When we were on the route through Iowa, it occurred, that one day, when one of the wagons was upset, the press **for making bogus money rolled into sight**, and was seen by many Mormons, who till then had not supposed they were one of a gang of counterfeiters. But there is no doubt about the fact that the business of counterfeiting was carried on extensively, and that too under the personal sanction and blessing of the Prophet Joseph, and of the Twelve. Most of these Twelve Apostles are now living at Salt Lake, and the same is true to day there, although not done openly, and justified as is the spiritual wife practice. Even this was denied at Nauvoo to the Gentiles, while it was taught us under the ban of secrecy. One thing is certain; this bogus press was carried, to my certain knowledge, to Salt Lake, and there is now a man living in Allegany county, by the name of Lewis Wood, who saw it between Nauvoo and Council Bluffs. (*Mormonism: Its Rise, Progress, and Present Condition*, Hartford, 1870, pp. 28-29)

While dressing the next morning, Wallace [her husband] accidentally left his belt in my room; it was the one he wore around his body under his clothing; which I examined without his knowing it, and found it to contain about three hundred dollars of bogus money. This did not surprise me, as I had suspected it before, and I knew the authorities of the Church, if they did not manufacture it themselves, directed it to be done by others. . . . The discovery I had made as to the bogus money in the belt of Wallace, sharpened my curiosity, and I took occasion to watch his movements and all connected with him. I made it convenient, as I had an opportunity a few days after this, to question Joseph Young, brother of the Prophet, about it. I commenced by telling him I thought he had given Wallace more than his share of bogus money. The men who had the management of such matters were generally very cautious about telling the women of [i]t. Brother Joseph, thrown off his guard, replied,

"Did he get me a span of horses?"

I told him I did not know but he bought one for himself.

"Yes, yes," said brother Joseph, thinking I knew all about it, as some of the wives of the Prophet did; "he can sell the bogus any time to the Missourians, if he wishes, and they cannot detect us. If they do, we shall soon be beyond their reach. We must help ourselves this year to a good outfit for crossing the plains; and, next spring and summer, we shall be off and beyond their reach, and they can whistle."

I thus ascertained positively what I had long suspected. I went home knowing that my husband was a thief and a counterfeiter, if not something worse than either; . . . soon after this, a man came to our house, who was unknown to me, and had a long conversation with Wallace. The subject of their interview seemed to be one of great importance and secrecy. After the stranger had left, Wallace told me it was necessary for us to move to St.

Joseph, Mo.; that he was going there by direction, and in the service of the Church, and was to keep a boardinghouse to accommodate the Mormons in that State, doing business disguised as “Gentiles.”

The reader will not be surprised to know, what I soon learned to be true, that this “business” was selling bogus money, and buying with it various kinds of property needed by the Church, and forwarding it to Council Bluffs. . . .

The notorious gamblers of this region, among the Gentiles, somewhat famed about this time, stood no chance with this band of Mormons; for while they were professedly strangers, they had a system of secret signs by which they were understood by each other, and they could thus play into the hands of their friends unsuspected.

The horses, and other booty purchased or stolen, was forwarded at once to Kaneshville, and was there received by Orson Hyde, who, after assorting it, forwarded it on to the plains, or made such disposition of it as would place it beyond the reach of the Gentiles, in case suspicion should be directed towards them. Orson Hyde is one of the “Twelve Apostles,” and is often in the States. There are now many persons living by whom these facts can be proved.

The bogus money used by these men, was mostly made at Nauvoo; but I have heretofore mentioned that the press used in its manufacture was taken west, and on to Salt Lake in the wagon of Peter Hawse, and was at this time at Kaneshville. This man, Hawse, is now living on Humbolt River, west of Great Salt Lake City. (*Ibid.*, pp. 103-107)

Mrs. Smith’s statement that the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde received stolen property at Kaneshville is very interesting, for we know that Orson Hyde approved of stealing from the Gentiles. In his journal for October 13, 1860, John Bennion recorded that “after meeting Bp council & **Elder Hyde** had a long talk in my house br **Hyde** said **speaking of stealing** that a man may **steal** & be influenced by the **spirit of the Lord to do it** that Hickman had done it years past said that he never would institute a trial against a brother for stealing from Gentiles but stealing from his brethren he was down on it . . .” (The reader will find the complete statement on page 433 of this volume.)

Mrs. Smith states that a bogus press was hauled west in the wagon of “Peter Hawse.” This seems very likely, since Peter Haws (a member of the Council of Fifty) was indicted along with the Mormon leaders for counterfeiting, and since even Brigham Young admitted that while the Mormons were coming west “Haws had let Williams have some bogus money on shares . . .” (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” May 12, 1846, typed copy).

After the Mormons arrived at their destination by the Great Salt Lake, they decided to mint some gold coins. Dr. Wyl made this statement concerning these coins:

Should you come to Utah, reader, some old Mormon or apostate will show you the gold coins of Zion, coined by Brigham Young. Even this official money of the Kingdom, now out of course, is counterfeit; it bears on its face “Five Dollars,” and is in reality only worth about \$4.30. (*Mormon Portraits*, p. 37)

In his book, *Counterfeit, Mis-Struck and Unofficial U.S. Coins*, Don Taxay stated:

Among the most prominent newcomers were the Miner’s Bank, the Pacific Co., Ormsby & Co., and the Cincinnati Mining & Trading Co. In addition, gold pieces from other territories, including the famous **Mormon** issues, now poured into the motley circulation. As the weeks rolled by, a veritable avalanche of private coin resuscitated the moribund economy and business thrived as never before.

In the midst of the boom the citizens received a rude shock. A series of assay tests, taken by Eckfeldt and DuBois at the Philadelphia Mint, revealed that almost all of the coins in circulation were debased. The Mormon gold, whose coining was supervised by none other than Brigham Young, was found to be wanting by as much as twenty per cent, and that of the Pacific Co., by even more. . . .

In the panic that followed the publication of Eckfeldt and DuBois’ findings, the debased issues quickly depreciated, and those holding them suffered severe losses. One by one the firms were driven out of business, and at the end of 1849 Moffat & Co. alone survived. (*Counterfeit, Mis-Struck, and Unofficial U.S. Coins*, by Don Taxay, New York, 1963, p. 172)

In 1859 the Mormon people again found themselves in serious trouble because of the exposure of a counterfeiting operation. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gives this information regarding this matter:

Two incidents happened in the troublesome fall of 1859 that threatened for a time to bring on a conflict between citizens of Utah and the army at Camp Floyd. One of these is known . . . as the Spencer-Pike affair; the other was a plot to arrest Brigham Young in connection with a case of alleged counterfeiting of government drafts. . . .

The facts in the counterfeiting case referred to in the opening paragraph of this chapter, in which it was sought to involve President Young, are as follows: a party of men in Camp Floyd, prominent among whom were M. Brewer, and J. M. Wallace, conspired to counterfeit United States quartermaster orders on St. Louis and New York. In pursuance of this purpose they employed a young “Mormon” engraver of Salt Lake City to duplicate the quartermaster’s plate at Camp Floyd. This was skilfully accomplished and the counterfeit bills printed upon it. The forgery was soon discovered and the principal in the crime, Brewer, was arrested at Camp Floyd. He promptly turned state’s evidence by confessing and threw responsibility for the crime upon the young “Mormon” engraver; and implicated a person in Brigham Young’s office for having furnished the paper for the counterfeit notes. The engraver’s tools and engraving paraphernalia were all seized by Mr. Dotson, the United States marshal, and the young engraver was arrested. Afterwards, when visiting the engraver’s regular workshop, where he had done work for Brigham Young on the “Deseret currency plates,” these plates were also seized by Mr. Dotson and carried to Camp Floyd.

The confession and allegation of Brewer seemed to bring this crime so close to the premises at least of President Young that it was hoped at Camp Floyd that he could be implicated in it. . . .

In pursuance of this purpose to make the crime “stick” on Brigham Young, a plan for his arrest was arranged, . . . The plan was to issue a writ for the arrest of Brigham Young as well as the young “Mormon” engraver, and apprehending that there would be resistance to the arrest of the former, the army was to be ordered into Salt Lake City; Johnston’s artillery was to make a breach in the wall surrounding the ex-governor’s premises, then the troops would sally forth, seize Brigham Young by force and hurry him to Camp Floyd. (*A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 4, pp. 503, 505, 506)

B. H. Roberts goes on to show that Governor Cumming opposed the idea of the army “creeping through walls” to arrest Brigham Young. On pages 507-510 of the same volume, B. H. Roberts gives this information:

Word indeed was brought from Camp Floyd . . . by an express rider from Camp Floyd that two regiments would be ordered that night on a forced march to Salt Lake City to make arrests. Whereupon Governor Cumming, it is said, gave orders to General D. H. Wells of the Utah militia, to be ready with a force **to repulse the federal troops**. And this General Wells so promptly responded to that “by two o’clock on Monday morning, five thousand men were under arms.” . . .

The young “Mormon” engraver of the counterfeit plates of the foregoing incident was put on trial, found **guilty**, and sentenced to prison for two years. . . .

Marshal Dotson in taking forceful possession of the “currency” plates belonging to Brigham Young exceeded his duties as an officer; while in his charge they were



marred to the point of ruining them. In this condition the marshal sought to return them to their owner, but President Young refused to receive them, and brought suit against Marshal Dotson for the illegal seizure and injury of the currency plates. After a long and tedious trial President Young obtained judgment of damages to the extent of \$2,600, for which property in Salt Lake City was sold to satisfy. It was this circumstance which finally led to Marshal Dotson's resignation and removal from Utah.

Judge John Cradlebaugh, who served in Utah, made these statements in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863:

With the history of one more case, I will conclude. In the summer of 1858, David Machenzie was arrested, charged with engraving plates for counterfeiting Government drafts on the Treasury at St. Louis. The evidence showed that the engraving had been done in the upper part of the Deseret store, in Salt Lake City. This store is within the inclosure of Brigham Young's premises, the same being walled in with a stone wall some twelve or fourteen feet in height. Judge Eckels, who issued the warrant, directed the marshal, Peter K. Dotson, to seize the plates, and any other matter that might be found in the room where the engraving had been done which would establish the offense. The marshal accordingly went to the room and seized the plate. He also found another plate there, belonging, as it since appears, to Brigham Young, and used for striking off the Deseret currency; and, observing that the copper-plate upon which the counterfeit engraving had been made had been cut off one side of Brigham's Deseret currency plate, he brought away with him the currency plate. After the trial Brigham refused to take them back, but brought his action against the marshal, P. K. Dotson, in the probate court. Probate courts throughout the Territory, held in violation of the organic act, are dignified into courts of coequal jurisdiction with the Federal courts. It is one of Brigham's methods of destroying and nullifying the Federal courts. He installs into these probate courts his most devoted creatures. An appeal can be made from these courts to the district court, but the appeal is almost always refused. I defy the Delegate to show that Brigham ever brought an action in one of these creature courts of his in which he did not succeed. Of course he obtained a judgment against Marshal Dotson for some \$2,600. It would have been as much more if he had only said the word. An appeal is refused; execution is issued; Dotson's property is sold, and he is turned out of his house—a property that would rent for \$500 per annum—Brigham's agent having bought it in. Thus a good, efficient officer is ruined in Utah for having faithfully endeavored to prevent fraud upon the Government Treasury.

I have the plates here, [exhibiting them] I have shown them to engravers in the city, and they tell me the original cost of making them could not be more than five or six hundred dollars, and say that they can be put in as good order as ever they were for twenty-five dollars. No stronger evidence could be adduced showing the absolute control of Brigham Young over the courts of Utah. ("Utah and the Mormons," a Speech of Hon. J. Cradlebaugh, in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863, as printed in Appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, February 23, 1863, p. 124)

On July 20, 1859, *The Valley Tan*, printed an article in which the following appeared:

On Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock, Judge Eckles held a court in the Theatre to make the primary examination in the case of the forgery of Quarter Master's Cheques on the Treasury. Judges Sinclair & Cradlebaugh were present.

Myron Brewer, who was admitted as State's evidence, was the first called. After being duly sworn he made the following statement:

Resided in Salt Lake City for 3 or 4 years; in the month of May met McKenzie on the street; in course of conversation a plate was mentioned, . . . about four weeks elapsed, . . .

Witness told McKenzie he would consult his friend Mr. J. M. Wallace—did so—seemed to coincide with the views of McKenzie, spoke to him, when McKenzie said the thing was quashed. McKenzie said he must get some other party; he said Mr. John Kay had spoken

to him about it, did not understand the behavior of Wallace after his return from Camp Floyd, said he was resolved to carry the thing out at all hazards.

Court—Did he assign any reason?

He said he had scruples and must communicate with Mr. Young on the subject.—Young gave him short answers.

From this time the plate progressed . . . received the plate from McKenzie . . .

Court—You state that Young said so and so. What Young?

Wit.—Brigham Young. The Tithing office is on the west side of Young's house; is enclosed and belongs to the church.

McKenzie stated he could get some paper from a son-in-law of John Kay. George D. Watt got some of the paper for him, he lives in the city; he is the reporter for the church. Witness got a quire from the *Valley Tan* office, but thought it was not used.

Court—Was there any agreement in writing as to the disposal of the proceeds?

Wit.—McKenzie said he should exact a receipt from Wallace for two-thirds of the proceeds. Nothing less than \$500.00 was to be issued, at first \$1000 was mentioned.

Court—Did he assign any reason for so large an amount?

Wit.—That it might fall into the hands of the people of the territory—they wished the government to be the sufferers. . . . Had seen McKenzie at work, in the upper room of the Tithing office; he worked in the day time—every one can have access [i]n the room. There was some contrivance with the handle of the door which gave notice of the approach of any one, and the plate disappeared under a false sill in the window. McKenzie had made some plates for the church and *The Deseret News* office; he worked as a mechanic. . . . the impression was taken off the plates by a hand press in the office in the Tithing store; Mr. Wallace was engaged as agent.

Mr. J. M. Wallace next stated he had an [in]terview with McKenzie, who told him that Wallace) was recommended to him by Mr. Brigham Young as a man to be trusted.

Wallace entered into the scene, and no[t]ified Gen. Johnston of what was going on . . . (*The Valley Tan*, Great Salt Lake City, U.T., July 20, 1859)

Juanita Brooks states that the Mormon engraver McKenzie "refused to implicate Brigham Young or anyone else, but took his sentence of imprisonment for two years" (*On The Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 699, n. 60). Mrs. Brooks also gives this interesting information concerning McKenzie:

David McKenzie was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, December 27, 1833. . . . On February 11, 1853, McKenzie was baptized into the Mormon Church and the next year came to Utah. On March 7, 1857, he was made a Seventy, . . . He was engaged to engrave the plates for the Deseret currency, and while thus engaged he lived with the family of Brigham Young in the Beehive House. On February 28, he married Mary Ann Crowther, and four months later was involved in the counterfeiting scandal. . . .

McKenzie was convicted and sentenced to a two-year prison term, at the end of which he became disbursing clerk at the tithing office. Later he became one of the most popular actors at the Salt Lake Theater. In 1868 McKenzie was made private secretary of Brigham Young; still later succeeded Horace K. Whitney in keeping the church books. He died March 10, 1912, in Salt Lake City. (*Ibid.*, p. 698, n. 58)

Although the Mormon leaders always denied that they were involved in counterfeiting, there is so much evidence to the contrary that it cannot be easily dismissed (for more information see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, pp. 50-70).



## Mormon Scholars Look at Joseph Smith's Financial Difficulties

On page 535 of this book, we quoted a letter from J. Butterfield, U.S. Attorney for the District of Illinois, in which he accused Joseph Smith of making “fraudulent transfers of his property” at the time he attempted to take out bankruptcy. Joseph I. Bentley and Dallin H. Oaks, who served as president of Brigham Young University, took exception to this charge:

After a September trip to consult land records in Nauvoo and Carthage, Butterfield wrote the Treasury Solicitor on 11 October 1842 that he had found sufficient evidence to sustain Bennett’s accusations of fraud by Joseph Smith and had even found other deed conveyances to or from Joseph not mentioned by Bennett. Butterfield probably discovered some of the many conveyances Joseph Smith continued to execute or receive (probably on the advice of counsel) in his capacity as trustee for the Church after he had filed for bankruptcy in his personal capacity. In any event, Butterfield wrote that he had appeared at the 1 October hearings in Springfield, armed with certified copies of various deeds, and had successfully opposed the Smith’s discharges in bankruptcy.

Butterfield’s written objections to discharge, as formally filed with the court on 1 October, contained several general grounds for opposition: . . . Butterfield first charged that Joseph Smith in contemplation of bankruptcy transferred property to persons who were not bona fide creditors or purchasers for a valuable consideration. Butterfield did not identify any specific conveyances or include other supporting details for his general objections, other than by reference to Bennett’s published accusations. Bennett’s earlier attack had specified seven conveyances that he alleged were fraudulently made by Joseph Smith—one to his wife, Emma, four to his children, and two to himself as trustee for the Church. However, four of these conveyances were made by persons not related to Joseph Smith or his family and therefore would not qualify as conveyances “made or given by [a] bankrupt” within the prohibitions of the Act. As to the remaining three, the issue was whether Joseph made them “in contemplation of bankruptcy.” . . . Butterfield further charged that since 1 January 1841 Joseph Smith had made invalid transfers to some of his creditors in preference to other creditors in contemplation of the passage of the Bankruptcy Act. . . . unless Butterfield found proof that Joseph had made at least one conveyance to a creditor, this objection was ill-founded, even if, as is by no means certain, such conveyance could be shown to have been made “in contemplation of passage” of the Bankruptcy Act. . . .

Since John C. Bennett was then an implacable enemy of the Mormons, his charges of fraud carry little weight. But those of U.S. Attorney Justin Butterfield, one of the best lawyers of his day, are entitled to careful consideration. . . . There is no evidence that Joseph Smith had understood or even heard of the Bankruptcy Act until attorney Warren explained it to him in Nauvoo on 14 April 1842. As shown earlier, none of the Mormon newspapers carried any prior information concerning the new bankruptcy law, . . . there is abundant evidence, summarized above, to show that the deeds probably relied upon by Justin Butterfield at the 1 October bankruptcy hearing were executed according to a policy adopted prior to the Bankruptcy Act—and vigorously promoted by the Quorum of the Twelve—of separating Joseph’s personal properties from those held in trust and of making adequate provision for his family out of the latter. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1979, pp. 182-184)

On page 174 of the same article, Oaks and Bentley concede that at one time Joseph Smith’s own financial dealings could not be separated from those of the church:

Nevertheless, when Joseph Smith prepared a list of his debts totalling \$73,066.38 during the spring of 1842, he included the following entry at the top of the list on nine creditors: “To the United States of America, September 10, 1840—\$4,866.38.”

Federal efforts to collect this admitted obligation ran into almost insurmountable difficulties largely because during the first two years of the Mormon settlement in Nauvoo the financial activities of the Church and the personal financial affairs of Joseph Smith were indistinguishable.

In his book, *History of the Saints*, pages 96-97, John C. Bennett claimed that a great deal of property had been transferred from Joseph Smith and his wife to “Joseph Smith, as sole Trustee in trust for the Church” to avoid paying debts owed. Bennett maintained that the law stipulated that trustees of Religious Societies in Illinois could not purchase more than “five acres.” Oaks and Bentley concede that there was a law limiting the property a trustee could receive (they give the limit as ten acres), but feel that Smith was ignorant of this law:

The Illinois statute which the Church had relied on in designating Joseph Smith as trustee-in-trust for the Church made it lawful for the trustee of any religious society “to receive by gift, devise or purchase, a quantity of land not exceeding 10 acres.” There is no evidence that Joseph Smith or other Church leaders were ever aware of this ten-acre limitation on church ownership of land. . . .

The judge who examined witnesses and land records found that although Joseph Smith was duly elected to the office of trustee-in-trust for the Church prior to his receipt of deeds to the properties at issue in this case, Joseph Smith as trustee had received earlier deeds for “more than ten acres of land situated in said Hancock County.” . . .

As a corollary of the court’s ruling that Joseph Smith owned all trustee-in-trust (Church) properties in excess of ten acres in his personal capacity, it followed that Emma Smith owned a one-sixth dower interest in all such properties. The court so decreed. As a result, persons who had purchased from the successor trustees what they thought were Church properties would now have those properties sold at a judicial sale, with one-sixth of the proceeds being paid to Emma Smith. This result must have been embarrassing to the Church and an unexpected windfall for Emma Smith, then Mrs. Lewis C. Bidamon. (*Ibid*, pp. 195-196)

On page 198 of the same article, Oaks and Bentley claim that “Although plagued by misfortune in business and bad advice about the law, Joseph Smith was nevertheless untainted by any wrongful conduct.”

Marvin S. Hill, C. Keith Rooker and Larry T. Wimmer have written another article in defense of Joseph Smith’s business dealings. These authors feel that Joseph Smith’s indebtedness has been exaggerated by anti-Mormon writers:

III. Meticulous research into court records and the papers of Joseph Smith indicate that Joseph’s total cumulative indebtedness over the period 1835-37 was a little over \$100,000 rather than in excess of \$150,000 as Brodie maintains. There is evidence that at least \$60,000 of this debt was subsequently settled, possibly much more. Brodie ignores Smith’s assets. We have found that Smith owned land in conjunction with others worth \$130,000. Assuming that this was bought entirely on credit (which is unlikely), Smith and company held \$59,500 in equity as a result of rising land values. Thus Smith and other investors associated with him had assets in excess of their debts when they left Kirtland in early 1838. These assets would likely have been adequate to cover Smith’s business ventures had there been sufficient liquid capital and a continuing prosperity. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1977, p. 459)

These authors feel that Joseph Smith's big financial mistake was setting up an "unchartered bank." They frankly admit that

While he may have been encouraged in his decision by various groups, and by bad professional advice from lawyers, ultimately the responsibility for the decision to proceed with the bank was his. . . . In the face of numerous lawsuits and threats upon his life, Joseph Smith chose the alternative of fleeing Kirtland—a personal defeat since he fled not only creditors, but also had to leave behind the temple and the community he had gathered. (*Ibid.*, p. 458)

The reader will remember that Joseph Smith said that the legislature would not grant a charter for the bank "because we were 'Mormons'." Hill, Rooker and Wimmer, however, admit "There is little evidence that the Church in this instance was subject to

religious persecution." The same writers freely admit that Joseph Smith was found guilty of violating the law:

The Smith and Rigdon cases were tried by a jury in October 1837, resulting in a judgment of \$1,000 plus small costs against each.

These cases were filed under an Ohio statute adopted in 1816 that made conduct of the banking business by any persons or associations other than those duly incorporated by the legislature unlawful, . . . Examination of the court records establishes that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were properly charged, tried by jury, and found to have violated the statute. This finding, of course, implicitly held the entire Society activity wholly unlawful, and made it impossible for it to survive, even had survival been otherwise possible. (*Ibid.*, pp. 437-38)





## 36. Blood Flows in Utah

In the chapter on “Blood Atonement” we showed that the early Mormon leaders taught that if men commit certain sins they should “**have their blood spilt** upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an **offering for their sins**; and the smoking incense would **atone** for their sins. . . .” (*Deseret News*, 1856, p. 235)

We have demonstrated that even Gustive O. Larson, Professor of Church History at the Brigham Young University, is willing to admit that “Blood Atonement” was actually practiced, and that he cites a “verbally reported case of a Mr. Johnson in Cedar City who was found guilty of adultery with his stepdaughter by a **bishop’s court and sentenced to death for atonement of his sins**” (*Utah Historical Quarterly*, January 1958, p. 62, n. 39).

We have also shown that a “Dr. Vaun” was “**shot and killed**” for the same offense. There were many other cases of “Blood Atonement” in early Utah. On September 21, 1851, Hosea Stout wrote of another murder:

I learned to day that Howard Egan, who has returned from the gold mines lately, and upon learning that his wife had been seduced or in other word had had a child willingly by James M. Monroe . . . Egan drew a pistol and shot him dead which makes the second man who has been deliberately shot dead for the same offence in less than one year in the Territory. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 404)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith argued in behalf of the defendant. In the *Journal of Discourses*, published by the Mormon Church, we find the following statements by George A. Smith:

The principle, the only one that beats and throbs through the heart of the entire inhabitants of this Territory, is simply this: The man who seduces his neighbor’s wife must **die**, and her nearest relative must **kill him!** . . . When the news reached Iron County, that Egan’s wife had been seduced by Monroe, the universal conclusion was, “there has to be another execution;” and if Howard Egan had not killed that man, he would have been damned by the community for ever, and could not have lived peaceably, without the frown of every man. . . .

If Howard Egan did kill James Monroe, it was in accordance with the established principles of justice known in these mountains. That the people of this Territory would have regarded him as accessory to the crimes of that creature, had he not done it, is also a plain case. . . . he would have been damned in the eyes of this whole community. . . . I want the crocodile, the hyena, that would destroy the reputation of our females to feel that the mark is upon him; and the avenger upon his path, ready to pounce upon him at any moment to take vengeance; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 97-99)

Hon. Z. Snow, Judge of the First Judicial District Court for the Territory of Utah, argued against the Apostle Smith’s contention that it was all right to kill in the name of the Lord: “If, as it is contended by the defendant’s attorney, he killed Monroe in the name of the Lord, it does not change the law of the case” (*Ibid.*, p. 101). Since the Mormon Church supported Egan there was no chance for conviction, and therefore he was released.

Besides the death penalty the Mormon leaders used whipping and castration to keep their people in line. Brigham Young recorded the following in his history under the date of September 6, 1846:

Daniel Barnham, Pelatiah Brown and Jackson Clothier received thirty lashes each, administered by the Marshal with a hickory switch, upon the bare back, for illicit intercourse with females. (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” September 6, 1846, typed copy)

Under the date of September 12, 1846, Brigham Young wrote: “Some boys have been whipped in camp, and it is right.” The next day Brigham Young preached a sermon in which we find the following:

Prest. Young said, . . .

There have been some feelings of late in the camp because some unruly boys have been flogged by the Marshal for their wickedness; . . . The Marshal has not whipped the boys enough, if he had, they would not have spit out their revenge, he should have whipped it out of them. . . . such transgressors should be taken care of, in a manner that they would not whine. He said, he would whip any man that would sustain such corruption . . . (“Manuscript History of Brigham Young,” September 13, 1846)

Hosea Stout speaks of this same matter in his journal:

Friday September 4th 1846 . . . I saw Br Wilford Woodruff who informed me of the conduct of some young men towards some young women. . . . they and the girls had been out for fifteen nights in succession until after two o’clock and that it was his wish & the wish of the President that I should take the matter in hand and see that they had a just punishment by whipping them and for me to take my own course and use my own judgement in executing the same . . . The crimes of these men were adultery or having carnal communication with the girls which was well known to many and the legal punishment was death

Saturday Sept 5th 1846. I was busy in making preparation to execute the order of the President and Br Woodruff . . . one of these men was chopping wood. . . .

When we came he suspected our business and was uncommonly excited He began to plead . . . He had seen Woodruff & did not make satisfaction nor could he as Woodruff told him this side of hell for he told him that nothing short of fire & brimstone could cleanse them so when we came two of us having guns he never thought of anything else but to be killed forth with. This was what excited him so much At length I told in a few words that we must execute our orders . . . He was weeping & begging all the time. At length he exclaimed that he did not want to be taken off and killed this way. I then first discovered what he expected so I told him that he was not to be killed. He then expected we were going to put the next worst punishment on him [Juanita Brooks states that “The second worst punishment was emasculation.”] so then I told him that we were only going to give him a severe whipping . . . We took him to a good place and the Marshall gave him 18 hard lashes . . . after which we taught him the principles of the law and the just punishment for such crimes and what he need to expect if ever we had to visit him again now since we had declared to him the law of God. . . .

Sunday Sept 6th 1846. This morning a number of the

Police and the Marshall went over into Heber camp and took Peletiah Brown . . . into the woods and give him 18 stripes which brought the blood in two places . . . we had now but one more case to attend to and that was A. J. Clothier . . .

We took him out of camp and gave him 23 stripes putting on five for his mean conduct while in our hands.

Monday September 7th 1846. Went to see President Young after breakfast and reported what [had] been done which he said was all right and perfectly satisfactory on his part . . .

Saturday September 12th 1846. At home all day Went to a council at Rockwoods tent at 7 o'clock P.M. Here President Young spoke with great power . . . of the whipping which those boys got . . . He sustained the whipping of them and gave them to understand **what they might expect if the law of God came** and we were disobedient to its mandates. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, University of Utah, 1964, vol. 1, pp. 190-193)

The Mormon historian Juanita Brooks states that the Mormons not only practiced whipping but emasculation as well:

But there were some rogues among them who had to be dealt with, either by the whipping post, by public humiliation at the election polls, or by means even more drastic. If it were necessary to **emasculate** a man who was corrupting the morals of the community, it would serve as a warning to others that such things would not be tolerated here, and it would guarantee that the offender should be harmless thereafter. Public courts had their place, but differences settled between brethren at the Bishop's Courts or before the High Council were not determined by legal technicalities but by the broad principles of human rights. So the president did well to tell the world that in Zion there was no need of civil courts. (*John D. Lee*, by Juanita Brooks, Calif., 1962, p. 153)

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made this statement on July 12, 1857:

. . . if I am not a good man, I have no just right in this Church to a wife or wives, or to the power to propagate my species. What, then, should be done with me? **Make a eunuch of me**, and stop my propagation. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 5, p. 29)

Hosea Stout wrote the following in his diary under the date of August 17, 1858:

Was invited by Judge Eckles to day to his room He gave me a letter from one Wm R Yancey to him stating that one John Beal had been **castrated** in Ogden lately for adultery with E. Lish's wife. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 663)

Judge Cradlebaugh, who had served in the United States Federal Court in the Utah Territory, wrote the following in a letter dated January 18, 1860:

Now to the end that the country may know the truth respecting these matters, . . . I assert—

1st. That the Mormon people are subject to a theocratic government, and recognizes no law as binding which does not coincide with their pretended revelations . . .

4th. That they teach the doctrine of "the shedding of human blood for the remission of sin," as defined by their own ecclesiastical code, and these teachings are carried into practice. . . .

5th. That they teach the doctrine that it is right and godly that Mormons should rob Gentiles whenever they can do so with facility and escape public exposure. . . .

6th. That they teach the doctrine and practice it, of **castrating** men, and have declared from their pulpit, with public acquiescence, that the day was near when their valleys would resound with the voice of **eunuchs**.

I am prepared here and now with proofs to sustain these charges, . . . (Letter from Judge Cradlebaugh, as printed in *Valley Tan*, February 22, 1860, p. 2)

John D. Lee related the following in his *Confessions*:

In Utah it has been the custom with the Priesthood to make **eunuchs** of such men as were obnoxious to the leaders. This was done for a

double purpose: first, it gave a perfect revenge, and next, it left the poor victim a living example to others of the dangers of disobeying counsel and not living as ordered by the Priesthood.

In Nauvoo it was the orders from Joseph Smith and his apostles to beat, wound and **castrate** all Gentiles that the police could take in the act of entering or leaving a Mormon household under circumstances that led to the belief that they had been there for immoral purposes. I knew of several such outrages while there. In Utah it was the favorite revenge of old, wornou[t] members of the Priesthood, who wanted young women sealed to them, and many a young man was unsexed for refusing to give up his sweetheart at the request of an old and failing, but still sensual apostle or member of the Priesthood. . . .

Warren Snow was Bishop of the Church at Manti, San Pete County, Utah. He had several wives, but there was a fair, buxom young woman in the town that Snow wanted for a wife. . . . She . . . told him she was then engaged to a young man, a member of the Church, and consequently could not marry the old priest. . . . He told her it was the will of God that she should marry him, . . .

The girl continued obstinate. The "teachers" of the town visited her and advised her to marry Bishop Snow. . . . Then the authorities called on the young man and directed him to give up the young woman. This he steadfastly refused to do. He was promised Church preferment, celestial rewards, and everything that could be thought of—all to no purpose. He remained true to his intended, and said he would die before he would surrender his intended wife to the embraces of another.

. . . The young man was ordered to go on a mission to some distant locality, so that the authorities would have no trouble in effecting their purpose of forcing the girl to marry as they desired. But the mission was refused.

. . . His fate was left to Bishop Snow for his decision. He decided that the young man should be **castrated**; Snow saying, "When that is done, he will not be liable to want the girl badly, and she will listen to reason when she knows that her lover is no longer a man."

It was then decided to call a meeting of the people who lived true to counsel, . . . in Manti, . . . The young man was there, and was again requested, ordered and threatened, to get him to surrender the young woman to Snow, but true to his plighted troth, he refused to consent to give up the girl. The lights were then put out. An attack was made on the young man. He was severely beaten, and then tied with his back down on a bench, when Bishop Snow took a bowie-knife, and performed the operation in a most brutal manner, . . .

The party then left the young man weltering in his blood, . . . The young man regained his health, but has been an idiot or quiet lunatic ever since, . . . To make a long story short, I will say, the young woman was soon after forced into being sealed to Bishop Snow

Brigham Young, when he heard of this treatment of the young man, was very mad, but did nothing against Snow. He left him in charge as Bishop at Manti, and ordered the matter to be hushed up. This is only one instance of many that I might give to show the danger of refusing to obey counsel in Utah. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photo-reprint of 1880 edition, pp. 284-286)

On April 26, 1859, the *Valley Tan*, a non-Mormon newspaper published in Salt Lake City, told of

the castration of \_\_\_\_\_ Lewis by a party, including a bishop of one of the southern settlements, who were bringing him up towards this city as a prisoner, and of \_\_\_\_\_ who was castrated in \_\_\_\_\_ the same season.

These two latter are still living in a condition, in comparison, to which death would have been a blessing. One of these was lately at Camp Floyd. The other lives in a hole in the ground near one of the settlements [in] San Pete Valley, and is perfectly crazy. (*Valley Tan*, April 26, 1859)

The reader will note that the incident which John D. Lee related occurred in "San Pete County," and that the man was "an idiot or quiet lunatic ever since." Since the *Valley Tan* stated that the man lived in "a hole in the ground

near one of the settlements [in] San Pete Valley and is perfectly crazy,” we cannot help but believe this is referring to the same incident. Henry Jones was castrated and finally murdered because of the doctrine of “Blood Atonement.” Harold Schindler states that “Jones had been mutilated and put to death after being accused of incest with his mother, who shared his fate” (*Orrin Porter Rockwell*, p. 287). In a footnote on the same page, Mr. Schindler gives this information:

This incredibly bizarre crime caused a sensation among the Mormons. Henry Jones, according to Achilles: *Destroying Angels of Mormonism*, pp. 18-19, had only recently returned from California when the citizens of Great Salt Lake City spread gossip accusing him of having an unnatural relationship with his mother. Achilles continues:

Rockwell was despatched to administer justice. Jones was met in a saloon with some friends, and the Chief of the Danites joined the party, and participated in their hilarity. While under the influence of liquor, Rockwell and others enticed Jones out to the suburbs, where they bound and gagged him, and Rockwell castrated him. Jones made out to get home and recovered. Shortly afterwards, he and his mother started by the Southern route to come to California. About seventy miles out from Salt Lake city, they were overtaken at a place called Payson, and encamped in a “dug-out.” Rockwell and his party while they were asleep, entered the “dug-out,” and in opening the door awoke Jones, who broke through his assailants and ran for his life. The party then entered and killed his mother, cutting her throat. They then started in pursuit of Jones, and captured him about three miles out, and shot him. They then took his body and carried it back to the “dug-out,” and laid it beside his mother, and then pulled the building down upon the bodies, and there they lie to-day.

That Jones had been castrated two months before being murdered is verified by Hosea Stout’s diary:

Saturday 27 Feb 1858. This evening several persons **disguised as Indians** entered Henry Jones’ house and dragged him out of bed with a whore and castrated him by a square & close amputation. (*On the Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 653)

On April 19, 1859, the *Valley Tan* printed an affidavit by Nathaniel Case which contained the following statements:

Nathaniel Case being sworn, says: that he has resided in the Territory of Utah since the year 1850; lived with Bishop Hancock (Charles Hancock) in the town of Payson, at the time Henry Jones and his mother were murdered, about the 15th of April, 1858.—The night prior to the murder a secret council meeting was held in the upper room of Bishop Hancock’s house; saw Charles Hancock, George W. Hancock, Daniel Rawson, James Bracken, George Patten and Price Nelson go into that meeting that night. Meetings had been held pretty regularly for three weeks before the last one a[t] the same place. I was not in any of the meetings; I boarded at the bishop’s. About 8 o’clock in the evening of the murder the company gathered at Bishop Hancock’s; the same persons I have named above were in the company. They said they were going to guard a corral where Henry Jones was going to come that night and steal horses; they had guns.

I had a good minnie rifle and Bishop Hancock wanted to borrow it; I refused to lend it to him. The above persons all went away together; I don’t know what time they got back. Next morning I heard that Henry Jones and his mother had been killed. I wnet (sic) down to the dug-out where they lived when the sun was about an hour high. The old woman was laying on the ground in the dug-out on a little straw, in the clothes in which she was killed. She had a bullet hole through her head, entering near the centre of the forehead. In about 15 or 20 minutes Henry Jones was brought there and laid by her side; they then threw some old bed clothes over them and an old feather bed and then pulled the dug-out on top of them. . . .

The next Sunday after the murder, in a church meeting in payson, Charles Hancock, the bishop, said, as to the killing of Jones and his mother he cared nothing about it, and it would have been done in

daylight if circumstances would have permitted it.—This was said from the stand; there were 150 or 200 persons present. He gave no reasons for killing them. And further saith not.

Nathaniel Case.

Sworn to and signed before me this 9th day of April, 1859.

John Cradlebaugh,

Judge 2nd Judicial District.

Those who murdered Henry Jones and his mother may have very well remembered Brigham Young’s words which were delivered in a sermon just two years before:

Suppose you found your brother in bed with your wife, and **put a javelin through both of them, you would be justified, and they would atone for their sins, and be received into the Kingdom of God.** I would at once do so in such a case; and under such circumstances, I have no wife whom I love so well that I would not put a javelin through her heart, and I would **do it with clean hands** . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 247)

## Killing the Thieves

On December 10, 1858, the *Valley Tan* published this statement:

What has become of that deaf and dumb boy that used to be around the streets. He has been missing now for two or three weeks. We have heard it rumored that he had “gone under.” Do any of the police know anything about him? We ask for information.

The next issue of the *Valley Tan* contained two letters which were supposed to have been written by Mormons:

Salt Lake City,  
Dec. 11, 1858.

Mr. Kirk Anderson:

You inquire in your last paper, the w[here]abouts of the “deaf and dumb boy.” That your impertinant inquiries may be satisfied, and we hear no more about the matter; I will inform you that he has been permanently and decently planted, about one and a half miles north east of your office; in a place called a Cemetery—where, if you desire, you can find him.

It was necessary for his **salvation**, that his existence on earth should be abbreviated, and consequently his sudden transition from this to a better world.

Having said this much, I would advise you, that it is not proper that you, hereafter notice such matters in your paper. It is one of the rights guaranteed to us by the Constitution of our Government; “to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences;” with which right, it is to be hoped you will not again attempt to meddle.

I hope you will take the hint, it certainly will be to your advantage. You see our paper the “Deseret News,” does not make itself objectionable by heralding such things.

Kirk Anderson Esq:

Sir: —I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, but I am very glad to see the course pursued by you in your paper; I think it will be approved of by many of our Church members at least by all those who are opposed to many acts of violence that are done under a pretended right and color of our faith. I never did and never can believe in the doctrine that it was right to take a persons life, for the purpose of saving him; yet many of my brothers differ with me on this—they think that when there is danger of Apostatizing they should by a premature transition from this world be secured the happiness of a better one.

You Inquire in your paper of last week about the deaf and dumb boy. For your information I will say that he was killed about three or four weeks ago about twelve miles east of here, in the Kanyon on the road to Bridger, and near the house of Ephraim Hanks. The person who killed him, is a Policeman of this City, his name is \_\_\_\_\_. The boy was shot through the arm, and also had a second shot through the breast, that not killing him his throat was cut. I am glad to see you notice these things, it may have a tendency to prevent such actions in future.

Not being much in the habit of putting my thoughts on paper, you will look over my disconnected kind of writing,



. . . I thought it was right to let you know that some of us approved of your paper, and thought it my duty to answer your inquiry. (*Valley Tan*, December 17, 1858, pp. 2-3)

Darwin Richardson, who saw the boy after he was murdered, testified that “The wound in the neck was a considerable one. It seemed to be a gash severing the Trachia, and, coming out on the other side, **it was a complete throat cut**; thinks the jugular was cut; saw a bullet hole on the right breast; . . .”

N. L. Christianson was arrested and charged with the murder. Brigham Young defended the policeman’s actions and stated that he “is a very good sober Dane” (Letter from Brigham Young, dated December 24, 1858, microfilm copy). He claimed that Christianson was attacked by the boy and that he “put an end to the conflict as well as the life of Dummy, by inflicting a severe wound in his neck.” It was only natural that Brigham Young would defend this cruel deed, since he publicly stated that he would “be perfectly willing to see thieves have their **throats cut**; . . .” (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 597). On another occasion he stated:

If you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, I say **kill him on the spot**, and never suffer him to commit another iniquity. . . . If you will cause all those whom you know to be **thieves**, to be placed in a line before the mouth of one of our largest cannon, well loaded with chain shot, **I will prove by my works whether I can mete out justice** to such persons, or not. **I would consider it just as much my duty to do that, as to baptize a man** for the remission of his sins. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 108-109)

Since Brigham Young defended the murderer there was no chance that he could be convicted. Under the date of January 4, 1859, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

District Court met to day and the grand jury ignored the Indictment against Christensen for killing Dummy, which created much excitement among the outsiders. (*On the Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 676)

For additional information concerning this matter see *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2, pp. 137-138.

T.B.H. Stenhouse made this statement concerning the Mormon police in Brigham Young’s time:

Resistance to an officer, or the slightest attempt to escape from custody, was eagerly seized, when wanted, as the justification of closing a disreputable career, and in more than one case of this legal shooting, there is much doubt if even the trivial excuse was waited for. The Salt Lake police then earned the reputation of affording every desperate prisoner the opportunity of escape, and, if embraced, the officer’s ready revolver brought the fugitive to a “halt,” and saved the county the expenses of a trial and his subsequent boarding in the penitentiary. (*Rocky Mountain Saints*, p. 149, as quoted in *Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 315)

J. H. Beadle gave the following information:

Soon after, three apostates named Potter, Wilson and Walker, were arrested at Coalville in Weber Valley, on a trumped up charge of stealing a cow. This Potter was a brother of those murdered at Springville in 1857, and had been pursued with unrelenting hatred. Several times he had been arrested on various charges and as often acquitted. His death was now determined upon, and one “Art” Hinckley, a “Danite” and Salt Lake policeman was sent for. Evidence afterwards obtained, shows that he was accompanied by another policeman, and joined by parties at different points on his way. They proceeded to the schoolhouse where the three men were confined, and took them out. Walker suspecting foul play, saw two of his guards level their guns at him, when he dodged down and the shots only slightly wounded him in the neck. At the same instant the

contents of a heavily loaded shot-gun were fired into Potter’s body. Walker being an agile man escaped by jumping a near fence, receiving another slight wound in so doing, and made his way through canons and ravines to Camp Douglas. Wilson also ran a little way, but was shot dead. On the evidence of Walker the assassins were arrested, but by the connivance of Mormon officers escaped from the Territorial Marshal, who had them in charge. The Mormon papers labored to explain the affair, stating that the prisoners were shot in attempting to escape from custody; but it is the testimony of all who saw the corpse of Potter, that the gun must have been almost touching his body when fired, and that his **throat was cut** after death. This was no doubt in fulfilment of the penalty in the Endowment oath. Walker remained about Camp Douglas for some time, then suddenly disappeared, and has since never been heard of. Shortly after, a colored man generally known as “Negro Tom,” who had been brought to the Territory by the Mormons as a slave, . . . called upon some Federal officials and stated that he could give important evidence in regard to some of these murders. A few days after, his body was found upon the “bench” two miles east of the city, horribly mangled, his **throat cut from ear to ear**, and on his breast a large placard marked:

LET WHITE WOMEN ALONE.

(*Life in Utah; or, The Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, pp. 210- 212)

Since Potter, Wilson and Walker had been charged with stealing, and since Brigham Young taught that thieves should “have their **throats cut**” (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 597), the guards undoubtedly felt justified in committing this crime.

On January 19, 1862, Brigham Young made these comments:

I was sorry for an expression made by one of our officials in relation to the late killing of three thieves. He considered that they were dealt with by mob violence. . . . The three persons that were lately killed were notorious thieves, and resisted the officers in the discharge of their duty. . . . There has been enough said to such characters, and they must quit such practices. I say, If they will not reform, I wish they would resist the officers, and then there is an end of them and of their depredations upon the honest citizens of Utah

The best people in the world are in this Territory, and yet there is not another community, according to our numbers, so infested by thieves as we are. . . .

I mourn not that a thief is killed, but that any human being would so far debase himself as to become a mean, low, degraded thief. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, pp. 154-155)

R. N. Baskin made these observations concerning the attack on Potter, Wilson and Walker:

. . . the armed man discharged the gun against the body of Potter at a range so close as to cause his instant death. At the discharge of the gun, both Wilson and Walker broke away and ran for their lives. Wilson was overtaken and killed at the edge of the Weber river. As Walker made his escape, a charge from a shotgun grazed his breast and lacerated his hand and wrist. He was wearing neither coat nor vest, and the charge set his shirt on fire and as he ran he extinguished the fire by the blood from his wounds. . . . Several of the residents of Coalville testified that they were awakened by the shots fired, and rushed out to learn the cause of the disturbance; that they saw Potter dead upon the ground, with his **throat cut from ear to ear**. . . .

The only excuse ever claimed by any of the accused was that Potter, Wilson and Walker attempted to escape, and were shot while running away. In the light of the fact that Potter’s throat was cut and his clothes scorched by the charge which killed him, and that Walker’s shirt was set on fire by the shot which wounded him, such a claim is absurd. . . . (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, pp. 9-12)

As to the killing of the Negro man, the early Mormon people could easily justify such an act. Brigham Young himself once stated: “Shall I tell you the **law of God** in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs

to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the **penalty, under the law of God is death on the spot.** This will **always be so**" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 110).

### Parrish Murders

On March 19, 1857, Hosea Stout reported the following in his diary: "Learned this morning that on last Sunday evening that Garder G. Potter, William Parrish and his son were killed at Springville. The circumstances and how I have not learned" (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 624). The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated: "The victims were members of the Parrish family, and the deed was committed on the eve of the intended departure of the family for California" (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 176, n. 26). On April 5, 1859, *The Valley Tan* printed an article which contained the following:

By testimony taken on a preliminary examination in the case pending . . . it appears that about the 1st day of March, 1857, a private council-meeting was held at Bishop Johnson's house in Springville. . . . the object was to talk about **apostates** and the disposition to be made of them.

About a week after this another meeting is held at the same place, at which time Duff Potter and Abraham Durfee are selected for the purpose of attending to the Parrishes and some person residing at the Indian farm.

The evidence does not disclose the names of all the persons there, the witness however, recollects the following named persons, as participating in both of those meetings: Aaron Johnson, the Bishop of Springville, Lorenzo Johnson, his brother, A. F. McDonald, Mayor of the city of Springville, Andrew Wiles, William Bird, Lorin Roundy, Simmons Curtis, Duff Potter, Abraham Durfee, and Joseph Bartholomew. . . . During the week following, the last meeting, Parrish was robbed of four horses and a carriage. The family, after the murder of the Parrishes, recovered two of the horses and the carriage. They were found in the stable of Kimball Bullock, present Mayor of Provo. . . .

Early in the week before the murder, William Johnson, a Mr. Metcalf and a person whose name is not recollected, came to the house of Mr. Parrish, professing to be religious teachers, and questioned him in regard to his faith.—His answer to them seems not to have been satisfactory. A short time after this, Alexander McDonald and Wilber J. Earl come to the house of Mr. Parrish about dusk in the evening, . . . he is taken across the street behind an unfinished house . . . Alvira Parrish, the wife of Mr. Wm. R. Parrish, passes over into this house, and from an open window hears a conversation which she states as follows:

McDonald told my husband that he should never see his grey horses any more, that he had stolen them from a widow woman. My husband said, that if he could go to Brigham Young's he could get papers to show that the horses were his own, and that he had honestly obtained them. McDonald or Earl replied: if you start to go to see Brigham you will never get there. My husband opened his bosom and said, you can kill me now, if you choose. McDonald replied, we don't wish to shed blood now. . . .

Abraham Durfee is at this time working for Mr. Parrish. Durfee and Potter pretend to Parrish that they are dissatisfied with the condition of affairs here, and impress him with the belief that they are desirous of getting to California; . . .

Arrangements are made that Durfee, Potter, Parrish and his two sons shall leave on Sunday night, the 14th of March . . . Parrish, the father and Durfee left about 2 o'clock in the day. Durfee returned again about dusk to get a gun belonging to Owen Parrish; went away with the gun; afterwards returned and said that he had come from where Parrish was. Upon being interrogated by Mrs. Parrish, he said that

he was outside of the Fort, and would stay there for safety, and that he had told him to tell her to send the boys out, whether they were ready or not. Durfee and the two Parrish boys then leave, the boys carrying bundles of provisions and ammunition. . . .

Durfee and the boys start in the direction of the corner of the land fence where it had been arranged they all should meet after dark. After they had crossed the fence from the field into the road and got near the place, Durfee calls out, "Duff, Duff," (Potter's name) and stops and looks towards the fence on the east side of the road. Afterwards all proceed on, and when within fifteen or twenty feet of the corner of the fence, where all are to meet, some one called out, "Durfee," three times. Durfee answers, and immediately a gun or pistol is fired. Wm. B. Parrish, the eldest son, who is the farthest from Durfee, falls dead. Both of the sons are unarmed. Several shots are fired, one ball taking effect in a cartridge box that Owen Parrish had on.—Durfee drew up his gun, pointed it at Owen and bursted a cap, but the gun failed to go off.

Owen immediately jumped over the fence into the fields and made his escape into the city, climbing the city wall where it was low. While going through the streets he heard some person behind him say, "he went this way." . . . Upon the following day the widow of Parrish is allowed to go and see the bodies of her husband and son, and Orrin is taken to the school house at the same time; Durfee is found there. . . .

On the same Sunday that the murder is committed, after church services in the city of Provo, President Snow, of the Provo stake, desired to know if there was any one there who would carry a letter which he held in his hand to Bishop Johnson, of Springville, and place it in his hands. Nethercott stepped up and said he would take it. Snow charged him specially to deliver it safely to Bishop Johnson himself, saying at the same time, "dead men tell no tales."

The preaching that morning had been in regard to **apostates** and the proper disposition of them.

The body of old man Parrish was literally cut to pieces. His throat was cut on the left side, his fingers and arms, his back—in fact, his whole body was covered with knife-wounds of which he had received as is testified; at least fifteen. There were no wounds of pistol or rifle balls on his body.

Potter was killed by three balls, probably from a shot gun, which entered the body on the left breast, a little below the nipple.

Wm. Beason Parrish was shot through by four balls, . . .

Mrs. Parrish further testifies that her husband had a \$500 Territorial order in his pocket book when he left home that day, which has never been returned. That she went to Salt Lake City in the month of July following the murder of her husband, to see Brigham Young: . . . she told him that Gee had possession of the horses, and that he said nothing, but an order from Brigham would get them. . . . Brigham said he would write to her, but never did. She went to see Brigham again between last Christmas day and New Year's; went into his office about 8 o'clock in the morning, and sat there till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. His clerks were present. At 4 o'clock they told her she could not see Brigham that day, but to call the next, between 8 and 11 o'clock in the morning. She went there the next morning about 8 o'clock, and was then told she could not see him. . . . She noticed Sharp and one of Brigham Young's clerks following her. One of them finally called her, and Sharp said to her, that if she wanted to get her horses back, she had better not go into court, but wait until the soldiers were gone, . . .

Several witnesses testify that about the time of the murder of the Parrishes, it was a very common thing to hear Bishops and Elders speak in their meetings about what was to be the fate of apostates, that as Brigham Young says, "Judgment was to be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet;" which in plainer terms meant that apostates were to have their throats cut to save them. (*Valley Tan*, April 5, 1859, p. 1)

Alvira L. Parrish, the widow of the murdered man, testified as follows:

Alvira L. Parrash being sworn, says, . . . I heard a gun fire. . . . I remained in the house all night, much alarmed and very lonesome. I went to the door occasionally and saw some men fixing a wagon, and passing fre[q]uently

with candles in their hands, . . . I saw the wagon move off in the direction that my sons went. It proved to be the wagon that brought in the dead bodies. G. McKenzie told me that he was ordered by the Bishop to drive the wagon out, but did not know at the time, what he was going after; that when they arrived at the place, they threw the dead bodies of my husband, my son and Mr. Potter, into the wagon like dead hogs, and said: "This is the way the damned apostates go." . . .

After the burial I was required to pay \$48.00, for funeral expenses, before I could get back my husband's watch, and other things . . . I noticed that a knife had been drawn through my husbands left hand, the fore finger hung by the skin; his hand and left arm were all cut up with a knife, a large gash in the back of his head. One of his suspenders was cut off, the knife pierced his body, then another wound lower down and more in front. There was forty-eight holes in his coat all caused by stabs; examined and counted them myself. Mr. Parrish's throat was **cut from ear to ear**, his watch had saved him one stab, there was the mark of a knife on it. There was four bullet holes in the left side of my son. . . .

There had been public preaching at Springville, to the effect that no apostates would be allowed to leave, if they did, hogholes would be stopped up with them. I heard these sermons myself. Elder Hyde and President Snow, and others, preached that way. My husband was no believer in the doctrine of killing to "save," as taught by the teachers. (*Valley Tan*, April 19, 1859, p. 1)

On March 29, 1859, Joseph Bartholomew made an affidavit in which he stated:

Duff Potter came to me and notified me to attend a meeting at Bishop Johnson's, about the 1st of March, 1857. . . . In about a week after that they met again, and at that meeting Potter and Durfee were "dropped off" or selected for the purpose of finding out what was going on.

At the meeting the conversation was about the Parrishes and about persons at the Indian farm. . . . At this meeting it was not known what the Parrishes intended to do, and nothing was decided on in regard to them. Bishop Johnson made a remark, however, that some of us would yet "**see the red stuff run.**" He said he had a letter, and the remark was made by some one that "**dead men tell no tales.**" I do not know whether any other meetings were held or not.

The same night that the Parrishes were killed, at about nine o'clock, I was notified by Carnes to go home and get my gun. . . .

I went and got my gun and came back and was told to take my post and watch west of Parrish's house 3 rods; . . . I stayed there some 10 or 15 minutes when I was notified to repair to the school house; . . . When I got there, there was a company formed there with a wagon and team. . . . I did not know at that time for what purpose. When we got out at the south gate I learned then that what was up. . . . I saw the bodies of Potter and Wm. Parrish lying side by side. . . .

There has been several attempts to put me out of the way. . . . We went to Kinkead's store . . . He took us over to the Secretary's; . . . We claimed the Secretary's protection.

There was a gun fired close to us when we entered the city. . . . (*The Valley Tan*, April 19, 1859, pp. 1, 4)

Joseph Bartholomew was certainly afraid that he would lose his life for testifying as he did. Hosea Stout records in his diary that Bartholomew received "gentile protection":

Friday 25 March 1859. . . . Heard that A. Durfee & Joseph Bartholomew had gone to Great Salt Lake City and give themselves up to Secretary Hartnett claiming Gentile protection . . .

Sunday 27 March 1859. . . . Marshall Dotson returned from the city with Durfee & Bartholomew who have now got the gentile protection they so much sought for. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 692)

Under the date of April 1, 1859, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

Court met and was engaged till three in the after noon examining Durfee who like Bartholomew has turned states evidence and seeks to save his own neck by implicating others and criminales nearly the same persons as Bartholomew but is more specific and pointed. (*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 693)

Although Durfee was probably protecting himself, his testimony contains some very revealing material concerning the whole affair:

Abraham Durfee, . . . this first day of April, A.D. 1859, comes before Judge Cradlebaugh, and makes the following confession, viz:

I am thirty-four years old, I have resided in Springville, Utah County, U.T., . . .

I was notified of a council by Wilber J. Earl in the month of January 1857; he told me he wanted me to come to the Bishop's house that evening . . . there were matters talked of concerning people going away. Some individuals were mentioned by the Bishop; he stated that he had instructions in regard to them. The Bishop said **he had received a letter** which he had in his hand; he said he supposed that was sufficient for us to know, . . .

There was another meeting in the neighborhood of a week or longer . . . The same persons were at this meeting that were at the first . . . Bishop Johnson presided. There was something mentioned at this meeting about the Parrishes, that they were going to leave the Territory. . . . the Bishop decided that both Potter and myself should try and learn when the Parrishes were going to leave the Territory. . . .

In the course of that week, Parrish's horses were taken, . . .

The next morning after the murder I heard Bishop Johnson and Bird talking together, and he blamed Potter and Bird for not going further away with them, the Bishop said he wanted I should be satisfied about the affair, and not tell who was in it, that if I did they would serve me the same way. . . .

In the second meeting, which I attended Bishop Johnson said there were some of them that would see the blood run. . . . (*The Valley Tan*, April 19, 1859, p. 4)

On March 26, 1859, Zephaniah J. Warren made an affidavit in which he stated:

Zephaniah J. Warren, being duly sworn says as follows: I am fifty-seven years old; . . . I settled in the town of Springville, Utah County, . . . On my way home from California in the spring of 1857, I heard of the murder of the two Parrishes and Potter; the day I arrived at Springville I saw the place where they were murdered. Seeing the place and the appearance of blood, I became somewhat excited and spoke very reproachfully of the leading men of Springville; . . . I heard of many threats being thrown out against me in the meeting house by the overseers, but I did not use much caution; I was thrown off my guard by supposing that they dare not touch me. . . . On the night of the 31st. of August 1857, . . . a person knocked at my door; I bade him come in. Two men come in. William Johnson and Oliver Mc'Bride. . . . they told me brother Earl wished to see me a few minutes . . . I went out into the street in company with these two men; I found six others standing in the street; there names were Wilber J. Earl, Sandford Fuller, Abraham Durfee, John Curtis, Lehi Curtis and Simmons P. Curtis. They were all armed with pistols, knives and guns. Earl told me to be still and go with them out of the city gate. I told them I would not go one step without the knowledge of the public. Earl seized me by the throat, saying damn your old heart if you speak another loud word, applying his knife to my throat; saying, "I will cut your throat on the spot." They then, Johnson and Earl, took me by force and dragged me on the ground most of the time for about sixty rods, through the gate; they then suddenly stopped, and some one said "there is some one coming; damn him, stop him, stop him," two ran back, and the other six threw me into a fence ditch. Earl then seized me by the throat, saying, you damned old American, you will never write or talk any more about



people that have been murdered. They then all but one left me, . . . then six of them came back, and Earl said, we have concluded to let you live a few days, if you will now swear before us that you will never divulge what has been done to you to night to any person, and go within a day or two and settle up your tithing, as all men in these valleys have now got to be tithed; we have declared war against the whole world, and at any time we can put you aside very easy. . . . (Signed) Z. F. Warren

Sworn and subscribed before me this 26th day of March, A.D. 1859. John Cradlebaugh Judge. (*The Valley Tan*, April 19, 1859, p. 2)

Another resident of Springville made an affidavit which tended to link the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde with the murders committed there. In this affidavit this man said he had “lived in Springville since 1853. Was there at the time the Parrishes and Potter were murdered; had a conversation a short time before the murder with Moses Daily, jr.; he said that **they had been ordered never to let the Parrishes go** out of Springville or the Territory. Said he called on me to join them. I told him I would not, that I did no such jobs. He then said, for God’s sake, not to tell of it. He said the orders were from Orson Hyde. Orson Hyde had just been preaching at Springville.”

On March 29, 1859, *The Valley Tan* reported:

Court met pursuant to adjournment.

The testimony of several witnesses in the Par[r]ish case was heard. . . . The evidence, as it now stands, implicates persons high in authority in the church; and so far as others may have been concerned, they only acted the part of slaves, doing the will of their masters.

It now appears that Bishop Hancock, of Payson, Johnson, of Springville, and Pres. J. C. Snow, of this place [Provo], have acted a conspicuous part in these bloody tragedies. Several attempts have been made to arrest two of them, but they have managed to elude the vigilance of officers.

Warrants have been issued for several others who are implicated, but they cannot be found. The town of Springville has been **quite destitute of its male inhabitants** for the last few days. This, as every other circumstance, goes to prove their guilt. . . . The most strenuous efforts have been made to suppress the testimony in these cases. **The lives of witnesses have been threatened**, and their property seized on some trifling pretext immediately after their testimony was given, and a degree of terrorism exercised, which can only be appreciated by those who fell it. (*The Valley Tan*, March 29, 1859, p. 2)

On March 29, 1859, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary: “A company of 56 dragoons and several deputy marshalls started to Springville this morning and before day surrounded Bp Johnson’s house expecting to arresting him but failed” (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 693). On April 5, 1859, *The Valley Tan* reported:

Monday 28.

Court met pursuant to adjournment and adjourned to await the arrival of Mrs. Parrish and other witnesses. . . .

The marshal reports that he experienced the greatest difficulty in discovering the residences of any one for whom he sought, the inhabitants generally either refused to answer his questions or else telling him direct falsehoods, sending him away from the place for which he was seeking.

The Bishops of Springville, of Payson, of Lehi and of this city are all gone, as well as the President of this Stake.

The marshal searched the house of George Hancock, the Bishop of Payson at an early hour, but the bird had flown. Hancock was the principal actor in the murder of Jones and his mother.

Four of the grand jurors who had been selected by the county court to serve at this term of the district court, are known to have fled to escape arrest, they having been implicated in these murders.

. . . These facts form a striking commentary upon the working of the law prescribing that the juries shall be selected by the county court, . . . Recent advices from Cedar City and the other towns near the scene of the Mountain Meadow massacre, report them to be almost entirely depopulated. In Cedar City there remains but twelve families out of a population of between eight or nine hundred inhabitants. . . .

Tuesday, 29th.

This morning, at about 3 o’clock, Marshal Dotson, accompanied by Deputy Marshal Stone, and a civil posse of five men, and a company of the 2nd Dragoons, . . . left this city with the utmost secrecy and proceeded to the town of Springville, the scene of the murder of the Parrishes, of Potter, and of Forbes, . . .

Upon reaching the town it was immediately surrounded by details from the company of Dragoons who were so stationed that no one could leave the city unperceived of them.

The Marshal with his posse then entered the town, and at daybreak commenced the search of all those houses . . . The Bishop’s house was one of the first entered, but no one was found therein except his ten wives. . . .

After a thorough search, not one of the offenders could be found, and it was discovered that not only those who have been already implicated have run off, but also fully one half of the male inhabitants of the city have fled, leaving their numerous wives and families at home, . . . The connection of the church authorities with the murder is fully established by the testimony of Durfee and Bartholomew.

It was not until the arrest of these men that the mass of those who have left the southern settlements fled. As soon as they gave themselves up in Salt Lake City, an express was sent down from there, giving notice of that fact, and stating that they were going to turn States evidence, and this caused the general stampede. . . .

The following affidavit was this evening made by the witnesses for the prosecution . . .

We, Albert Parrish, Henry Higgins, James O’Bannion, Leonard Phillips, Orin Parrish and James Gammell, do solemnly swear . . . that we were summoned to appear as witnesses before the United States District Court . . . that we possessed certain knowledge of various crimes which had been in the past two or three years committed in said district, on account of which said knowledge we had been so summoned; that on account of the participation in, or sanction afterwards of the said crimes, by the community in which said crimes were committed, emanating as we believe from the authorities of the Mormon Church; we considered our lives and property in imminent peril from the Mormon community, should we appear and testify to the facts within our knowledge, unless a portion of the United States troops should (as they have been) be stationed in the town of Provo, near enough the Court room to guarantee safety, and that from the Mormon community we have received threats of intimidation, in case we should divulge the facts . . . and which threats we believe would have been carried into execution but for the timely aid afforded by the Commanding General in the stationing of troops, now in and near this city; and further, we believe our lives to be in danger henceforward without military protection from United States troops. (*The Valley Tan*, April 5, 1859, p. 3)

The evidence collected by Judge Cradlebaugh clearly shows that the Parrishes were victims of the Mormon doctrine of “Blood Atonement.” After Cradlebaugh’s investigation, J. M. Stewart, who conducted a pretended inquest at the time the Parrishes were murdered, admitted that he had been “swayed in my official duties by ecclesiastical dignitaries.” In a letter dated July 4, 1859, written from California, Stewart stated:

Sir: —

. . . during the notable “Reformation,” I think in the winter of 1857, I was, as one of the Bishop’s counselors, presiding and speaking in a ward meeting, . . . N. T. Guymon, came to the door, and said, “. . . the Bishop wishes to see you.” . . . As this was in the night, our movements were,

perhaps, observed by but very few . . . the Bishop stated the object of the meeting, which was, that we might hear a letter which he had just received from “President Young.” He there read the letter, the purport of which was about this.

He, Brigham, had information that some suspicious characters were collecting at the “Indian Farm,” on Spanish Fork, and he wished him (Bishop Johnson) to keep a good look out in that direction; to send some one there to reconnoiter and ascertain what was going on, and if they (those suspicious characters) should make a break, and be pursued, which he required; he “**would be sorry to hear a favorable report;**” “but,” said he, “the better way is to lock the stable door before the horse is stolen.”

He then admonished the Bishop that he (the Bishop) understood those things, and would act accordingly, and “keep this letter close,” or safe.

This letter was over Brigham’s signature, in his own peculiarly rough hands, which we all had the privilege of seeing. . . .

The next Saturday night there was a council, . . . In this council were, as well as I remember, Bishop A. Johnson, J. M. Stewart, A. F. McDonald, N. T. Guyman, L. Johnson, C. Lanford, and W. J. Earl. . . . Potter and Durfee were present. . . .

In this council there was a good deal of secret talking done by two or three individuals getting close together, and talking in suppressed tones, . . . some things I could not help understanding. I understood when Potter requested of the Bishop the privilege to **kill Parrish** wherever he could find “the damned curse,” and the Bishop’s reply, “Shed no blood in Springville.”

During this council, to the best of my recollection, I scarcely spoke a word. I understood that blood would probably be shed, not in Springville, but out of it.

I did in my heart disapprove of the course, but I was in the current, and could not get out, and policy said to me, “Hold your tongue for the present.”

I knew nothing of the plan, nor of the deeds having been done, until near midnight, when I was awakened, and requested to go and hold an inquest over some dead bodies. W. J. Earl, one of the city aldermen, and my predecessor in the magisterial office, made this requirement of me, and undertook to dictate me in the selecting of a jury. I considered my position for a moment, and concluded to suffer myself to be dictated to, unless an attempt should be made to lead me to the commission of crime. In that case I felt that I would try “mighty hard” to back out.

I obeyed my manager, W. J. Earl, in selecting the jury . . . we proceeded along the main road, . . . to the corner of a field known as Childs’ corner. Here laid the bodies of Wm. R. Parrish and G. G. Potter, . . . I proceeded to fill up and qualify the jury. . . . I was told to take charge of the goods, chattels, and clothes of the murdered men; which I did, and in due time delivered every article to their families, except a butcher knife claimed by Mrs. Parrish, . . .

The law of the Territory made it my duty to make returns of my proceedings, in this case, to the County Court, but the Bishop told me not to do it, and I obeyed him.

Some considerable time, I don’t know how long after the murder, I spoke to Bishop Johnson concerning the above named knife. I supposed, from the fact that when the knife came into my possession it was all over bloody, that it had been used by the assassin; but the Bishop thought differently. During our chat about the knife, and the murder, the Bishop asked:

“Do you know who done that job?”

I replied, “No.” He then asked, “Have you any idea?”

“No.”

“Can’t you guess?”

I answered, “I guess I could.”

He then said, “Well, guess.”

“I guess William Bird.”

He replied, “you are pretty good at guessing.” . . .

H. H. Kearns, Captain of the Police, came to me on . . . the next day after the murder, and told me that I must hold Court sometime

that afternoon, and examine Durfee and young Parrish in regard to the murder, as he had them prisoners on that account. I understood that it was only to be done as a show, or kind of a “put off.” . . .

Durfee made his statement first, which was about what has hitherto been revealed. . . . Parrish, . . . chose not to know anything of consequence. . . .

It would have been in order, while on the subject of the “knife,” to state that which I will now state:

Before the Bishop and I had got through with our chat, Bird came in sight, and the Bishop called to him; he came to us, and during our conversation, coolly and deliberately made the following statement:

“When Potter fell, I clinched Parrish, and killed him with my knife.” . . .

I am perfectly aware that that portion of community who have no knowledge of the under-currents and wire-workings of Mormonism will consider me a “poor concern,” for suffering myself to be swayed in my official duties by ecclesiastical dignitaries, for suffering myself, in the case above mentioned to be governed by the Bishop. But I perfectly understood that to act without counsel, or to disobey counsel, was to transgress; and if I had never understood it before I could not help but understand it then, by the example of the three dead bodies right before my eyes, that “The way of the transgressor is (was) hard.” . . .

I am, & c., your humble servant, **J. M. Stewart.** (*The Valley Tan*, August 24, 1859, p. 2)

The following statements are taken from “the remarks of Judge Cradlebaugh upon the occasion of his releasing the Grand Jury” from further service:

This day makes two weeks from the time you were impannelled . . . the court took the unusual course of calling your attention to particular crimes—the horrible massacre at the Mountain meadows. It told you of the murder of young Jones and his mother, and of pulling their house down over them and making that their tomb, it told you of the murder of the Parrishes and Potter, and Forbes, almost within sight of this court house. . . .

The court has had occasion to issue bench warrants to arrest persons connected with the Parrish murder; has had them brought before it and examined; the testimony presents an unparalleled condition of affairs. It seems that the whole community were engaged in committing that crime. Facts go to show it. There seems to be a combined effort on the part of the community to screen the murderers from the punishment due them for the murder they have committed.

I might call your attention to the fact that when officers seek to arrest persons accused of crimes they are not able to do so; the parties are screened and secreted by the community. Scarcely had the officers arrived in sight of the town of Springville before a trumpet was sounded from the walls around the town. This, no doubt, was for the purpose of giving the alarm. The officers were there to make arrests. The officers leave the town, and in a short time a trumpet sounds again from the wall for the purpose of announcing that the danger was over. Witnesses are screened; others are intimidated by persons in that community. . . .

Such acts and conduct go to show that the community there do not desire to have criminals punished, it shows that the Parrishes and Potter were murdered by counsel, that it was done by authority; . . .

By legislation we have no jails, no means to support prisoners, no means of paying witnesses or jurors, or other officers of this court. It would seem that the whole of the legislation of this Territory was to prevent the due administration of justice. . . . (*The Valley Tan*, March 29, 1859, p. 3)

On May 17, 1859, *The Valley Tan* published an article which contained the following statements:

Where are now the Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, Teachers and territorial officers who have fled to the mountains in fear of just punishment for their crimes? These are high authorities in the Church, against whom a chain of circumstances has been elicited by testimony,

showing a confederacy in crime. All of us know that the Mormon church is a secret oath-bound organization, . . . All of us have a belief amounting almost to knowledge that if Brigham Young were to direct the surrender of Snow, Johnson, Earl and the whole list of fugitives from justice to-day it could be effected to-morrow. All of us know that the testimony taken implicate these men in crimes which makes humanity shudder. All of us conclude, therefore, that when the lawful process of the judge is running for the arrest of these murderers, the whole Mormon church is acting as an accessory after the fact to conceal them and prevent their arrest, if necessary, by force.

In his book, *Desert Saints*, Nels Anderson gives this information concerning the murders in Springville and their relationship to "Blood Atonement":

Brigham Young on September 21, 1856, made a speech upon which enemies of the church built a harsh case. He said there were some sins that could not be expiated by repentance; that, if sinners guilty of such acts could see their true condition, "they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins." Thus the idea got around that some sinners could only be saved by spilling their blood. As the idea spread, the stories began to travel that men had been slain; that "destroying angels" went about at night on their missions of death, thus to save the souls of Saints who had sinned. That was "blood atonement." . . .

In March, 1857, three men were killed in Springville: . . . The Parish family, against advice of counsel, planned to leave for California. Priesthood leaders, it was alleged, thought such a migration would do them no good and might be an evil example for others. Two years later Associate Justice John Cradlebaugh attempted to apprehend the murderers of the Springville brethren. Mormon leaders bitterly opposed him and denied all the allegations, but the fact remains that the Mormons in charge of the local government did nothing to find the murderers. (*Desert Saints*, 1966, pp. 153-154)

John D. Lee gives the following information concerning other murders committed in early Utah:

I remember an affair that transpired at the old distillery in Cedar City, just before the massacre . . . The facts are as follows: Three men came to Cedar City one evening; they were poor, and much worn by their long journey. They were on their way to California. They were so poor and destitute that the authorities considered they were dangerous men, so they reported that they were spies from Johnston's army, and ordered the brethren to devise a plan to put them out of the way, decently and in order. That the will of God, as made known through Haight and Klingensmith, might be done these helpless men were coaxed to go to the old distillery and take a drink. They went in company with John M. Higbee, John Weston, James Haslem and Wm. C. Stewart, and I think another man, but if so I have forgotten his name. The party drank considerable, and when the emigrants got under the influence of the whisky the brethren attacked them, and knocked the brains out of two of the men with the king-bolt of a wagon. The third man was very powerful and muscular; he fought valiantly for his life, but after a brief struggle he was overcome and killed. They were buried near Cedar City.

This deed was sustained by all the people there. The parties who did the killing were pointed out as true, valiant men, zealous defenders of the faith, and as fine examples for the young men to pattern after. . . .

Many such cases came under my observation. I have known the Church to act in this way and break up and destroy many, very many men. The Church was then, and in that locality, supreme. None could safely defy or disobey it. The Church authorities used the laws of the land, the laws of the Church, and Danites and "Angels" to enforce their orders, and rid the country of those who were distasteful to the

leaders. And I say as a fact that there was no escape for any one that the leaders of the Church in Southern Utah selected as a victim. . . .

In 1854 (I think that was the year) there was a young man, a Gentile, working in Parowan. He was quiet and orderly, but was courting some of the girls. He was notified to quit, and let the girls alone, but he still kept going to see some of them. This was contrary to orders. No Gentile was at that time allowed to keep company with or visit any Mormon girl or woman. The authorities decided to have the young man killed, so they called two of Bishop Dames' Destroying Angels, Barney Carter and old man Gould, and told them to take that cursed young Gentile 'over the rim of the basin.' That was a term used by the people when they killed a person.

The destroying angels made some excuse to induce the young man to go with them on an excursion, and when they got close to Shirts' mill, near Harmony, they killed him, and left his body in the brush.

The Indians found the body, and reported the facts to me soon afterwards. I was not at home that night, but Carter and Gould went to my house and staid there all night. Rachel asked them where they had been. They told her they had been on a mission to take a young man, a Gentile, over the rim of the basin, and Carter showed her his sword, which was all bloody, and he said he used that to help the Gentile over the edge. Rachel knew what they meant when they spoke of sending him "over the rim of the basin." It was at that time a common thing to see parties going out of Cedar City and Harmony, with suspected Gentiles, to send them "over the rim of the basin," and the Gentiles were always killed.

This practice was supported by all the people, and every thing of that kind was done by orders from the Council, or by orders from some of the Priesthood. When a Danite or a destroying angel was placed on a man's track, that man died, certain, unless some providential act saved him, . . .

It frequently happened that men would become dissatisfied with the Church or something else in Utah, and try to leave the Territory. The authorities would try to convince such persons that they ought to remain, but if they insisted on going, they were informed that they had permission to do so. When the person had started off, with his stock and property, it was nearly always the rule to send a lot of Danites to steal all the stock and run it off into the mountains; so that in the majority of cases the people would return wholly broken up and settle down again as obedient members of the Church. It was a rare thing for a man to escape from the Territory with all of his property, until after the Pacific Railroad was built through Utah. It was the general custom to rob the persons who were leaving the country, but many of them were killed, because it was considered they would tell tales that should not be made public, in the event of their reaching Gentile settlements. (*Confessions of John D. Lee*, photomechanical reprint of 1880 Edition, pp. 273, 275, 278, 279, 286, 287)

R. N. Baskin, who served as mayor of Salt Lake City and as a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Utah, made these interesting observations concerning the murders committed in early Utah:

In the excavations made within the limits of Salt Lake City during the time I have resided there, many human skeletons have been exhumed in various parts of the city. The present City cemetery was established by the first settlers. I have never heard that it was ever the custom to bury the dead promiscuously throughout the city; and as no coffins were ever found in connection with any of these skeletons, it is evident that the death of the persons to whom they once belonged did not result from natural causes, but from the use of criminal means, and therefore the victims were not given a Christian burial. That the Danites were bound by their covenants to execute the criminal orders of the high priesthood against apostates and alleged enemies of the church is beyond question. . . . How many murders were secretly committed by that band of assassins will never be known, but an estimate may be



made from the number mentioned in the confessions of Hickman and Lee, and the number of human skeletons which have been exhumed in Salt Lake City, the possessors of which were evidently murdered and buried without a knell, coffin, or Christian ceremony. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R.N. Baskin, pp. 154-155)

We could show many other cases where men were murdered, but these should be sufficient to convince the reader that Joseph Fielding Smith's claim that no person was ever "blood atoned" in early Utah is completely false. For additional information on these and other cases of murder in early Utah see our publication *The Mormon Kingdom*, vol. 2.

### Young Indicted For Murder

It was obvious to many people in early Utah that Brigham Young was responsible for the death of many people, but with the power Brigham Young had it was almost impossible to convict him. Harold Schindler states:

As winter surrendered to spring in 1871, the combined efforts of Gentiles and apostates had failed to unsettle the church or its leadership. But in a shepherd's shack west of Nephi a confrontation was taking place which soon would have violent repercussions. At a table cluttered with dishes sat two men—one a federal marshal, the other a desperado reputed to have killed literally scores of men. Marshal Sam Gilson spoke earnestly and convincingly to the man he had spent weeks attempting to contact. What the lawman wanted was a full confession of the outlaw's misdeeds. He especially wanted knowledge of a major crime which could be linked to the Mormon hierarchy. In return, Gilson promised to use his influence in the informer's behalf. The marshal's impassioned arguments eventually prevailed, and the desperado nodded his assent. William A. "Bill" Hickman had decided to "unbosom myself where it would do some good." (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, p. 352)

Bill Hickman made this statement in his confessions:

He [Gilson] said he could not give me any hope of pardon for the many crimes in which I had participated, further than that he believed, if I made a clean breast of it, it would be greatly in my favor. . . . I found Gilson to be a man that had had much experience in his life in his line, and was well posted on the crimes of Utah. He was conversant on the most prominent cases, and held the correct theory, that the leaders of the Church were the guilty party, and not the laymen. He conversed about many cases with which I was connected; and finally elected the case of Yates as the one on which we could with the greatest safety rely for prosecuting Brigham Young. I then gave him a full statement of the case and the names of the witnesses that would make the circumstances complete. . . . Gilson assured me. . . . that I should have every protection that I needed. . . . On the last of September he came and arrested me and another man by the name of Flack. We were then taken before Chief Justice McKean for examination, which we waived, and were sent to Camp Douglass for safe keeping. After we had been there some two weeks we were taken before the Grand Jury, and I made a full statement of all the crimes committed in this Territory that I knew of—as I have related them in this history—which statement, together with that of Flack's and others, caused the Grand Jury to find indictments against several persons, and it has caused many threats to be made on me.

Several have said if I ever get out of here I will not be privileged to live but a short time; others have tried to get me out of camp under promise of any amount of money I wanted to make my escape; but it was too plain to be seen that I would not get far before I would be cared for in such a manner that I would not tell more stories. (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, pp. 191-193)

Bill Hickman made these statements concerning the murder of Yates:

One Yates, a trader that had been in the country before, had returned with five or six thousand dollars' worth of Indian goods, and stopped on Green River. . . . He was sent to, to purchase his ammunition, but would not sell it without selling his other goods also. He came to Bridger twice, buying beef cattle for the Government. . . . We kept watch of the United States camps every day, . . . One day they moved up the creek about four miles, and we saw a vacancy between them and their cattle. We made a rush and drove off seven hundred and fifty head, taking all the fat cattle they had, and some mules. Horses and mules were taken several times after this.

About this time it was noised about that Yates had let the soldiers have his ammunition, and that he was acting the spy for them. . . . One of the Conover boys . . . saw a lone man traveling . . . after learning his name, Yates, he marched him to Bridger, where he was placed in the big stone corral and a guard placed over him. . . .

I will here state that the office I held was that of independent captain, amenable to none but the head commanding general or governor, Brigham Young, . . .

. . . I was asked to take the prisoner, Yates, to the city with me, and agreed to do so. . . . There was a common trace-chain on Yates' ankle, fastened with a padlock. He had a fine gold watch and nine hundred dollars in gold, all in twenty-dollar gold pieces. The money was given to me to bring into the city with the prisoner, but the watch was kept, and what became of it I never knew.

. . . The next morning we traveled about halfway down Echo Canon to where the general's headquarters were located, and got breakfast. I delivered General Wells some letters, reported myself, and told him who I had along, and asked him what I should do with my prisoner. He said: "He ought to be **killed**; but take him on; you will probably get an order when you get to Col. Jones' camp"—which was at the mouth of Echo Canon on Weber River. After breakfast we started for Jones' camp, some twelve miles distant, and when within three or four miles of the camp, we met Joseph S. Young, a **son of Brigham's**, going, as he said, to the general's camp to take orders. He hailed me (I being behind) and said **his father wanted that man Yates killed**, and that I would know all about it when I got to Jones' camp.

We got there about sundown, and were met outside by Col. Jones, . . . He then took me aside and told me he had orders when Yates came along to have him **used up**, . . . Supper was brought to us, and Yates soon went to sleep on his blankets. Flack and Meacham spread their blankets and soon went to sleep also. I told them to do it, as I would guard the prisoner until I called them. . . .

About this time all was still, and everybody supposed to be in their beds. No person was to be seen, when Col. Jones and two others, **Hosea Stout** and another man whose name I do not recollect, came to my campfire and asked if Yates was asleep. I told them he was, upon which **his brains were knocked out with an ax**. He was covered up with his blankets and left laying. Picks and spades were brought, and a grave dug some three feet deep near the camp by the fire-light, all hands assisting. Flack and Meacham were asleep when the man was killed, but woke up and saw the grave digging. The body was put in and the dirt well packed on it. . . .

The next day I took the nine hundred dollars, and we all went to headquarters. Flack and I had a talk, as we went, about the money. He said Brigham ought to give that to us as we had already been to more expense than that money amounted to, from horses used up and other losses, and urged me to get it. I told him I would try, saying to him: "You know how much I have been out, and can testify to it, and I think he will give us part of it, anyway."

Soon after dark Flack and I went to Brigham's office. He asked how things were going on out East, and I told him. He asked what had become of Yates? I told him. He then asked if I had **got word from him**? I told him that I had got his instructions at Jones' camp, and also of the word **I had got from his son Jo** [Joseph Young]. He said that was **right, and a good thing**. I then told him I had nine hundred dollars given me to bring in, that Yates had at the time he was captured. I told him

of the expense I had been to during the war, and asked him if I might have part of the money? He gave me a reprimand for asking such a thing, and said it must go towards defraying the expenses of the war. I pulled out the sack containing the money, and he told me to give it to his clerk (I do not remember who he was now). The money was counted, and we left. (*Brigham's Destroying Angel*, pp. 122-126)

According to Stanley P. Hirshon, Brigham Young's son, Joseph A. Young, admitted he met Hickman but claimed that he gave instructions to save Yates:

The Saints argued about the remainder of the episode. In 1871 Joseph A. Young, the prophet's son, described to the New York Tribune how he met Hickman at the outskirts of the city and urged him to bring Yates in alive. Hickman, however, told the New York World a different story. Joseph said Young wanted the prisoner "taken care of," so Hickman waited until Yates was asleep and bashed his brains out with a rock. . . . The prophet warned Hickman to keep cool and say nothing about the incident to anyone. Significantly, neither Joseph nor Hickman denied that Mormons had murdered Yates. (*The Lion of the Lord*, pp. 176-177)

Joseph A. Young's statement certainly raises a very interesting question: if Joseph A. Young was really concerned about Hickman bringing in Yates alive, why didn't the Mormons punish Hickman when he came in without him? The fact that the Mormon leaders did not punish Hickman for this murder seems to show that they were accessories to the crime. That Hickman did not seem concerned about keeping Yates's death a secret is made plain by a statement written by Dan Jones:

"This Yates was a personal friend of mine, a kind-hearted, liberal man . . . I was camped with a small party about four miles west of Weber valley and ten or twelve miles from Echo. One very cold morning about sunrise, Hickman and two others came to my camp. They seemed almost frozen. . . . Hickman asked me if I had any whiskey. I told him I had not. He then asked if I had coffee. I replied that we had. 'Then make us a good strong cup.' While the coffee was being made he took me outside and asked me if I knew Yates. I told him I did. 'Well, we have **just buried him**,' he said." (*Forty Years Among the Indians*, as cited by Juanita Brooks in *On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 643, n. 13)

Juanita Brooks gives this revealing information in the same footnote:

A contemporary account which establishes place and date is Lorenzo Brown's . . . On October 18 he noted: "Wm Hickman came in with a prisoner named Yates He had sold 3 or 400 lbs powder & some lead etc to the troops which he had promised to us." In that war climate, this would brand Yates as an enemy. "Journal," I, 290, 296. . . .

That some Mormons did confiscate Yates' property is shown in the diary of Newton Tuttle, at that time adjutant to Major John T. D. McAllister: "Sat 24 [October 18, 1857] . . . 6 teamsters have come in to camp from the enemy. Lewis Robinson got back from Green river he took 48 Horse & colts 36 pair of blankets & c that belonged to Yates . . ." . . .

Still another interesting sidelight comes from Albert Tracy, a member of the Johnston expedition. On April 10, 1860, as they were leaving the territory, he wrote: ". . . Yates! He has neither been seen by any of us since the day we purchased his powder. . . . The story of his horse ridden and his overcoat worn by Bill Hickman—'Destroyer'—a Springville as told me by the woman . . . affords beyond doubt the key to his fate." . . . This confirms the story that Yates actually did sell his powder to the soldiers rather than to the Mormons, thus branding himself an enemy spy. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 643, n. 13)

In Appendix E of *Brigham's Destroying Angel*, J. H. Beadle gives this information concerning the murder of Yates:

Through the indefatigable labors of United States Marshals and detectives, the entire history of Yates has been made known. His wife, residing at present in Nevada and married again, has written to Salt Lake enclosing photographs of the murdered man, taken a short time before his death. She had always supposed he was killed by the Indians. His remains have been disinterred from the spot named by Hickman, and the chain of evidence is complete. Hosea Stout, a Mormon lawyer of considerable prominence, who was arrested for complicity in this murder, and on Hickman's testimony, admits that Yates was killed as a spy; but insists that he was not present and had no knowledge of the transaction; that Yates was delivered to Hickman to be taken to the city, and neither he nor any other officer saw him again.

There is little doubt that Hosea Stout would resort to violence towards a man suspected of being a spy, for the reader will remember that he recorded the following in his diary for January 9, 1846:

When we came to the Temple some what a considerable number of the guard were assembled and among them was William Hibbard son of the old man Hibbard. He was evidently come as a **spy**. When I saw him I told Scott that we must "bounce a stone off his head." to which he agreed we prepared accordingly & I got an opportunity & **hit him on the back of his head which came very near taking his life**. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 1, p. 103)

The *Salt Lake Herald* for October 29, 1871, reported that Daniel H. Wells, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, had also been indicated for the murder of Yates:

Another link in the chain of conspiracy aimed at the very existence of the Mormon people was revealed yesterday afternoon, in the arrest of Mayor Wells, for the alleged crime of murder. Hosea Stout, Esq., was also arrested at the same time, on the same charge; and Col Wm. H. Kimball on a similar charge. The indictment charges Daniel H. Wells and Hosea Stout, among others, with having on the 15th of November, 1857, killed one Richard Yates at the mouth of Echo canon, in Summit county. There is **little doubt that Yates was killed**, and it is generally **conceded** that the notorious **Bill Hickman committed the crime**, for which, however, there is little prospect of his suffering punishment under existing circumstances, as it is believed that upon his testimony the indictment was found. (*The Salt Lake Herald*, October 29, 1871)

Juanita Brooks points out the fact that "the date given, November 15, was nearly a month later than the actual date of October 18, 1857, greatly helped the case for Stout" (*On The Mormon Frontier*, vol. 2, p. 739). The date of October 18, 1857, was undoubtedly the correct date, for it was on October 18, 1857, that Lorenzo Brown recorded in his journal that "Wm Hickman came in with a prisoner named Yates . . ." Hosea Stout was certainly on the scene at the time of the murder, for he recorded the following in his diary:

Sunday 18 Oct 1857. Visit from Col Little. H. P. Kimball arrived with a party of Col Burton's command . . . Some 700 head of the captured cattle passed to day being driven by teamsters who left the enemy. At dark **W. A. Hickman came in with Mr. Yates a prisoner**. (*On The Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 643)

After Bill Hickman confessed that he committed murders for the Mormon leaders, Brigham Young himself was indicted. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gives this information:

It was not to meet the petty charge of "lascivious cohabitation" that this journey of President Young's was made; but, as already suggested, he had learned that there existed a more serious charge against him, that of "**murder**." In the previous November he had been jointly **indicted** with D. H. Wells, mayor of Salt Lake City, and others,

for the “murder” of one Yates, during the “Echo Canon War.” Mayor Wells, Hosea Stout, formerly attorney-general of the territory, and W. H. Kimball, had been arrested on the 28th of October, on the same charge. . . . Acting United States District Attorney Baskin planned the indictment and arrest of Brigham Young on this **charge of “murder,”** on the strength of the confessions of the notorious “Bill Hickman,” who had confessed to some eighteen or twenty murders . . . Hickman at the request of Mr. Baskin consented to go before the grand jury, and Baskin handed to Major Hempstead the statement of the self-confessed murderer, with the announcement that Hickman was ready to go before the grand jury. It was at this point that Hempstead resigned and Baskin was appointed by McKean to fill the vacancy. By becoming acting United States district attorney, Mr. Baskin had the opportunity of doing what he had urged upon his predecessor to do, and hence the indictments for murder against Brigham Young et al., upon the confessions of Hickman, . . . the coup de main in the arrest of Brigham Young on the charge of “murder” was ordered for Monday, the 20th of November, but President Young by that time was in St. George, and the coup de main was a failure. . . .

It was a dramatic incident when, in the afternoon of the 2nd of January, 1872, Brigham Young...walked into the court presided over by Judge McKean. . . . A certificate of Dr. W. F. Anderson—stating that he was the attending physician of Brigham Young, and that confinement would in all probability prove fatal to him in the present feeble state of his health, and at 71 years of age—was read. . . . The judge declined to admit the defendant to bail; but granted him the privilege of selecting one of his own houses, . . . and defendant might be detained there under custody of the marshal until the time of trial. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 404-408)

The historian Hubert Howe Bancroft speaks of Brigham Young’s indictment for murder, but claims that it was for the murder of the last member of the Aiken Party at Warm Springs rather than for the murder of Yates (see *History of Utah*, pp. 663-664, n. 20). R. N. Baskin, who was responsible for the indictment of Brigham Young, gives this information:

One evening in 1872, . . . Hickman, . . . came to my office. . . . he said that during his seclusion his mind had been greatly disturbed by the matter, and that he had finally concluded to reveal the facts to me, although in doing so he would acknowledge his own guilt. . . . Having become satisfied that Hickman told me the truth, and at my request he having consented to go before the grand jury and tell what he had revealed to me, I placed the statements which I had so written in the hands of Major Hempstead, who was the United States district attorney, and informed him that Hickman was ready to go before the grand jury and testify to the matters therein set forth. In a few days afterwards I saw him, and, while talking the matter over, asked him if he intended to have Hickman appear before the grand jury. He replied that in view of the recent assassination of Doctor Robinson it would be hazardous to indict Brigham Young and the other persons implicated by Hickman. In reply, I said that in any other place than Utah such a confession would cause an investigation by the grand jury, and that I thought he would be derelict in the discharge of his duties if he failed to move in the matter. He returned the statements and nothing further passed between us on the subject.

A grand jury had, in accordance with the decision of Judge McKean, been summoned for the approaching term of the district court. Upon entering the courtroom on the morning that court was opened at that term, I was informed by the Judge that Major Hempstead had resigned as district attorney, . . . and he said he intended to appoint me if I would accept the position. . . .

Upon entering upon the discharge of my duties I determined to procure indictments against the officers of the Mormon church for their violations of the law against polygamy, but I soon found that it could not be done because it was necessary to prove both the first

and plural marriages. I was unable to prove the latter because they were entered into in the secret precincts of the “endowment house” of the Mormon church, and were not made public, but carefully concealed. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R. N. Baskin, Salt Lake City, 1914, pp. 36-38)

The grand jury that indicted Thomas Hawkins also indicted Brigham Young and other high officials among the privileged Mormon ranks. They were charged with having violated Section 32 of the statute against lewd and lascivious cohabitation, . . . and by virtue of the confession of Bill Hickman, Brigham Young and those implicated by Hickman were also indicted for **murder**. . . .

I knew that the indictment of Brigham and others would cause great excitement, especially among the polygamic element of the Mormon church, and if a collision occurred it [sic] would be at the time Brigham was arrested on the charge of **murder**. To meet such a contingency the United States marshal had appointed about one hundred deputies, . . . I knew that the arrest of anyone except Brigham would not be resisted. I therefore had Hawkins arrested and tried before taking any steps in the other cases. During that trial the street in front of the courtroom was daily crowded by hundreds of men, many of whom were armed and whose demeanor was most threatening towards the court. . . . Brigham was then arrested on the charge of lewd and lascivious cohabitation, and brought into court. He gave bonds, just as others were required to do. No special demonstration was made upon that occasion. In a few days later I had a warrant issued for his arrest on the murder charge. . . . Evidently some of the marshal’s deputies betrayed him, as Brigham learned of his intended arrest. . . . Brigham finally decided that instead of resisting he would make a journey to “the south” for his health. . . . In the height of the excitement, and when the armed mob was menacing the court, a number of prominent Gentiles called upon me and stated that they had reliable information that, unless the prosecutions were stopped, the prominent Gentiles who had taken an active part in opposing the Mormon “system” would be assassinated; that they had been appointed a committee to advise me of the fact and request me to dismiss the cases. I told the spokesman he would make a splendid angel, and as I did not intend to grant the request, he had better prepare to go to Abraham’s bosom. He replied that the matter was “too serious to treat facetiously.” . . . This was not the only time I had been subjected to a fire from the rear by men who should have encouraged instead of opposed me. (*Ibid.*, pp. 54-56)

Stanley P. Hirshon gives this information:

Then, on October 2, 1871, Young was arrested for lewd and lascivious cohabitation with sixteen of his wives, a charge the government expected to prove by bringing into court his children by these women. Although the marshal allowed the prophet to remain at home, Brigham Young, Jr., at the church conference on October 5, denounced the federal appointees as tools of the devil and called down on them heaven’s curse. “Trust to God,” he advised his people, “keep your powder dry, and don’t fail to have on hand a good supply of fixed ammunition.” Loud cheers greeted his remarks. . . . Young heard that Hickman had implicated him in several murders. He panicked and fled. Fortunately for him, however, the sympathetic George C. Bates now replaced Baskin. “The counsel of Brigham Young, indicted for murder and lewd and lascivious cohabitation, have proposed to me, that he is perfectly willing to come in at once, surrender himself, and give bail in the sum of \$200,000,” Bates informed his superiors. “His counsel also state that Young left, not to avoid trial, but to escape confinement in the garrison here and for fear of his life.”

Early in 1872 Young submitted to arrest for murder, but Salt Lake City had no federal jail and McKean allowed him to return home. . . . Attorney General, McKean argued that he had treated the Saints humanely. “I permitted Brigham Young, though indicted for murder, to occupy his own house, and take exercise in his own carriage, surrounded by his friends, and but nominally in the



custody of the Marshal. I permitted Mayor Wells, also indicted for murder, to go on bail. . . .

The Saints, on the other hand, ceaselessly harassed McKean. One day during the trials the door of the hayloft suddenly flew open, and twenty to thirty armed men dashed inside the courtroom. "They stood for some minutes in a menacing and insulting group near the middle of the room, but as they seemed not to be noticed, they gradually took seats. They were of the organization known as 'Danites.'" Several times these sinister men returned to the hayloft, but they failed to intimidate McKean. (*The Lion of The Lord*, pp. 305-308)

Unfortunately, the case against Brigham Young for murder never came to trial. Harold Schindler states that "the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in the Englebrecht case which set aside all legal proceedings in Utah during the previous eighteen months and declared null and void indictments found against nearly one hundred and forty persons. The landmark opinion resulted in all charges being dropped against Young, Wells, Stout, Kimball, and, ironically, Hickman himself" (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, pp. 355). Thomas G. Alexander gives this information concerning this matter:

Almost as soon as Judge McKean arrived in Salt Lake City, . . . he found himself involved in a conflict between the federal government and territorial officials over the relative areas of their jurisdiction. . . . McKean and his fellow judges ruled that the territorial courts were United States district courts. Consequently, from then until April, 1872, the United States marshal empaneled juries by open venire. In a decision which was possibly the biggest blot on McKean's career, the United States Supreme Court overruled him by decreeing that the courts were merely legislative courts of the territory created by federal statute and thus subject to territorial law. The case involved a judgment of \$59,063.25 against Alderman and Justice of the Peace Jeter Clinton for the abatement of a saloon in Salt Lake City which refused to pay a city liquor license tax that it considered exorbitant. The federal decision in *Clinton V. Englebrecht* provided the legal basis for throwing out 130 indictments found by grand juries drawn in accordance with the practice in United States courts rather than the territorial statutes. This solved nothing, however, because the disputes over the appointment of the territorial marshal tied the hands of the court; the courts became little more than boards of arbitration, and by June, 1874, a backlog of ninety-five cases had built up in Third District Court.

McKean and other Gentiles believed that the Mormons were afraid to allow trials of their brethren accused of murder and other crimes before impartial juries. The judge wrote U.S. Attorney General George H. Williams in the fall of 1873 complaining that he could neither convict the guilty nor protect the innocent and that Utah had become a "theocratic state, under the vice regency of Brigham Young." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, pp. 86-87)

R. N. Baskin, who had pressed for the indictment of Brigham Young, made the following statement:

Later, the judgment in the Englebrecht case was reversed by the supreme court of the United States, and as the grand jury which had found the indictments against Brigham and others was held by that court to be invalid, the criminal cases in question were dismissed. I regret that those cases were not tried, because their trial would have exposed, as did the first trial of Bishop John D. Lee, the deplorable conditions which then existed in the Territory; and the examination of Hickman, in my opinion, would have convinced the public that his confession was true, especially if he had been subjected to a rigid cross-examination. (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, by R. N. Baskin, p. 57)

## No Protection in Utah

In a sermon delivered June 19, 1853, Brigham Young stated: "It is true, as it is said in the Report of these officers, if I had crooked

my little finger, he would have been **used up**, but I did not bend it. . . . Apostates, or men who never made any profession of religion, had better be careful how they come here, **lest I should bend my little finger**" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, pp. 186-187).

The people of early Utah knew that this was no idle threat, and that their lives and property were in danger if they opposed Brigham Young's rule. On February 4, 1849, Hosea Stout recorded the following in his diary:

Went to meeting on the warm side of the Fort wall. President B. Young spoke giving us general instructions & advice. He said that **none** should leave here & carry off the gold & silver &c without **he pleases to let them that they can not get away unless he sees fit** & those who go away contrary to council **he will confiscate their property**, for **he is boss** &c. (*On The Mormon Frontier; The Diary of Hosea Stout*, vol. 2, p. 341)

Heber C. Kimball, a member of the First Presidency, made these statements in a discourse delivered September 2, 1860:

The moment a young man leaves the Church, he is then a traitor to the law of laws. You know the law of nations is that when a man becomes a traitor to the law of the land, all he has is confiscated, and he is punished accordingly; and so it is in the Church and kingdom of God. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 8, p. 213)

Jedediah M. Grant, also a member of the First Presidency, plainly and openly taught that traitors to the Church were "worthy of death" (*Deseret News*, July 27, 1854).

We can only begin to imagine the fear that must have gripped the inhabitants of early Utah. Nels Anderson gives this interesting information:

A month later Burr wrote another letter to Hendricks, reporting that he had made a contract with a man named Mogo to survey Sanpete Valley. When Mogo got ready to leave the city, he found that ten of his oxen had been stolen. "Suspicion falls on a noted character who stands high in the councils of the Church, but to convict or punish him would be impossible, and it is but another instance that the laws afford no protection to life or property." Burr advised that two persons who could testify feared to talk lest their lives should be in danger. . . .

The "Reformation" was an occasion for every Saint to purge his soul and to be rebaptized, to rededicate himself to the church. . . . Thousands were rebaptized. Repentant backsliders confessed and begged forgiveness of the congregations. There were allegations that many were dragged from their homes and beaten and their property destroyed. Burr did not exaggerate. Some of the Gentiles were in danger.

An example of reformation zeal was reported in a letter sent by Dr. Garland Hurt, sometime in the autumn of 1856, to Brigham Young. With General Burr and other members of the land survey he had visited central Utah. They were on their way to Corn Creek, near Fillmore, to visit the government farm of the Pahvante tribe. As they approached the farm, they noticed two men riding full speed ahead of them. They noticed also, on reaching the farm, that some Indians were riding away in the opposite direction. Later they learned that the riders were Mormons going to warn the Indians that the "Americans were coming to their camp to arrest the murderers of Captain Gunnison." As previously mentioned, some of the Indians of this tribe had been tried and convicted for the murder of Gunnison, but they escaped and were still at large.

Hurt and his party returned to Fillmore and stopped during the evening at the home of a Mr. Peter Robison. In the course of the evening a Mr. Edwin Pugh, a neighbor, stepped in and invited two young men of the party to visit at his house. No sooner did they enter Pugh's house than some persons began to stone the place. "Mr. Pugh ran out and asked what they meant. They asked what he was doing with those damned Americans about his house." Apparently the two men visiting with Mr. Pugh, although working for Hurt or Burr, were not "Americans," but Mormons. Pugh so stated. The voices of the attackers

responded from the darkness: “They are no better than Americans, or they would not be with them.”

The incident reported by Hurt reflected the prevailing attitude of the Saints toward the Gentiles. There were other reports of stoning at night the houses of Gentiles and apostates. Thus Utah Mormons in 1856 were conducting themselves like Missouri Gentiles in 1833, when Mormon houses were stoned in Jackson County. (*Desert Saints*, pp. 149-153)

The feud between the Governor Cumming faction and the Judge Eckles faction of Utah’s carpetbag government is traced to the poison-pen letters of the latter. On July 9, 1858, Eckles wrote to Secretary of State Lewis Cass that “Brigham Young is de facto governor of Utah, whatever Governor Cumming may be de jure. His reign is one of terror. His unbridled will is king. Every apostate Mormon and every Gentile here, who has hitherto lived in the Territory is in constant fear of personal violence. To me the future is dark and gloomy.” In this letter Eckles expressed regret that all the federal officials in Utah were not united in what he considered the proper course in dealing with the Mormons. (*Ibid.*, p. 195)

Those who were appointed to enforce the law in early Utah found themselves in a very difficult and dangerous situation. The U.S. Marshal P. K. Dotson wrote a letter to Judge Cradlebaugh in which he stated:

I have received from you certain warrants of arrest against many persons, in your Judicial district, charged with murder, including one against J. D. Lee, John Higbee (a bishop), Hoyte (his counselor), and thirty-six others, for the murder of one hundred and nineteen men, women and children, at Mountain Meadows, also one against Porter Rockwell, John A. Wolf, president of the Seventies . . . for the murder of the Aiken Brothers and two others; one against Lewis Bentz and three others for stealing six mules, the property of the United States. . . .

I regret to inform you that it is not in my power to execute any of these processes, I have made repeated efforts by the aid as well of the military, as of the civil posse, to execute the warrants last alluded to, but without success. So great is the number of persons engaged in the commission of these crimes, and such the feeling of the Mormon Church, and the community in their favor, that I cannot rely on a civil posse to aid me in arresting them. . . . (“Journal History,” June 3, 1859, as cited in *Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, pp. 292-293)

Thomas G. Alexander gives this information:

As the conflict evolved, a considerable degree of violence took place between Mormons and Gentiles in which McKean or his court was directly involved. . . . A body of what McKean thought were either Danites or members of the Nauvoo Legion tried to intimidate the judge in court. In October, 1874, a group of armed men knocked Marshal George R. Maxwell down and hurt him while he was trying to serve a writ on Brigham Young to secure his testimony before a grand jury. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1966, p. 95)

J. M. Grant, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, frankly admitted that Brigham Young interfered with the grand jury and claimed that the Mormons did not need courts:

Last Sunday, the President chastised some of the Apostles and Bishops who were on the grand jury. Did he fully succeed in clearing away the fog which surrounded them, and in removing blindness from their eyes? No, for they could go to their room and again disagree, though, to their credit, it must be admitted that a brief explanation made them unanimous in their action. . . .

Several had got into the fog to suck and eat the filth of a Gentile law court, ostensibly a court of Utah, though I call it a Gentile court. . . .

A brief examination will soon convince a person, of only ordinary observation, that the laws of Utah are not administered in our courts,

and that the judges must know that fact, and that they have been seeking from the first, with but few exceptions, to overrule them. . . .

I want the Gentiles to understand that we know all about their whoredoms and other abominations here. If we have not invariably **killed** such corrupt scoundrels, those who will seek to corrupt and pollute our community, I swear to you that we **mean to**, and to accomplish more in a few hours, towards clearing the atmosphere, than all your grand and traverse juries can in a year. . . . we are determined to do right, and to set at defiance wickedness and wicked men, and to send them to hell across lots, as quick as we can. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, pp. 233-235)

John Cradlebaugh, who served as associate justice of the Second Judicial District in early Utah, made these revealing statements in a speech delivered before the House of Representatives:

Mr. Speaker, having resided for sometime among the Mormons, . . . I feel that I would not be discharging my duty if I failed to impart such information as I have acquired in regard to this people . . .

Mormonism . . . not only permits, but orders, the commission of the vilest lusts, in the name of the Almighty God himself, and teaches that it is a sacred duty to commit the crimes of theft and murder. . . . And, as if to crown its achievements, it establishes itself in the heart of one of the greatest and most powerful Governments of the world, establishes therein a theocratic government overriding all other government, . . . They teach the shedding of blood for the remission of sins, or, in other words, that if a Mormon apostatizes his throat shall be cut, and his blood poured out upon the ground for the remission of his sin. They also practice other revolting doctrines, such as are only carried out in polygamous countries, which is evidenced by a number of mutilated persons in their midst. . . . they teach that it is a duty to rob and steal from Gentiles. . . . the picture, true to life as it is, has yet darker shades. Murder is openly commanded, . . . In the few extracts I have to give you, . . . the right and duty of the church to “spill blood” is asserted in the plainest and coarsest words that our Anglo-Saxon language affords. . . . Brigham himself is king, priest, lawgiver, and chief polygamist. Is treason hatched in Utah—Brigham is the head traitor. Are rebel troops mustered against the United States—Brigham is their commander-in-chief. Is a law to be enacted—Brigham’s advice determines it. Is an offending “Gentile” or an apostate Mormon to be assassinated—the order emanates from Brigham. . . . His deluded followers yield him implicit obedience, and a church organization known as “Danites” or “destroying angels,” stand ready to protect his person, to avenge his wrongs, and to execute his pleasure.

Brigham is both Church and State. True, the atrocities committed in Utah are not committed by him with his own hands, but they are committed by his underlings, and at his bidding. He claims that he is not a criminal, because his hand is not seen in the perpetration of crime. He pleads an “alibi,” when he is known to be everywhere present in the Territory. He seeks to avert censure by feigning ignorance of the atrocities of his underlings. Such ignorance can only be supposable on the hypothesis that Mormonism is not a system and Brigham is not its head; that he is a despot without power, or a prophet without the ability to forsee.

Now, Brigham is either complete ruler in Utah, or he is nothing. The complicity of the church dignitaries, mayors of cities, and other territorial officials, in the crimes that have been committed, demonstrates that those crimes were church crimes, and Brigham is the head of the church. . . . Mormon punishment for Mormon apostasy is like the old curse of former Popes; it extends from the soles of the feet to the hairs of the head. It separates husband and wife; it reaches from the confiscation of property to the severance of the windpipe. . . . Brigham not only controls the legislation, but he controls the courts. . . .

This attempt of the Mormons to interfere with the administration of the law, and control the courts, has been one of the chief causes of difficulty between the

judges sent by the Federal Government to Utah and the Mormon people. From almost twenty judges sent to the Territory, with the exception of two—Judge Zerubbabel Snow, a Mormon, and J. F. Kinney, the present chief justice, the only territorial judge who has not been removed by the present Administration, and who bears the unenviable reputation of being the “creature and tool of Brigham Young”—the testimony has been uniformly to the effect that the laws could not be enforced. Not one of these judges, with the exception of the two named above, have been enabled to serve out the short term of four years. Some have left in disgust, while others were driven away by force.

As one of the associate justices of the Territory of Utah, in the month of April, 1859, I commenced and held a term of the district court for the second judicial district in the city of Provo, about sixty miles south of Salt Lake City. Upon my requisition, General A. S. Johnston, in command of the military department, furnished a small military force for the purpose of protecting the court. A grand jury was impaneled, and their attention was pointedly and specifically called to a great number of crimes that had been committed in the immediate vicinity, . . . The jury thus instructed, though kept in session two weeks, utterly refused to do anything, and were finally discharged as an evidently useless appendage of a court of justice.

But the court was determined to try a last resource to bring to light and to punishment those guilty of the atrocious crimes which confessedly had been committed in the Territory, and the session continued. Bench warrants, based upon sworn information, were issued against the alleged criminals, and United States Marshal Dotson, a most excellent and reliable officer, aided by a **military posse**, procured on his own request, had succeeded in making a few arrests. A general stampede immediately took place among the Mormons; and what I wish to call your attention to as particularly noticable, is the fact that this **occured more especially among the church officials and civil officers**. Why were these classes so peculiarly urgent and hasty in flight? The law of evidence, based on the experience of ages, has but one answer. It was the consciousness of guilt which drove them to seek a refuge from the avenging arm of the law, armed at last, as they supposed, with power to vindicate its injured majesty. It is a well-known fact that many of the bishops and presidents of “stakes” remained secreted in the mountains until the news was confirmed beyond doubt which announced the retrograde course of the Administration at Washington. . . .

Marshal Dotson, holding warrants for the arrest of almost a hundred murderers, including the participators in the horrible butcheries at the Mountain Meadows, is compelled to return those warrants unexecuted, for the reason, as he solemnly states, that he has not the ability to serve them. In utter disgust he resigns his office; and in this connection his letter of resignation, addressed to the President, is worthy of perusal:

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH TERRITORY,

August 1, 1859.

Sir: I hereby tender to your excellency my resignation as United States marshal of the Territory of Utah, to take effect from the 20th instant. . . .

The courts of the United States in the Territory, powerless to do good, in dreadful mockery of justice, are compelled to lend the power and majesty of the law to subserve the evil designs of the very criminals they seek to punish. Impotent to protect innocence, they encourage crime. . . .

Though willing to serve the Administration from which I received my appointment, I cannot remain an officer of the Government without the power to maintain its dignity. . . .

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. K. DOTSON, . . .

(“Utah and the Mormons,” a Speech of Hon. J. Cradlebaugh, in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863, as printed in Appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, February 23, 1863, pp. 119-125)

Although John Cradlebaugh presented an accurate picture of conditions in early Utah, conditions have certainly changed. The police in Salt Lake City give full protection to both Mormons and Gentiles, and an apostate no longer has to fear for his life or property. Wallace Turner makes this interesting observation:

A modern apostasy can be understood through the story of the Tanner couple. The fact that today they can live comfortably in Salt Lake City, relatively unmolested by the LDS church (beyond a letter or so from anguished apostles) demonstrates as much as anything could the way the church has changed. In the old days, those who disagreed had better be able to defend themselves. (*The Mormon Establishment*, p. 163)





## 37. Miscellaneous History and Doctrine

In this chapter we will deal with a few doctrines and other matters not mentioned in the rest of the book.

### Birth Control

We have previously shown that the Mormon Church teaches that all men pre-existed as spirits before they were born in the flesh. Because many of God's spirit children are still "waiting to take tabernacles," the Mormon leaders teach that Mormons should have large families and that birth control is evil. Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, said that "there are multitudes of pure and holy spirits waiting to take tabernacles, now what is our duty?—to prepare tabernacles for them; to take a course that will not tend to drive those spirits into the families of the wicked, . . . It is the duty of every righteous man and woman to prepare tabernacles for all the spirits they can; . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 4, p. 56).

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

**Birth Control is wickedness.** The abuse of this holy covenant has been the primary cause for the downfall of nations. . . .

When a man and a woman are married and they agree, or covenant, to limit their offspring to two or three, and practice devices to accomplish this purpose, they are guilty of iniquity which eventually must be punished. Unfortunately this evil doctrine is being taught as a virtue by many people who consider themselves cultured and highly educated. . . .

It should be understood definitely that this kind of doctrine is not only not advocated by the authorities of the Church, but also is **condemned** by them as **wickedness** in the sight of the Lord.

President Joseph F. Smith has said in relation to this question:

"Possibly no **greater sin** could be committed by the people who have embraced this gospel than to prevent or to destroy life in the manner indicated." President Brigham Young has this to say about birth control, an abomination practiced by so-called civilized nations, but nations who have forsaken the ways of life:

"There are multitudes of pure and holy spirits waiting to take tabernacles, now what is our duty? . . . It is the duty of every righteous man and woman to prepare tabernacles for all the spirits they can."

. . . Moreover, may we not lose our own salvation if we violate this divine law?

**Birth control leads to damnation.** Instructing the mothers of the Church, President Joseph F. Smith said in June, 1917: "I regret, I think it is a crying **evil**, that there should exist a sentiment or a feeling among any members of the Church to curtail the birth of their children. I think that is a **crime** wherever it occurs. I have no hesitancy in saying that I believe that is one of the greatest **crimes** of the world today, this **evil practice**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, pp. 87-89, 1960 ed.)

The following appeared in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* on May 2, 1970:

It is earnestly to be hoped that Latter-day Saints will not be misled by the ridiculous philosophy now being widely advocated that families are to be limited to one, or at most two, children. . . .

The doctrine of one or two children to the family is **contrary to the revealed instruction of God**.

The "population explosionists" are misleading both the nation and the world, and we should not be deceived by them.

. . . it is God who determines how many people will be born into this world, and each one of them is His own child in the spirit. . . .

God has commanded us to "multiply and replenish the earth." At no time has He abrogated that law.

. . . are we to believe also that He is so blind and thoughtless that He will over-populate this earth? Where is our faith?

Have not the prophets of the Church taught from the beginning of our history that large families are to be desired? Shall we repudiate them? . . .

To limit the size of families means contraception, and what have the modern prophets said about contraception? Has anyone heard them advocate one or two to a family? Has anyone heard them endorse the use of the "pill"— . . .

. . . This earth will not survive long enough in its present state to become so overpopulated that we will all starve to death. . . .

It is His prophets to whom we should look—not to the unbelieving "population explosionists" with their meaningless mathematical calculations which will have no significance as the judgments of God come upon a faithless world. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, May 2, 1970, p. 16)

The teaching that many spirits are awaiting tabernacles and that Mormons should have large families has caused some problems for faithful Mormons. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich stated:

It isn't easy these days to be a Mormon mother of four. In the university town where I live, fertility is tolerated but not encouraged. . . .

Open a woman's magazine and I'm told that the most responsible step I can take is to limit the size of my family. . . . Open the *Ensign* and I am warned of the woeful consequences should I "wall up the path of life over which new spirits must cross to enter a mortal body." Clearly, to prevent the birth of a fifth child would be sinful.

I apparently have two choices. I can selfishly gobble up more of the earth's scarce resources by having another child when I know that in the time it takes you to read those words four children will have died from starvation; or, I can selfishly refuse to bear more children when I know that there are spirits languishing in the pre-existence waiting to enter mortality. . . .

While the "anti-explosionists" argue that the U.S. growth rate, 17.6 births to 9.6 deaths per thousand, is not excessive and can be managed, what would they say of the Mormon performance—28.41 births to 4.78 deaths per thousand, giving us a population increase on a par with most of Asia and only a few percentage points under Africa and Latin America, a rate of growth which, if applied universally, could only result in disaster?

. . . the First Presidency, in a signed statement dated

14 April 1969, has urged Latter-day Saints not to limit their families. One might assume that in the Lord's eyes there is no population problem. . . .

. . . the First Presidency addressed themselves to Latter-day Saints through their Bishops, not to the world at large. Unlike the Catholic hierarchy our leaders have made no attempt to fight world population control; they have simply ignored it, directing their pronouncements to their own people.

To a haggard mother of four in a fledgling stake in the mission field, the reason seems obvious. While there are unquestionably too many Indians in India and too many commuters on Boston's Route 128, there are simply not enough Mormons. . . . we don't need more people in New Hampshire, just more Mormons. That explains why having babies is not enough. We've got to persuade other people to stop having them. . . . Assuming a constant conversion rate and a constant rate of natural increase, there could be twenty-three million Mormons in forty years. In just ninety years we could number 300 million, . . .

Will I have more children? I might. Yet right now four seems like a nice, independent number—just twice too many for Zero Population Growth and only half enough to fill a row in Sacramento Meeting. All things considered, I think I can be quite comfortable just where I am, as long as Mormons keep having babies and the rest of the country stops. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1971, pp. 41-45)

The Mormon leaders teach that the faithful will continue to have children throughout eternity. Brigham Young stated:

Many of the sisters grieve because they are not blessed with offspring. You will see the time when you will have **millions of children** around you. If you are faithful to your covenants, you will be mothers of nations. (As quoted in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1971, p. 14)

### Compressed Spirits

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made the following statements:

A great many people have supposed that the spirit which exists in the tabernacle, for instance, of an infant, is of the same size as the infant tabernacle when it enters therein. No one will dispute that it is of the same size when it is enclosed therein; but how large was the spirit before it entered the tabernacle? . . . the Lord Jesus, who was one of these spirits, . . . a full-grown spirit, thousands of years before he came to take his infant tabernacle. . . .

When all these spirits were sent forth from the eternal worlds, they were, no doubt, not infants; but when they entered the infant tabernacle, they were under the necessity, the same as our Lord and Savior, **of being compressed**, or diminished in size so that their spirits could be enclosed in infant tabernacles. If their bodies die in infancy, do their spirits remain infants in stature between death and the resurrection of the body? I think not. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, pp. 333-334)

Orson Pratt also claimed that when a spirit was compressed it caused a loss of memory:

When Jesus was born into our world, his previous knowledge was taken from Him: this was occasioned by His spiritual body being **compressed** into a smaller volume than it originally occupied. . . . when this spirit was compressed, so as to be wholly enclosed in an infant tabernacle, it had a tendency to suspend memory; . . . So it is with man. When he enters a body of flesh, his spirit is so compressed and contracted in infancy that he forgets his former existence, . . . (*The Seer*, p. 21)

According to Joseph Fielding Smith a baby that dies has its spirit compressed twice. The spirit is compressed in order to enter the child's body. When the child dies the spirit leaves the body and expands to its full size, but before the body is resurrected the spirit must be compressed again to the size of the infant's body.

**CHILDREN IN THE RESURRECTION.** When a baby dies, it goes back into the spirit world, and the spirit assumes its natural form as **an adult**, for we were all adults before we were born.

When a child is raised in the resurrection, the spirit will enter the body and the body will be the **same size** as it was when the child died. It will then **grow** after the resurrection, to full maturity to conform to the **size of the spirit**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 56)

### Vegetable Spirits

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt, writing in 1853, made these statements:

The spirit of a vegetable is in the same image and likeness of its tabernacle, and of the same magnitude, for it fills every part thereof. . . . If the spirit of an apple tree were rendered visible when separated from its natural tabernacle, it would appear in the form, likeness, and magnitude of the natural apple tree; . . . When the spiritual vegetable withdraws, the natural one decays and returns to its original elements; but its spirit, being a living substance, remains in its organized form, **capable of happiness** in its own sphere, and will again inhabit a celestial tabernacle when all things are made new . . . we are compelled to believe that every vegetable, whether great or small, has a living **intelligent spirit** capable of feeling, **knowing**, and rejoicing in its sphere. (*The Seer*, 1853, pp. 33, 34)

When a world is redeemed from its fallen state, and made into a Heaven, all the animal creation are raised from the dead, and become celestial and immortal. The food of these animals is derived from the vegetables, growing on a celestial soil; consequently, it is not converted into blood, but into spirit which circulates in the veins of these animals; therefore, their offspring will be spiritual bodies, instead of flesh and bones. . . .

. . . when planted in a celestial soil, each vegetable derives its nourishment therefrom; and the fluid thus derived, circulates in the pores and cells of the vegetable tabernacle, and preserves it from decay and death; this same fluid, thus circulating, forms a spiritual vegetable; this differs from the parent vegetables in Heaven. . . . Thus the spirits of both vegetables and animals are the offspring of male and female parents which have been raised from the dead, or redeemed from a fallen condition, with the world upon which they dwelt. (*Ibid.*, pp. 37-38)

Admitting the eternity of the capacities, then the materials of which our spirits are composed, must have been capable of thinking, moving, willing, &c., before they were organized in the womb of the celestial female. . . . If they were once organized in the vegetable kingdom, and then disorganized by becoming the food of celestial animals, and then again reorganized in the form of the spirits of animals which is a higher sphere of being, then, is it unreasonable to suppose that the same particles have, from all eternity, been passing through an endless chain of unions and disunions, organizations and disorganizations, until at length they are permitted to enter into the highest and most exalted sphere of organization in the image and likeness of God? A **transmigration** of the same particles of spirits from a lower to a higher organization, is demonstrated from the fact that the same particles exist in a diffused scattered state, mingled with other matter; next, they exist in a united form, growing out of the earth in the shape of grass, herbs, and trees; and after this, these vegetables become food for celestial animals, and these same particles are organized into their offspring, and thus form the **spirits of animals**. Here then, is apparently a **transmigration of the same particles of spirit** from an inferior to a superior organization, wherein their condition is improved, and their sphere of action enlarged. Who shall set any bounds to this upward tendency of spirit? . . . who shall say that it will not progress until it shall gain the very summit of perfection, . . . the **image of God?** (*Ibid.*, pp. 102-103)

## A Year's Supply of Food

In the November 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era*, page 101, we found an advertisement in which this statement appeared: “**Hunger Hurts!**” Under such a title one might expect to find something concerning the people who are starving in India or Africa; instead, however, we found this question: “**Is your year’s supply important?**” This was not a plea for the hungry, but an advertisement for a “**food storage booklet.**”

For many years the Mormon leaders have counseled their people to store at least a year’s supply of food in case of an emergency. The following appeared in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* in 1971:

First, provide for one’s own. Then help one’s kin, one’s priesthood quorum members, one’s brothers and sisters in the Gospel, one’s fellowmen. . . . For 34 years, Church members have been specifically counseled to store enough of the necessities of life to provide for the family for at least a year. . . . these are programs inspired of the Lord. . . . The keynote to personal welfare was given by President J. Reuben Clark Jr. in April Conference, 1937. It has never been changed. President Clark said:

“First, and above and beyond everything else, let us live righteously, . . .

“Let every head of every household see to it that he has on hand enough food and clothing, and, where possible, fuel also, for at least a year ahead. You of small means put your money into foodstuffs and wearing apparel. . . .” (*Deseret News*, Church Section, February 20, 1971)

## John Whitmer’s History

John Whitmer was one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon. In the year 1831 Joseph Smith gave a revelation commanding John Whitmer to keep a history of the church:

Behold, it is expedient in me that my servant John should write and keep a regular history, and assist you, my servant Joseph, in transcribing all things which shall be given you, until he is called to further duties. . . . And again, I say unto you that it shall be appointed unto him to keep the church record and history continually, for Oliver Cowdery I have appointed to another office. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 47:1, 3)

Again we read in section 69:

Wherefore, I, the Lord, will that my servant, John Whitmer, should go with my servant Oliver Cowdery; And also that he shall continue in writing and making a history of all the important things which he shall observe and know concerning my church; . . . let my servant John Whitmer travel . . . that he may the more easily obtain knowledge—Preaching and expounding, writing, copying, selecting, and obtaining all things which shall be for the good of the church, and for the rising generations that shall grow up on the land. . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 69:2, 3, 7, 8; Reorganized LDS ed. 69:1a, b, 2b)

Strange as it may seem, Joseph Smith did not agree with the God of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, for he said that John Whitmer was not capable of writing a history. In a letter to John Whitmer, which was signed by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, the following was stated: “Indeed, sir, we **never** supposed you **capable of writing a history**, but were willing to let it come out under your name, notwithstanding it would really not be yours but ours” (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 15).

Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith also told John Whitmer that his history could not come forth unless they were allowed to censor it:

We were desirous of honoring you by giving publicity to your notes on the history of the Church of Latter-day Saints, after making such corrections as we thought would be necessary, knowing your incompetency as a historian, and that writings coming from your pen, could not be put to press without our correcting them, or else the Church must suffer reproach. (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 15)

## The Living Earth

On November 8, 1857, Heber C. Kimball, who was a member of the First Presidency, stated:

. . . blessing be to God that I live on an earth that lives . . . **well, it is truth.** . . . Do you believe that a dead woman can conceive from a live man and bring forth a live child? . . . No, you know better. Well, if a woman will not produce when she is dead, then the earth cannot produce living things if it was dead. . . . Where did the earth come from? From its **parent earths.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, pp. 35-36)

On another occasion Heber C. Kimball stated that the “earth” has a “spirit as much as any body has a spirit” (*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 172). Mormon leaders still teach that the earth is alive. Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy, said:

. . . this earth was created first as a spirit, and that it was thereafter clothed upon with tangible, physical element. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, pp. 210-211)

. . . the earth itself is passing through a plan of salvation. It was created (the equivalent of birth); it fell to its present mortal or telestial state; it was baptized by immersion, when the universal flood swept over its entire surface . . . it will be baptized by fire . . . in the day when it is renewed and receives its paradisiacal glory; it will die; and finally it will be quickened (or resurrected) and become a celestial sphere. (*Ibid.*, pp. 251-252)

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

This earth is living and must die, but since it keeps the law it shall be restored through the resurrection by which it shall become celestialized . . . The earth, as a living body, will have to die and be resurrected, for it, too, has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 73-74)

## Changing the Blood

One of the oddest doctrines that Joseph Smith taught was that a Gentile must literally have his blood changed so that he is a actually of the seed of Abraham:

. . . as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the **literal** seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; . . . while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to **purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham.** (*History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 380)

Brigham Young, the second President of the Church, said:

Again, if a pure Gentile firmly believes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and yields obedience to it, in such a case I will give you the words of the Prophet Joseph—“When the Lord pours out the Holy Ghost upon that individual he will have **spasms**, and you would think that he was going into fits.”

Joseph said that the **Gentile blood was actually cleansed out of their veins, and the blood of Jacob made to circulate in them;** and the revolution and change in the system were so great that it caused the beholder to think they were going into **fits.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 269)

According to this doctrine we would expect that a Jew would have the proper blood, but Brigham Young taught that even a Jew must have his blood changed:

If a Jew comes into this Church, and honestly professes to be a Saint, a follower of Christ, and **if the blood of Judah is in his veins, he will apostatize.** He may have been born and bred a Jew, . . . and have openly professed to be a Jew all his days; but I will tell you a secret—there is **not a particle** of the blood of Judaism in him, if he has become a true Christian, a Saint of God; for if there is, he will most assuredly leave the Church of Christ, or that blood will be purged out of his veins. We have men among us who were Jews, . . . here is brother Neibaur; do I believe there is one particle of the blood of Judah in his veins? No, not so much as could be seen on the point of the finest cambric needle, through a microscope with a magnifying power of two millions. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, p. 142)



## 38. Facing Reality

Reality is sometimes very hard to face. For instance, on July 26, 1969, the *Salt Lake Tribune* printed an article which contained the following:

Forget the Apollo 11 NASA has got it all wrong about the moon, the earth and most everything else in the universe, according to the International Flat Earth Research Society.

The moon is not 240,000-odd miles away . . . It is less than 2,700- miles away, said Flat Earthist Secretary Samuel Shenton. The distance to the sun is 2,700 miles, he explained, and obviously the moon is closer. . . .

Nor is the moon 2,100 miles in diameter. It's slightly smaller than the sun, which is only 32 miles across, according to Shenton, . . .

The 66-year-old iconoclast has not wavered in his beliefs despite astronauts orbiting the earth and flying to the moon. All that, including moon landing he said, is just part of a great deception by NASA and its contractors and the manufacturers of globe maps who have a vested interest in perpetuating the globite teaching. . . .

Shenton . . . is very serious about his ideas and irate at the multitude of ways the public is being hoodwinked every day. . . .

"Once you get your teeth in it, it turns your stomach over that such deception can go perhaps to your children," he said.

The astronauts are hypnotized into believing they go into space, Shenton contended.

It is easy to look at this and smile, but those who are honest with themselves must admit that they have sometimes had difficulty facing reality.

One of the most difficult encounters we ever had with reality was when we discovered that the Book of Mormon was untrue. We found it very difficult to tell our friends that we no longer believed that it was translated from gold plates.

One man, who had taught at the Brigham Young University for many years, made an extensive study of Mormon Church history, but after spending much time and money to make this study, he was afraid to release his findings. He told us that the reason he would not disclose his findings was that he feared too many people would apostatize from the church.

James R. Harris, who wrote a thesis for the Brigham Young University on the changes in the Book of Moses, made this comment concerning the inability of the members of the church to face reality:

During the writing of this thesis an occasional inquisitive friend would ask about the nature and extent of changes in the contents of the Book of Moses. Encouraged by their interest, a variety of examples were pointed out. The reaction varied in emotional intensity but always ended with a caustic question or prediction, such as: "Why did you pick such a subject?" or "This will disturb a lot of people." . . . Our well-meaning friends were so **fearful of doing injury to the Church that they would abandon the search for truth.** ("A Study of the Changes in the Contents of the Book of Moses From the Earliest Available Sources to the Current Edition," typed copy, p. 237)

Jesus once stated: "And ye shall know the **truth**, and the **truth will set you free**" (John 8:32). Why is it, then, that we fear the truth if the truth will make us free? Why do we stop our ears when the truth is proclaimed? It is because we love the bondage of our own preconceived ideas. We do not like to admit that we have been wrong.

Frances Lee Menlove, a Mormon psychologist, has appealed to the Mormon leaders to be more realistic in their presentation of Mormon history:

But the story of Joseph Smith, the early Church, the hejira across the plains, and the consequent establishment of Zion is more than just history. It is the story of God directing His People to a new Dispensation. Perhaps because the history is so fraught with theological significance, it has been **smoothed and whittled down**, a wrinkle **removed** here and sharp edge there. In many ways it has assumed the character of a **myth**. That these courageous and inspired men shared the shortcomings of all men cannot be seriously doubted. That the Saints were not perfect nor their leaders without error is evident to anyone who cares to read the original records of the Church. But the **myths and the myth-making persist. Striking evidence for this is found in the fact that currently one of the most successful anti-Mormon proselyting techniques is merely to bring to light obscure or suppressed historical documents.** Reading these documents arouses a considerable amount in incredulity, concern, and **disenchantment** among Mormons under the spell of this mythological view of history. That individuals find these bits and pieces of history so **shocking and faith-shattering** is at once the meat of fundamentalistic heresies and an indictment of the quasi-suppression of **historical reality** which propagates the one-sided view of Mormon history.

The relevance of this to **honesty** is obvious. The net result of mythologizing our history is that the hard truth is concealed. It is **deception** to select only congenial facts or to twist their meaning so that error becomes wisdom, or to **pretend** that the Church exists now and has existed in a vacuum, uninfluenced by cultural values, passing fashions, and political ideologies.

There are other temptations to public dishonesty in the Church, temptation to use pretense and distortion to forward the work of the Church. This is the dishonesty of the missionary who presents only those facts or arguments which tend to support his purpose or who takes a scripture out of context or distorts its meaning a little to add to the evidence marshalled for the point he is making. Invoking a higher law or greater truth can also be a form of dishonesty. This occurs when someone's views are suppressed or historical manuscripts **censored**, not because they are false but because they might cause dissension or disturb the faithful or imperil unity. . . . Another motive behind some kinds of public dishonesty is the belief that the naked **truth** would be harmful to the simple believer. The assumption here is simply that the believer

remains better off with his delusions intact, that faith suffers when it **bumps into reality**. The reasoning of those who distort or **suppress reality** or **alter historical manuscripts** to protect the **delusions** of the simple believer is similar to that of the man who murders a child **to protect him from a violent world**.

The very nature of the Church demands both personal and public honesty, . . . **the Church's leaders must demonstrate for its members the quest for honesty**, . . . Because of the tremendous power the Church has in molding and teaching its members, it has an especially sacred responsibility not to **misuse this power**. . . . The appearance of the Church should never be enhanced at the expense of reality. To distort the reality of the Church as it is understood, to use tricks of manipulation or "salesmanship," to distort arguments by taking them out of context or by skillful omissions, no matter how noble the aim, is to provide the participants with **practice in deception** and the observers with a **blueprint for dishonesty**.

Secondly, the Church must avoid any discrepancy between the appearance and the reality. The human failings and occasional misdirections must **not be suppressed or omitted** from our books, but recognized as the manifestations of those who are less than perfect struggling within the limitations of their understanding. Not only does failure to do this provide an **example of dishonesty**, but when individuals discover that the Church they have been shown is not the Church as it is in actuality, they may feel that they have uncovered some dark, dangerous secret, a secret that had better be pushed to the back of the mind and forgotten—or a secret that provides evidence for abandoning their faith. There should be nothing based on fact that anyone can say about the Church that the Church has not already said about itself. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, pp. 49-52)

### Exalts the Pride of Man

The Mormon Church, which professes to teach the true way of salvation, teaches many things that are not compatible with the teachings of Christ. For instance, Christ taught that a man must be meek and lowly:

. . . Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3)

Jesus also said:

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Luke 18:9-14)

Mormonism, on the other hand, exalts the pride of man. Joseph H. Weston, who joined the Mormon Church three days after writing his book, made this statement:

Mormons don't grovel before God, prating their unworthiness and imploring mercy. They are not slaves! They are men, made in the image of God! They **proudly stand, hold their heads high**, and put out their hands to shake that of God in greeting, as any worthy son would be expected to respectfully but **proudly** stand before a wise and good father. (*These Amazing Mormons*, 1961, p. 82)

The reader should compare this with the following statement made by Jesus:

So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are **unprofitable** servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. (Luke 17:10)

Speaking of a Mormon Sacrament meeting, Mr. Weston remarked:

The meeting opened with the ancient hymn, "How Firm a Foundation." Then the leader made a simple announcement to the sacramental service. There was no long harangue as to who could or could not partake of the communion sacrament. There was no group confession of sins. There was no groveling and **humbling of the dignity of man**, either mentally or physically. . . .

Sitting erect in the **pride** and **dignity** of being a human being, each member took a piece of bread . . .

The almost starting [startling?] effect, psychologically, of this ultra-simple communion service was to completely obliterate the feeling of supplication and **meekness** engendered at such a time in many other churches. A man didn't feel that he drew nigh—"Unworthy as to so much as gather up the crumbs from His table"—**not at all!** He felt that he sat as an **equal** and guest at Jesus' table, and after he had eaten and drunk, he went away with a greater appreciation of his own table, his own body, his own life—all **Godlike** if he would make and keep them so. (*These Amazing Mormons*, p. 21)

In his thesis, "The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," Owen Kendall White, Jr., made these interesting observations concerning Mormon theology:

This dual nature of Mormonism often obscures its liberalism so that many Mormons and nonMormons alike misunderstand its subtle implications. Because of a commitment to biblical literalism, Mormon theology is frequently regarded as another expression of conservative orthodox Christianity. This popular notion is fundamentally inaccurate, for it fails to recognize that the basic liberal doctrines in Mormon theology oppose the central doctrines of orthodox Christianity. . . . The basic Mormon doctrines of God, man, and salvation are radical departures from traditional Christian thought. . . .

In contrast with the sovereign God of Christian orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy, the Mormon God is finite. This is indicated in the fact that God is not the only reality with necessary existence. That is, He is not the Creator of all that is. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1967, pp. 85-86)

From the above description of God, it should be apparent that the Mormon God is a heretical departure from traditional Christianity, and the traditional Christian terminology of omnipotence and omniscience are not justifiably applied to the Mormon God. . . .

The Mormon conception of man is an even more heretical departure from Christian orthodoxy than the doctrine of God. . . . this very claim that the human predicament is not really a predicament in the traditional sense, that man's natural state, present state, is really more good than bad, is a radical denial of traditional Christian theology. . . .

Mormonism rejects the notion that man's condition is best described by "depravity." Nowhere within Mormon theology is its optimism concerning man's natural condition more clearly apparent than in this denial of the Christian doctrine of original sin . . . to the Mormon the fall is a fall upward rather than downward. . . .

Even to the present, Mormonism, at least in most of its religious discourse, affirms the good nature of man. . . . In the April session of the 1964 General Conference, Hugh B. Brown, first counsellor to the President of the church, summarized much of what has been said in this chapter. He spoke:

Our doctrine of man is positive and life affirming. . . . We refuse to believe, with some churches of

of Christendom, that the biblical account of the fall of man records the corruption of human nature or to accept the doctrine of original sin. We do not believe that man is incapable of doing the will of God or is unable to merit the reward of Divine approval; that he is therefore totally estranged from God and that whatever salvation comes to him must come as a free and undeserved gift. . . .

. . . the Mormon doctrine of salvation not only provides further evidence of Mormon optimism, but it also argues for a claim that Mormon theology, in opposition to traditional Christian theology, is man-centered rather than God-centered. . . .

Nowhere is the man-centered character of Mormon theology more clearly evident than in the Mormon conception of salvation. For, Mormon doctrines of salvation are radically different from the doctrine of salvation by grace which permeates Christian orthodoxy. . . . There is an almost complete dearth of Pauline theology within Mormonism. Generally, Mormons only refer to Paul on the subject of the resurrection or in his ethical exhortations. Seldom do they quote him on the subject of salvation, and, when they do, they distort his concept of grace to mean man will be physically resurrected by the gracious act of God. Mormonism denies traditional doctrines of grace. . . . Because of this emphasis upon salvation by merit and the idea that man's destiny is Godhood, the Mormon doctrine of salvation, along with the doctrines of God and man, stand as rank heresy within the orthodox Christian world. . . . Mormon theology on the doctrines of God, man, and salvation is a radical departure from Christian orthodoxy.

While the God of Christian orthodoxy is absolute, the God of Mormonism is finite. . . . the Mormon doctrine of salvation emphasizes merit instead of grace. Although the theology has a doctrine of grace in the notion that Christ overcame physical and spiritual death, it is not to be confused with orthodox Christian conceptions of grace. For exaltation, the real salvation of man, is dependent upon works. . . .

If the author were to describe the fundamental difference between Mormon theology and orthodox Christianity in one sentence, he would suggest that while orthodox Christianity is God-centered, Mormon theology is man-centered. . . . Mormon theology is much more concerned with the similarities between God and man than the differences between them. . . . it is the notion that God has a physical body that leads to Mormon claims that man is literally, not figuratively, the offspring of God. Through its entire history, Mormonism has employed its extremely anthropomorphic conception of God to illustrate the similarities rather than the differences between God and man. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," pp. 95, 96, 98, 100, 101, 103, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 118, 119, 120, 122)

In the conclusion to his thesis (page 174), Owen Kendall White, Jr., makes this statement:

Mormon theology sharply dissents from orthodox and neo-orthodox Christianity. While Christian orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy proclaim a conception of an absolute God, a pessimistic assessment of man, and a doctrine of salvation by grace, Mormon theology boldly affirms a conception of a finite God, an optimistic assessment of man, and a doctrine of salvation by works. Pertaining to these crucial doctrines, Mormonism, when viewed from the perspective of orthodox Christianity, is a radical heresy.

It is certainly strange that the Mormon leaders have rejected so many of the basic doctrines of Christianity, for these same doctrines are found in the Book of Mormon. As an example, the Book of Mormon teaches that man of himself is an enemy to God:

For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, . . . (Book of Mormon, Mosiah 3:19)

President Brigham Young, on the other hand, taught that the natural man is a friend of God:

It is fully proved in all the revelations that God has ever given to mankind that they naturally love and admire righteousness, justice and truth more than they do evil. It is, however, universally received by professors of religion as a Scriptural doctrine that man is naturally opposed to God. This is not so. Paul says, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God," but I say it is the unnatural "man that receiveth not the things of God." . . . **The natural man is of God.** (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, p. 305)

. . . the orthodox divines . . . say that man is naturally prone to evil. . . . but if man had always been permitted to follow the instincts of his nature, had he always followed the great and holy principles of his organism, they would have led him into the path of life everlasting. . . . (*Ibid.*, vol. 10, p.189)

John Taylor, who became the third President of the Mormon Church, remarked: "In fact, as the President stated here not long ago, it is not natural for men to be evil" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 10, p. 50).

Thus we see that while the Book of Mormon plainly teaches that "**the natural man is an enemy to God**," the Mormon leaders have taught that "**The natural man is of God.**"

As Owen Kendall White, Jr., indicated present-day Mormonism rejects the doctrine that salvation is by grace. The Book of Mormon, however, teaches this doctrine. In 2 Nephi 10:24 we read: ". . . it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved." The fact that the Book of Mormon teaches salvation by grace has caused some division in the church, and there are a few Mormon writers who are going back to the teaching of the Book of Mormon on this subject. Owen Kendall White, Jr., gives this information:

In contrast with the Mormon denial of traditional doctrines of grace as reflected in Mormonism's aversion to Pauline theology, Mormon new-orthodoxy grounds much of its theology in Paul and peculiar Mormon scriptures reflecting a similar theological position. Glenn Pearson, while speaking at a "Know Your Religion" series, suggested that he would not quote from Paul to illustrate God's grace in saving man. He was afraid that his Mormon audience might reject a doctrine of grace if it were taken from the Bible, so he first referred to the Book of Mormon and then quoted from Paul. He said:

You know that we very often in the church nowadays think that Paul meant that the grace brought about the resurrection and that everybody would be resurrected by grace, but you notice that Paul said you are saved by grace through faith and you don't have to have faith to have the resurrection and so we know Paul was speaking of another salvation other than the resurrection.

The reader must recognize that Pearson acknowledges the fact that Mormons generally suppose that God's grace refers to the resurrection of man. Typical Mormon theology, when it emphasizes grace, tends to refer to the resurrection, while new-orthodox theology, when it emphasizes grace, usually refers to release from the human predicament. ("The Social Psychological Basis of Mormon New-Orthodoxy," pp. 146-147)

For more information concerning grace and works see our book, *A Look at Christianity*, pages 8, 17, 18.

When the Mormon leaders proclaim that man is naturally good, they not only reject the teachings of the Bible and the Book of Mormon, but they are simply refusing to face reality about the nature of man. Dr. Carl Jung, who



has been called one of the “three great pioneers in modern psychiatry,” made these observations:

Quite apart from the barbarities and blood baths perpetrated by the Christian nations among themselves throughout European history, the European has also to answer for all the crimes he has committed against the dark-skinned peoples during the process of colonization. In this respect the white man carries a very heavy burden indeed. It shows us a picture of the common human shadow that could hardly be painted in blacker colors. The evil that comes to light in man and that undoubtedly dwells within him is of gigantic proportions, so that for the Church to talk of original sin and to trace it back to Adam’s relatively innocent slip-up with Eve is almost a euphemism. The case is far graver and is grossly underestimated.

Since it is universally believed that man is merely what his consciousness knows of itself, he regards himself as harmless and so adds stupidity to iniquity. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and still go on happening, but it is always “the others” who do them. And when such deeds belong to the recent or remote past, they quickly and conveniently sink into the sea of forgetfulness, and that state of chronic woolly-mindedness returns which we describe as “normality.” In shocking contrast to this is the fact that nothing has finally disappeared and nothing has been made good. The evil, the guilt, the profound unease of conscience, the obscure misgiving are there before our eyes, if only we would see. Man has done these things; I am a man, who has his share of human nature; therefore I am guilty with the rest and bear unaltered and indelibly within me the capacity and the inclination to do them again at any time. Even if, juristically speaking, we were not accessories to the crime, we are always, thanks to our human nature, potential criminals. In reality we merely lacked a suitable opportunity to be drawn into the infernal melee. None of us stands outside humanity’s black collective shadow. . . . only the fool can permanently neglect the conditions of his own nature. In fact, this negligence is the best means of making him an instrument of evil. . . . We therefore prefer to localize the evil with individual criminals or groups of criminals, while washing our hands in innocence and ignoring the general proclivity to evil. This sanctimoniousness cannot be kept up, in the long run, because the evil, as experience shows, lies in man . . . one must ask oneself how it is that, for all our progress in the administration of justice, in medicine and in technology, for all our concern for life and health, monstrous engines of destruction have been invented which could easily exterminate the human race. (*The Undiscovered Self*, by Carl Jung, pp. 107-111)

Karl A. Menninger, one of the world’s leading psychiatrists, made these very revealing observations:

But today, after a long digression, we have in a measure come back to the sinfulness theory. For, in repudiating this theological tenet, modern science had reverted to the philosophy that man is the hapless prey, the potential victim of solely external forces, which is the philosophy of primitive man as well as the helpless child; whereas to conceive of disease as related to sin recognizes the partial responsibility of the individual for his own fate. Instead of referring all danger to the outside world, or to the devil, it acknowledges the presence of danger from within. (*Love Against Hate*, p. 199)

For more information concerning this matter see our book, *A Look at Christianity*, pages 3-5.

The reader will remember that Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth President of the Mormon Church, says that the Mormons are the **best people in the world**. I do not say that boastfully, for I believe that this truth is evident to all who are willing to observe for themselves. We are morally clean, in every way equal, and in many ways **superior to any other people**. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 236)

In a letter dated July 12, 1960, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards made this statement:

There is **no people** in this world that are evidencing their love of God by doing his will like the Latter-Day Saints are.

Actually, the Mormons are very much like other people. The Mormon writer John J. Stewart stated:

. . . Satan, the father of all lies, . . . is wrecking havoc among us in the sacred matter of marriage and morals, . . . the frequency of adultery, through unwarranted divorce and otherwise, and the number of illegitimate births, among teenagers and older adolescents as well, have reached an appalling figure. (*Brigham Young and His Wives*, p. 12)

Stanton L. Hovey wrote:

A quick survey was made of marriage and divorce statistics in Vital Statistics of the U.S. for the most recent year available, 1962. Although no definite conclusions can be made on the basis of only one year’s statistics, there were indications that Utah (which is roughly seventy percent L.D.S.) has a bad divorce record, especially for early marriages. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1967, p. 58)

Joseph H. Weston, an apologist for the Mormons, admitted that Mormons were getting their share of the divorces:

At first, loyal Mormons were prone to attribute the unprecedented rise in divorces to the fact that they were being obtained by non-Mormon “transients,” or “temporary residents.” But this was only whistling in the dark. An examination of the court records shows that **Mormons are getting their proportionate share of divorces**. . . . After his first thrill at being on Temple Square has somewhat subsided, the Mormon convert who comes to Zion often is disappointed. (*These Amazing Mormons*, p. 18)

A convert to the Mormon Church from Germany told us that he was very disappointed upon his arrival in Utah. When he was in Germany he had a difficult time living a righteous life because of the bad influence of his associates. He decided to come to Utah where he would, as he thought, be with the righteous “saints.” He said, however, that since he arrived in Utah, he has had a harder time living a good life than when he was in Germany.

James L. Clayton admitted:

. . . except for the distinctive personal habits prescribed by the Word of Wisdom (including an implied proscription against narcotics), there is really little quantitative evidence to distinguish Mormon behavior today from that of comparable groups. Distinctions are usually asserted, for example, between Mormons and non-Mormons in the areas of sexual morality, education, crime, patriotism, and sobriety. Statistical data, however, clearly shows that in 1960 Utah’s rate of illegitimate births was higher than the rate of illegitimacy for the white population of Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and was comparable with the rate for the white population of South Carolina, South Dakota, and Kansas. Even in Provo the rate of illegitimacy is not much different than it is in Dubuque, Iowa. . . . Regarding crime, according to the most recent data, Chicago is safer than Salt Lake City (total 1966 crime index 2172 vs. 2349). . . . In short, we are no longer so much a peculiar people as typical Americans with a peculiar history. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, p. 71)

In *Newsweek Magazine* for March 15, 1971, we read the following:

. . . much of the Mormons’ current edginess about things violent stems from a dawning awareness that the City of Saints is in the midst of something of a crime wave. . . . But it is characteristic of the Mormons’ reluctance to recognize the grimmer realities that church officials like [N. Eldon] Tanner blame the upsurge in crime on “drifters and transients.” The Mormon hierarchy was accused of taking a similar stance when a state study estimated that the city contained hundreds of hard-core heroin addicts and a substantial number of teen-agers well into the drug bag. They just shrugged and said, “none of our kids is doing it,” reports Bill Wilson, a community health official. (*Newsweek*, March 15, 1971, p. 106)

While the Mormon leaders do not like to admit it publicly, a letter from the First Presidency to “Stake Presidents,

Bishops, and Branch Presidents,” dated December 23, 1970, shows that even the young missionaries are having problems. In this letter we find the following:

We frequently hear complaints from mission presidents about the apparent failure of many bishops, stake presidents, and branch presidents carefully to interview prospective missionaries. . . . This recurring problem was called to our attention again recently by a letter from a mission president which mentioned the following problems involving missionaries which he had discovered but which did not come to light when the missionaries were interviewed before their missions:

1. One Elder had been on about 100 “trips” with drugs before coming into the mission field.

2. Another Elder had been on marijuana and LSD for two years before his call. According to this Elder, neither his bishop nor stake president asked direct questions about his moral qualifications but only whether he thought he was worthy to go into the mission field.

3. Five other Elders admitted to having committed fornication before their mission calls. Each stated that in the pre-mission interviews, they were not asked if they had committed fornication but only whether or not they were morally clean.

. . . .  
It is not sufficient merely to ask a prospective missionary, “Are you morally clean?” Instead, you must ask direct questions to ascertain whether a candidate is guilty of any serious moral offense involving fornication, adultery, homosexuality, masturbation, heavy petting, or drug use. (Letter from the First Presidency, dated December 23, 1970)

## Church Not Lost

The Mormon leaders have made the tragic mistake of pointing their people toward a church instead of toward the Savior. They claim that their church is the only true church and that all others are false and have no authority. This tends to make people more concerned about an organization than about their relationship with Christ.

Mormonism teaches that after the death of Christ, the whole Christian world fell into a state of apostasy. In the Bible, however, Jesus said:

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)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt did not seem to believe the words of Jesus for he stated:

Jesus . . . established his kingdom on the earth. . . . the kingdoms of this world made war against the kingdom of God, established eighteen centuries ago, and they **prevailed** against it, and the kingdom ceased to exist. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, p. 125)

. . . the former-day kingdom no where exists on the earth, but has been **prevailed** against and overcome, and nothing is left but man-made churches and governments among all kindreds, tongues, and nations. If this had not been the case—if the kingdom had continued on the earth during the last eighteen centuries, there would have been no necessity for its being set up. (*Pamphlets by Orson Pratt*, p. 116)

The Apostle Pratt’s words are in direct contradiction to Jesus’ statement that “the gates of hell shall not prevail” against His church. While it is true that there was a great apostasy throughout the Christian world, we do not believe that there was ever a time when there were not true Christians upon the earth. In John 1:12 we read: “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.” We believe that in all ages some people have believed in Jesus and have “become the sons of God,” and these people were members of His church. Although at times the numbers may have been small, Jesus promised that “where two or three are gathered together

in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:20)  
Hal Hougey made these interesting observations:

While Acts 20:29-30 and other passages teach that there would be false teachers and apostasy, the Bible does not teach that the true church would be completely lost. Instead, Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against his church (Matt. 16:18). . . . Daniel said the kingdom would never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44), and the New Testament says we have received that kingdom which cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28). Though we might not know the names or addresses of true Christians throughout the ages, this does not mean they did not exist. Elijah thought he was the only faithful one, but there were 7,000 others he did not know about (1 Kings 19:13-18). (*Review of Mormon Missionary Handbook*, p. 32)

The Mormon idea concerning the need for a restoration is not only out of harmony with the Bible, but it also contradicts the Mormon teaching that three of the Nephites and the Apostle John were to remain on the earth until the return of Christ. Hal Hougey states:

3. Joseph Smith’s angel usurped authority, since Mormon doctrine teaches that men with authority have always been present on the earth.

a. The Apostle John and three Nephite disciples are still tarrying on the earth until Christ returns . . . These all have authority; therefore, the authority has never been lost from the earth, and a restoration through an angel is unnecessary.

b. “As long as there are apostles on the earth, true to their callings, the true church will exist on the face of the earth.” (Letter to the writer by Mormon Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith, April 17, 1956.)

c. LDS would brand as a heretic any person who claimed to have received the priesthood from an angel. They say God does not work that way; that if the authority is on the earth, God will not give it through an angel. If this is so, the angel who gave the priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery was not from God, since John and the three Nephites are still on the earth!

(*Latter-Day Saints—Where Did You Get Your Authority?* p. 2)

According to the Book of Mormon the three Nephites and the Apostle John were supposed to continue the Lord’s work until He returned. Speaking to the three Nephites, Jesus was supposed to have said:

. . . ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, . . . desired of me. . . . ye shall never taste of death; . . . for ye have desired that ye might bring souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand. (Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 28:6, 7, 9)

If these four men continued to live and bring souls to Christ, as the Mormons maintain, then there was no need for a restoration.

As we have already shown, the Mormons believe that John the Baptist (not to be confused with the Apostle John) 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, p. 88)

Joseph Fielding Smith seems to have overlooked the fact that there were supposed to have been four men holding the authority left on the earth since the time of Christ. From this it would appear that “there would have been no necessity for a restoration.”

## Our Own Testimony

*Statement by Jerald Tanner.* I was born and raised in the Mormon Church, and before I was eight years old I felt that it was the **only true church**. I remember being told that a certain man who was excommunicated

from the church was possessed with the devil. I can remember walking past this man's house and being afraid of him because I firmly believed that he was possessed of the devil. I believed that a person would almost have to be possessed of the devil to leave "the true church." So strong was my conviction that I was greatly shocked to hear a boy in Sunday School say that he didn't know for certain that the church was true. I felt that it was strange indeed for a person to be a member of the Mormon Church and yet not know it was the only true church.

I believed very strongly that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that I belonged to the only true church. When I was about eighteen years old I had to face reality. I can remember that the first time I saw David Whitmer's pamphlet, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, I threw it down in disgust. After throwing it down, however, I began to think that perhaps this was not the right way to face the problem. If David Whitmer was wrong in his criticism of Joseph Smith, surely I could prove him wrong. So I picked up the pamphlet and read it through. I found that I could not prove David Whitmer wrong, and that the revelations Joseph Smith gave had been changed. I later went to Independence, Missouri, and saw a copy of the original *Book of Commandments*, which confirmed David Whitmer's statement that the revelations had been changed.

Since that time I have found more and more proof that the church in which I was raised is in error. The most important thing that I found, however, was not that the church was in error, but that I myself was in error. I found that I was a sinner in need of a Savior. The Mormon Church had taught me good morals, but they had not taught me much concerning the power of Christ which could change my life. There was much talk about Joseph Smith, but very little talk about Christ. Consequently, I began to think I had the power within myself to overcome sin. I didn't see how much I needed the help of God to overcome it. So I turned from one sin to another until I was deeply in bondage to sin. I found no help in the Mormon Church; they were too busy preaching about the glory of the church, Joseph Smith, etc. They were too busy singing "praise to the man who communed with Jehovah" and "We thank thee oh God for a prophet" to tell me about the Savior I needed so badly. They were too busy talking about missions, tithing, the welfare plan, etc. to talk about the Savior. Consequently, there was almost nothing in the services that could give life and peace to my dying soul. Perhaps I should mention, however, that there was one thing that really touched my heart, and that was when we sang the following song:

OH, IT IS WONDERFUL!

I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me,  
Confused at the grace that so fully he proffers me,  
I tremble to know that for me He was crucified—  
That for me, a sinner, He suffered, He bled, and died.

Chorus—

Oh, it is wonderful that He should care for me,  
Enough to die for me!  
Oh, it is wonderful, wonderful to me!

I marvel that He would descend from His throne divine,  
To rescue a soul so rebellious and proud as mine;  
That He should extend His great love unto such as I;  
Sufficient to own, to redeem, and to justify.

When we sang this song my heart burned within me. I have since learned, however, that even this song was borrowed from the Protestant faith. But regardless of where it came from, it touched me very deeply. It made me think of my Savior and the great debt I owed to him. If there had been more songs like this in the Mormon Church and if Christ had been preached instead of Joseph Smith I would, perhaps, have received Christ into my life in the Mormon Church. As it was, however, I was nineteen years old before I heard the true message of Christ preached, and that was in another church. A short time later I received Christ into

my life and found peace, joy and deliverance from sin. Or as the Apostle Paul expressed it:

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)

*Jerald Tanner*

**Statement by Sandra Tanner.** Since I was born and raised in the Mormon Church, and am a great-great-grandchild of Brigham Young, I had very strong ties to the Mormon faith. I was about 17 before I ever attended another church. As a teenager my life centered around the Mormon Church. Because I was active and paying my tithing I thought I was in pretty good standing with God. I knew I sinned but I felt my activity in church would somehow outweigh what I did wrong. I believed (as the Mormons teach) that I was inherently good. I had no fear of God's judgment. Besides the things that were wrong in my own life, I began to have doubts about my church. Could it really be the only true church? Was polygamy really right? Why couldn't the Negro hold the priesthood? Was temple marriage really so important? Why were its rites kept such a secret? Did God actually command Mormons to wear special undergarments? I had many questions going through my mind.

When I started college I enrolled in the Mormon Institute of Religion class. I started asking questions in class, trying to find answers to my doubts. But one day my Institute teacher took me aside and told me to **please stop** asking questions in class. There was a girl attending the class who was thinking of joining the church and I was disturbing her with my questions. What a surprise! I had hoped to find answers to the many things that were bothering me and now I had been silenced.

Shortly after this I met Jerald and we began studying the Bible and Mormonism together. As we studied I began to see the contradictions between the Bible and the teachings of the Mormon Church.

I had grown up thinking that Brigham Young was one of the greatest men that ever lived. He was always presented to me as such a holy man—God's Prophet, Seer, and Revelator. Then Jerald had me read some of Brigham Young's sermons in the *Journal of Discourses* on Blood Atonement. I was shocked! I knew what Brigham Young was saying was wrong but I couldn't reconcile these sermons with the things I had always been taught concerning him. I knew these were not the words of a Prophet of God.

Jerald also showed me the changes that had been made in Joseph Smith's revelations. The thought kept coming to me that if God had actually given those revelations to Joseph Smith why would they need rewriting? Surely the Creator of the universe could say it right the first time!

As I studied I not only found errors in Mormonism, I also began to comprehend there was something wrong in my own life. As I studied God's word I realized I was a sinful hypocrite. In spite of my sins I had thought I was right with God. Yet the Bible says:

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

After Jerald and I were married we started visiting the different Protestant churches. As I listened to the sermons I began to realize that God was not concerned with peoples' church affiliations, but with a personal relationship. Christ taught a way of love, not a religious system. He stated: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). Paul taught that we should "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us . . ." (Ephesians 5:2).

God reaches out to man, not because he deserves it, but because God loves him. John wrote: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Paul wrote: "But God, who is rich in mercy, . . . even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . 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 2:4, 5, 8, 9).



I now want to share with you the particular events of the day I surrendered my heart and life to Jesus Christ:

Early one morning (October 24, 1959) I decided to listen to the radio for a while. I turned to the Christian radio station and listened to a sermon. The minister was preaching on the great love of God and the mercy offered to us through Jesus Christ. Nothing ever struck me with such force. I opened my heart to God and accepted Christ as my own personal Savior. The Holy Spirit flooded my soul with such joy that I wept for over an hour. After the sermon the station played this song—

I love the Christ who died on Calv'ry,  
For He washed my sins away;  
He put within my heart a melody,  
And I know it's there to stay.  
In my heart there rings a melody,  
There rings a melody with heaven's harmony;  
In my heart there rings a melody,  
There rings a melody of love.

This song fully describes the way I felt. How glorious to know Christ died for my sins so I could have a new life in Him.

Our lives testify to all we meet whether or not we are truly Christians. Paul wrote:

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)

*Sandra Jensen*

Those who are interested in learning more about our views on Christianity should seek our book, *A Look At Christianity*.

### Mormonism A Shadow

Hal Hougey stated: “The LDS use the Bible to try to prove the Book of Mormon; then they leave the Bible behind, and urge the prospect to read the Book of Mormon. Does not the Bible tell anything about Christ’s mission?” (*Review of Mormon Missionary Handbook*, p. 66).

The Mormon Church is certainly not built upon the teachings of the Bible. The Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards has said that “the everlasting gospel could **not** be discovered through reading the Bible alone...this is the only Christian church in the world that did not have to rely upon the Bible for its organization and government;” (*A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*, 1979, p. 40).

Mormonism is **not** even based upon the Book of Mormon. The Mormon writer John Henry Evans made these statements:

There are two points here that deserve consideration.

The first is the bishop’s queer blunder that the whole body of the “Mormon” belief is build upon the Book of Mormon. . . . As a matter of fact, the Book of Mormon bears no more basic a relation to the work known as “Mormonism” than the other visions and revelations given in this dispensation. . . . If the Nephite record had not been revealed at all, in this dispensation, it is doubtful whether the body of “Mormon” belief would in any essential particular be different from what it is. I do not say this in disparagement of the Book of Mormon, nor in a spirit of criticism of the way in which our dispensation was ushered in, . . . but I call attention to the fact as showing how little the whole body of belief of the Latter-day Saints really depends on the revelation of the Nephite record. . . . it is far from being the structural foundation of our body of belief that the bishop’s words require. (*Improvement Era*, vol. 16, pp. 344-345)

The Mormon writer Robert J. Matthews made this interesting observation:

What did the faithful convert of the Church in 1830-1831 accept as essential “Mormonism”? Was he instructed concerning marriage for time and eternity? Of the three degrees of glory in the resurrection? Was he taught concerning the temple endowment, of baptism for the dead, of patriarchal blessings, or of the word of wisdom? Was he instructed in detail concerning the various offices and quorums in the priesthood from the deacons up through the teachers, priests, elders, seventies, and high priests? Was he taught concerning the quorums of the Presiding Bishopric, the First Council of Seventy, the Patriarch to the Church, the Council of the Twelve, and the First Presidency? To each of these questions the answer must be “No” for the simple reason that these matters had not yet been revealed in this dispensation and were known, if at all, only by the scant mention of some of them in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Summer 1971, p. 401)

Today converts are swarming into the Mormon Church, but very few of them really know much about Mormonism. We feel safe in saying that many of them are converted to the social program of the church rather than to its doctrines. Those who were born in the church in many cases “know” it is true but don’t know why it is true. Joseph H. Weston stated:

A great weakness of the church lies in the fact that so many who have been born and brought up within it are in high positions. These, too, often, are unable to grasp the significant differences between the Mormon church and the many sects and denominations of faith. Not having personally experienced membership in these other groups, they have no deep-seated emotional basis for contrast or comparison. They know that their church is better because they have been taught so from infancy—not because they themselves have compared it and come to that conclusion under their own power. (*These Amazing Mormons*, p. 26)

Many Mormons will stand up and dogmatically assert that Joseph Smith was a Prophet and that they belong to “the only true church,” but very few of them check to make sure that their faith is based on reality. The Bible warns:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Many members of the Mormon Church prefer to let their leaders do their thinking (“When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done.”); it is so easy to let someone else do our thinking. It is reported that one woman said that she didn’t need to fear the church leaders taking her astray. If they did, she said, all of the blame would come upon them and not her. How false can anything be? As the Bible says:

Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. (Jeremiah 17:5)

We sincerely hope and pray that the Mormon people will begin to awaken to the true message of Christ, realizing that in him, and him alone, can we have salvation.



# Appendix

## Questions About Our Work

Since many people have asked us concerning our work we have decided to include some answers to questions that we are frequently asked.

**1. How did you begin this work?** Although we both grew up as members of the Mormon Church, we found the teachings of the church to be so inconsistent that we decided we must leave it.

Our work really began in 1960 when we purchased a small hand-operated mimeograph machine with the hope that we could enlighten our Mormon friends who were still in the church. We distributed small mimeographed pamphlets free of charge, and had no intention of making this a full-time occupation.

In the fall of 1960 we had an interview with the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards which we will never forget. When Mr. Richards learned of our intention to examine the Mormon faith, he emphatically stated:

**I'm warning you! Don't start anything against this church!**

After this interview we were convinced that the Mormon leaders dreaded the thought of an investigation being made of their church. When LeGrand Richards found that we were going to use his great grandfather's journal in our investigation he wrote us a letter in which he threatened to sue us (see photograph of this letter on page 12 of this book).

We decided to write a book concerning the Mormon Church. We purchased a larger, power-operated, mimeograph machine and ran our first edition of *Mormonism* on it.

Although we had access to many rare documents and books concerning the Mormon Church, we felt that there must be a way of getting access to other documents which were suppressed or hidden from the general public.

We found an answer to this problem by the use of microfilm. Microfilm looks very much like the film used in motion picture cameras. One of the advantages of using microfilm is that an entire page of printed matter can be reduced down to about the size of a postage stamp. Thus a great deal of material can be filmed on a small roll of film, and with a microfilm viewer the image can be enlarged to its original size. By the use of microfilm we have been able to read many rare documents which we probably would not have had access to otherwise. For instance, we have read microfilms of rare documents from the Mormon Church Historians Office, the Huntington Library, the Yale University Library, the New York Public Library, and from other institutions. By the use of microfilm we were able to read the newspapers which were published in Palmyra, New York, in the early 1800's.

Since the use of microfilm appeared to be the answer to making the documents more readily available, we decided to buy a microfilm camera of our own. The price was \$1,200.00 for a used camera, and we did not have the money to make the down payment. Fortunately, a friend liked the idea so well that he decided to lend us the money to make the down payment.

Later on we were informed of a process by which metal plates or masters could be made from a microfilm. From these plates or

masters thousands of copies of a document could be reproduced by offset-printing. We looked at an offset-printing press, but the price was almost \$2,000.00. We had no money for a down payment but decided that if our income tax refund came in the mail the next day we would buy the machine. The next day the refund arrived in the mail and we were in business. Within three years we were able to photographically reprint almost fifty different books relating to the subject of Mormonism. Many of these books had not been in print for over 100 years. *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* and his strange account of the First Vision had never been published before.

The fact that we were making these early documents available caused a great deal of concern to the leaders of the Mormon Church. Ralph W. Hansen, formerly the Manuscript Librarian at the BYU, made this comment:

Microfilm, Xerox and other forms of photo-duplication have made possible inexpensive reproductions of out-of-print or rare books and newspapers. As far as the L.D.S. Church is concerned, such photo-publications are a mixed blessing. Jerald Tanner of Modern Microfilms (Salt Lake City, Utah) has used photo-publications to reproduce early Church and anti-Church works in wholesale lots. Mr. Tanner's object is to embarrass the Church to which he at one time gave allegiance. His reproductions are often as weak as his motives for doing them. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1966, p. 154)

Although the Mormon leaders opposed the publication of these documents, teachers at the BYU, LDS Institutes of Religion and Mormon Seminaries were more than happy to get the material. One teacher in the Department of Religion at the BYU bought 21 copies of one of the books which we reproduced. We understand that he was reprimanded for distributing our books, but his reply was "where else can I get this material?"

Within the last few years we have had a large number of students come to us desiring material who claim that our work was recommended by a Seminary teacher, an Institute instructor, or a teacher at the BYU.

**2. Is your work effective in reaching Mormons?** We feel that the work has been very effective and we believe it will be even more effective as time goes on. Below are extracts from a few of the many letters we have received:

It may be some satisfaction to you that you have in me another success. I was born and raised in the Mormon church...your publications have helped me greatly and I have accordingly made the decision to abandon my church and my faculty appointment at B.Y.U. (Letter dated May 5, 1968)

I must add I owe you two the thanks for seeing the error in the Mormon religion.

What a difference to really know God & know he hears me. (Letter sent December 1971)

I have never read such a complete study on Mormonism.

My eyes have been opened & I feel it my duty to open others.  
(Letter dated December 14, 1966)

Have enjoyed tremendously your many books you have published.

Thanks to you people and through our own studies my husband and I are no longer mormons. We thought you might be interested in knowing how good of Missionaries you are. (Letter dated October 13, 1966)

I should take this chance to thank you for the personal note you wrote me in 1967 when I was in the LDS investigation program and was about to be railroaded in. Now I am enrolled at a Methodist seminary and will become a minister in Oregon after 3 years of study. (Letter dated October 23, 1969)

The Mormon writer Stanley B. Kimball dismisses our work as being of no real importance:

... Jerald and Sandra Tanner's *Archaeology and the Book of Mormon* (1969), should be mentioned. As with all the rest of this company's fascinating publications, it is a joy to read the esoterica they come up with and a sorrow to note their wrong-headedness and unwarranted conclusions. The work of the Tanners—two clever and industrious but negative and untrained people—however, poses small threat to the Church. This new book's section on the Anthon Transcript, pages 12-22, a compendium of interesting but out-of-context snippets compiled for the purpose of discrediting the Church, is quite unconvincing. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, BYU, August 1971, p. 5)

Reed Durham, Director of the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah, has an entirely different opinion concerning this matter. In a speech given March 7, 1972, he admitted that our work does pose a threat to the church. While Dr. Durham still claims that he has a testimony to the Mormon Church, he made these very startling statements in his speech:

There has been a lot written about the Tanners. And anyone here who perhaps has not heard of the Tanners perhaps hasn't done enough reading to be aware of what's going on in Mormon history, because the Tanners represent the most prolific production of anti-Mormon literature on the whole history of this Church. They are the most prolific producers of Mormon literature, anti-Mormon literature, we've ever had in the history of this Church. And their company, called the Modern Microfilm Company, is here in Salt Lake City, which makes it all very close to home. And they've done perhaps the greatest pieces of research for and putting together sources and research that's been done by other people than anybody that I know of in all of Church history. So they've become very important in understanding our Church history. . . .

Their first big work, the one that they felt was their first great tome was this one, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* That was their first big work. This seemed to incorporate all that they had done, all these publications, for these years since '59 to '64. They incorporated it all in one great anti-Mormon piece of literature. . . .

Presently Sandra and Jerald informed me that they are working on their big tome, the summum bonum of everything they have done to date. That's right up to 1972; they're going to wrap it together in a huge volume. . . . they may even . . . call it *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* The same title as their first important work . . . they really believe . . . that the Mormon people have not had a chance to make a real intelligent decision as to where the truth is because the facts have never been given to them. . . . they feel that the Mormons have been blinded by tradition to such a point that its hard for them ever to be released. The freedom must come when Jesus emerges. . . . Mormonism, the institution of Mormonism, chokes, they believe, what is the true Christianity. . . . they feel that they have been God-prompted in what their doing. . . . they bear testimony that they feel

God has been with them in their work. . . . they feel that very keenly, . . . They believe that any Latter Day Saint should keep all the great Christian ethical moral principles which were taught in Mormonism, keep those and then leave all the rest alone, and come to Christ. . . . that's their purpose, to liberate, to free. Now, how can they do that? To go to the Mormon sources and let you see what the Church was like from start to finish, and oftentimes that will be a comparison—what it was like then and what it is like now. And there's a lot of interesting things that occur when you show the contrast. . . . things that were going on in Joseph's day as versus the things and teachings that go on today. One of the best ways to let you Mormons know what really was taught or/and practiced and believed in the early Church is to reprint documents of your own faith—that is, go to the primary sources and reproduce them for the Mormons, because by in large Mormons don't operate on primary sources. They operate on secondary sources, secondary, secondary, secondary sources. Indeed, if you were to pick up a manual of a Sunday School class in Church history you wouldn't know what a primary source was, it is so secondary. And so one of the main things they've done is to reproduce primary sources—primary documents. They aren't anti-Mormon stuff, they're our stuff.

Now, a poor teacher, like I am, teaching for the Church does not have the money to buy primary sources . . . You know, the originals of these documents that are my heritage . . . so comes along the Modern Microfilm Company, who reproduces, not retypes (they have a process . . . where you photo a page in a book and it makes a plate, and they just run the plate off), so you have the exact source. It's a photomechanically reproduced original. So I have to spend my money to buy these originals, because I want my primary sources. But it's true, if I study my primary sources I'm in another world when I compare with my Church today. Some of you may disagree, but I can take the time and show you that in so many regards we're in another world today. We do not live in the church of Brigham Young today or any one of the Presidents. We live only in the church today with Joseph Fielding Smith, and it's different today than it was with David O. McKay. And it will be like that all the time. It's just totally different. And so if you're going to make comparisons, of course you could shake some people up.

Now, let me show you . . . here are the *Millennial Stars*, . . . the great piece of literature in England. They have the first seven volumes reproduced. I can't go buy an original *Millennial Star*. . . . So I pay the Tanners for the *Millennial Star*, because I want to study the original *Millennial Stars*. It's part of my heritage . . . there's the first *Pearl of Great Price*. . . . I buy it from the Tanners 'cause I can't pay for an original edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*. This is my first *Pearl of Great Price*, in my Church. I want the first one. I want to study it. I want to compare it with my present *Pearl of Great Price* . . . all kinds of changes, but I want to understand the changes. I want to know what they are. So do they want me to know what they are! . . . the first time I could get an *Evening and Morning Star* was from Jerald and Sandra, a photomechanically reproduced *Evening and Morning Star*. That's my first newspaper; that's my first Church Section; that's my first *Improvement Era* . . . and by darn, I'm going to get it if I'm a student of Mormonism, and if they're the only ones producing it I'm going to buy it from them. Shame! Shame on me! The *Confessions of John D. Lee*, . . . I never had one, . . . now I do, photomechanically reproduced. I don't have to worry about any hanky-panky in the reproduction . . .

Lucy Mack's history of the Church...which was condemned by Brigham Young and revamped by Brigham Young, reproduced in 1901, reproduced in 1921, with changes . . . and deletions all the way down through time. I want to see what the original looked like. I'd like to see the stuff we took out, just for the kicks, just for my interest and for my information. The first edition of Lucy Mack's history was reproduced verbatim by the Tanners. . . . The *Temple Lot Case*, that whole case from the documents of the court and all the testimony that was there have all been



reproduced for me . . . Here's the *Messenger and Advocate*. That was my second newspaper, or official journal in the Church . . . and the *Elders' Journal*. All of these primary sources of my church . . . have been reproduced by them for me to read. The idea is that if I read the primary sources and see all the differences with today, I'm supposed to lose my testimony . . .

Now, in order to get their licks in even stronger than simply letting you read for yourself, they will pull out of these primary sources quotes on all the going problems. So you have books on the Negroes, . . . *The Negro in Mormon Theology*, *Joseph Smith's Curse Upon the Negro*, *Joseph Smith and Polygamy* (a great big one, that's a good one, my, that's really a good one), *Falsification of Joseph Smith's History*, *Joseph Smith's 1826 Trial*, *Joseph Smith and Money Digging* (that's one of their latest), *The Bible and Mormon Doctrine*, and then—this is one they like, they like to show you the changes . . . so they'll take the *Key to Theology* as we used to print it and show you how we print it now, and we have really doctored the *Key to Theology*. They like to show you that. That's supposed to really shake you up. We've doctored some other man's book after he's all dead and gone. . . . *Changes in Joseph Smith's History*, *Changes in the Pearl of Great Price*, . . . they photo the *Pearl of Great Price* and mark all the changes out in the margin for you to look at . . . *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*, this is an original 1830 photomechanically reproduced Book of Mormon, an 1830 Book of Mormon, and then in the margins they've pointed out all the changes that were there. Well, on and on they go. . . .

Lehi said "there must needs be opposition in all things." I can't help but think that what they're doing, though it has done damage—I've had people in my office who've been just totally devastated with things they raised. A Mormon who had never heard of Blood Atonement. And so now comes Blood Atonement crashing through the pages of primary sources, from the words of our own General Authorities, our own Presidents of the Church and it's devastating to lots of Mormons. Some Mormons don't even believe Joseph Smith was a polygamist. We have come so far from those days to the present time. And then all of the evidence about polygamy and all of the issues, and then to get crushed with actually seeing the changes in *Joseph Smith's History* or in the Book of Mormon or the *Pearl of Great Price*. I tell you, though you may not believe it, I have seen people get utterly crushed, almost devastated, with some of the material that the Tanners have reproduced. They have made their mark in many of our people. I wouldn't be in a group like this, but I could name to you professors . . . and some of their wives who read this and eat it up and have lost totally their testimony on this kind of thing. I will tell you, there was an Institute teacher here, not long ago, . . . who lost his testimony and went out of the Church on the basis of this stuff. Oh, this stuff is dynamite!

I can't help but think that when they raise these issues it does something to us to have to defend. . . . When I see something that counters what I've been taught or what I know or what I understand or what I feel, the way to counter research...unpleasant to me is not by sticking my head in the sand like an ostrich, but by more research. I may have to revamp, and knowledge sometimes is a dangerous thing. But I will revamp, and I will understand better my heritage. And in a sense, what I'm trying to say is that they have become, in a sense, catalysts to sharpen our own historical understanding. We've had to get on the stick and do some study, and do some homework that sometimes we haven't done. If we don't do the homework that will kill us. "Leave it alone, don't touch it," see that's a kind of philosophy. . . . All right, you leave it alone, but in this world of knowledge and mass communications lots of other people are going to read it, and you'll be exposed to it somewhere. I think if you're going to be exposed to it, where's the best place to be exposed to it? Over there, next door, some meeting, some well meaning friend, or maybe right here to be exposed to it. Bring the issues up here. Weigh them carefully. Do research. Have it in a framework of testimony and faith. That's where I think we should be exposed to it. (Speech by Reed Durham, Director, Salt Lake Institute of Religion, March 7, 1972)

After we published the first edition of our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* a prominent Mormon scholar told us he was

thinking of writing a rebuttal to our work. We did not hear from him again until 1966. At that time he confessed that he had given up the idea of a rebuttal. When he was pressed for the reason, he admitted that the truth concerning the church was even worse than what we had presented in our book. He stated that the problems we had found with the church and its history were minor compared with the problems he had found in his research. This man has now been excommunicated from the church.

Speaking of our work, Wallace Turner wrote: "The campaign is effective, too, and of this there is no doubt" (*The Mormon Establishment*, p. 162).

**3. Is there any opposition to your work?** The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt once said:

. . . convince us of our errors of doctrine, if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God, and we will be ever **grateful** for the information, and you will ever have the pleasing reflection that you have been instruments in the hands of God of redeeming your fellow beings from the darkness which you may see enveloping their minds. (*The Seer*, pp. 15-16)

While there have been a number of Mormons who have been "grateful" for the evidence we have presented, the great majority are opposed to our work. We have meet with opposition from Mormons, those who belong to apostate Mormon groups, and even from those who profess to be non-Mormons. We have received many letters criticizing our work. For instance, on March 12, 1970, we received this letter:

Both you and your wife are nothing but trash, trying to pollute the minds of other people, just as yours are polluted. You make me sick to my stomach with your feeble-mindedness and filthy lies.

After reading some of your publications and doing some research of my own I find you utterly repulsive, but I'm sure you've been told this by everyone you've met.

You're nothing but degenerates looking for cheap thrills at someone else's expense. (Letter dated March 12, 1970)

On one occasion we received a letter from a person who professed to be a non-Mormon. The envelope was filled with ashes. Two pieces of paper were also enclosed. On the one sheet the following was scribbled:

Look closely at the burned paper. It's the trash you sent us, so I burned it for you. This should & probably [will] happen to your company.

The other sheet contained a short letter in which the following statements appeared:

Dear Sir (or whatever you are)

Please stop sending your crummy bunch of make shift lies to our home. . . . Anybody should have the right to sue you and a lot more than that should be done. . . .

P.S. You're a bunch of hostile liars. May the devil take ya!

When we first began our work we were afraid that we would not be allowed to continue. As we indicated earlier, the Mormon Apostle LeGrand Richards threatened us as follows: "**I'm warning you! Don't start anything against this church!**" Since that time people have asked us such questions as: "Do you have a gun to protect yourself?" or "Do you have fire insurance on your equipment?" One man stated: "I would like to see you succeed, but I know they will burn you out."

Fortunately, the Mormon leaders have not tried to destroy our press (as they did the *Nauvoo Expositor*), nor have they sent the Danites in the night (as Brigham Young used to do). Except for the threats to sue us, and a man

who threatened to punch Sandra “in the nose,” things have been rather peaceful. The church has not used violence against us, as many people thought they would, but instead they have used silence as their chief weapon against us. But why silence? It is our sincere belief that the church leaders have no satisfactory answers to the charges of fraud and deceit that we have brought against them, and therefore they have used the “silent treatment” on us. This treatment seemed to work fairly well for the first few years, however, it has become less and less effective as time goes on.

**4. What is the purpose of your work and what do you hope to accomplish?** While we oppose the errors of Mormonism, we feel that our work is actually a work on behalf of the Mormon people. We feel that we owe our Mormon brothers the truth that God has revealed to us. We have always had a great deal of faith in our cause, and we believe that the truth will eventually prevail. H. A. Ironside once wrote:

Objection is often raised, even by some sound in the Faith, regarding the exposure of error as being entirely negative and of no real edification. . . . But the brethren who assume this attitude forget that a large part of the New Testament, both of the teaching of our blessed Lord Himself and the writings of the apostles, is made up of this very character of ministry . . .

Our Lord prophesied, “Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” Within our own day, how many false prophets have risen; and oh, how many are the deceived! . . . It is as important in these days as in Paul’s—in fact, it is increasingly important—to expose the many types of false teaching that, on every hand, abound more and more.

We are called upon to “contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints,” while we hold the truth in love. . . .

This does not imply harsh treatment of those entrapped by error—quite the opposite. If it be objected that exposure of error necessitates unkind reflection upon others who do not see as we do, our answer is, it has always been the duty of every loyal servant of Christ to warn against any teaching that would make Him less precious, or cast reflection upon His finished redemptive work and the all-sufficiency of His present service as our great High Priest and Advocate. . . .

Error is like leaven, of which we read, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking, and therefore more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word, and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.

Exposing error is most unpopular work. But from every true standpoint, it is worth-while work. . . . And to souls “caught in the snare of the fowler”—how many of them God only knows—it may mean light and life, abundant and everlasting. (A tract published by Religion Analysis Service Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.)

In *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, James L. Farmer criticized “apostate-Mormon and non-Mormon critics of the Church” for devoting so much time and energy to their cause. In reply Duane Stanfield wrote a letter in which he stated:

James Farmer . . . wonders why so many apostate-Mormons spend so much time “lamenting and exposing,” and why they feel such activity is of any importance. Maybe I can help explain it a little, as I have just entered that category, and so am still “fresh” on my feelings.

I would say it’s because the apostates feel the truth is important; in fact nothing really matters in life but the truth. They felt they had found the truth, and they gave it their heart, might, mind and strength; and then found themselves to be, as they felt, in error. And when you have been deceived on such a scale, you want others to know about it, just as one so dedicated and committed wants others to know about the Gospel. . . .

When I see the large amount of New Testament material in the Book of Mormon; when I see the outrageous tampering that has been done with the so-called revelations since their first printing; . . . when I see the varied and conflicting accounts of the first vision and the three witnesses; . . . when I see the biographical glimpses of Joseph Smith through other than “approved” eyes (and such things as his giving a translation of the Kinderhook plates that were later found to be a hoax; which brings up the current Book of Abraham imbroglio); when I see all this and more, I begin to wonder at the integrity and legitimacy of the church, . . .

You condemn the critics. Yet honest searchers for truth owe a large vote of thanks to such as the Tanners for the work they have done to help men see behind the books that the church gives them to read in for their answers. The Church owes them a vote of thanks, too, and should acknowledge it at the time of reckoning. For such endeavor has not been so much destructive as constructive . . . if you’re going to go out and set up the New Jerusalem and expect the righteous to rally to your flag, you’ve got to know exactly whereof you speak, and how solid the ground is you’re standing on. Check your premises, is all I for one am asking. And, after doing so, set your own house in order, before you start on the world’s. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1968, pp. 10-11)

While we would like to see the entire church turn away from the errors and false doctrines Joseph Smith established, we realize that this would be almost impossible. It is realistic, however, to believe that many members of the Mormon Church will turn from this man-made system and find peace and joy in Jesus Christ. We agree with Hal Hougey when he stated:

There is much that is good in Mormonism, and this review of the errors in Mormon doctrine should not be construed to be a rejection of whatever is true or good in Mormonism. How much better, though, to get the true and good from the Bible where it is not adulterated with the erroneous teachings of the false prophet Joseph Smith!

The writer also has no feelings of animosity toward LDS people. They are a good people, and there is much in them to admire, not the least of which is their zeal to share their faith with others. It is the conviction of the writer that their zeal is worthy of a better cause, . . . (*Mormon Missionary Handbook—With Refutation*, by Hal Hougey, 1969, p. 4)

Since the Mormon leaders send thousands of missionaries throughout the world telling other people that their church is false, it is only fair that they submit to some examination of their history and doctrine.

### **5. Is it true that you were excommunicated from the LDS Church?**

Lauritz G. Petersen, of the LDS Church Historian’s Office, made this statement in a letter: “Jerald Tanner was excommunicated from the church some time ago. How can the light shine when the switch has been turned off?”

Although it is true that we were excommunicated from the Mormon Church, we feel that the reader should understand that it is impossible to withdraw from membership in the Mormon Church without excommunication, and that we were excommunicated at our own requests. Actually, it is very difficult for a person to have his name removed from the membership rolls of the Mormon Church. The situation is almost like a worker telling his boss that he intends to quit, and having his boss reply, “You can’t quit unless we fire you.”

Wallace Turner stated:

Only by excommunication can a person leave the church. This may be had for the asking, but few ask, even when disenchanting with their religion.

Two who did request it are Jerald Tanner and his wife, Sandra who run a small printing operation here that distributes



such things as anti-Mormon books that have been out of print and pamphlets attacking the validity of the “Book of Mormon” as a divinely revealed work. (*The New York Times*, December 27, 1965, p. 18)

It may be of interest to the reader to know something concerning our “trials”; therefore, we will both make a brief statement concerning them:

**Statement by Jerald Tanner:** When I was about nineteen years of age I requested that my name be withdrawn from the LDS Church membership records. A member of the Stake Presidency promised me that he would see that this was taken care of. Two years later, however, I found that no action had been taken. At this time I wrote to the President of the LDS Church, and on August 9, 1960, I received a “summons” from my Bishop. The reader will find a photograph of this on page 575 of this book.

Notice that the “summons” states that I was the one who requested my name withdrawn from the records, and that I was to bring witnesses. On August 14, 1960, I appeared before the “Bishop’s Court” with my “witnesses.” My “witnesses” were told, however, that they could not come into the room where the excommunication was to take place because I had voluntarily requested my name removed. Unless I wished to contest the removal of my name the witnesses were not needed and would not be allowed into the room. So I walked into the room alone, and they shut the door. They asked me if I would mind if they made a tape recording of the proceedings. I permitted them to make the recording but asked if I could also make a recording. The answer was no. They asked me if I wanted to plead guilty to the “alleged wrong doing” of requesting my name to be removed from the church records and teaching doctrines not in harmony with the church. I replied that I did not believe my actions were “wrong” in these regards, and therefore could not plead guilty, but that I wanted my name removed without the use of the expression “wrong doing.” This caused a great deal of confusion among the members of the “Bishop’s Court,” and they did not know how to proceed. After conversing among themselves they decided to proceed without the admission of “wrong doing” on my part. On August 28, 1960, the Bishopric sent me a letter concerning the decision of the court. The reader will find a photograph of it on page 575 of this book.

**Statement by Sandra Tanner:** In June of 1960 I wrote a letter to my Bishop requesting him to remove my name from the membership of the Mormon Church since I no longer believed Joseph Smith to be a prophet or the unique doctrines of the Mormon Church. Shortly after this two Mormon Elders delivered a letter to me stating the date that the Bishop’s Court would meet to consider my excommunication (see letter on page 575).

On July 7, 1960 I went to the Ward. The Bishop, his two counselors, and the Ward Clerk were there. The Ward Clerk took notes of the proceedings. The Bishop proceeded to establish my “guilt” by presenting evidence that I was in a state of apostasy. After this had been established he then stated that from that moment on I was no longer a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and as such I forfeited my right to the blessings of the church and the church would no longer accept my tithing. He then stated I was forfeiting my right to the Kingdom of God. I asked him for a definition of the term “Kingdom of God”; did he mean the Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom, the Testial Kingdom, or all three kingdoms. (The Mormons believe heaven is divided into three kingdoms.) At this he became disturbed and said we weren’t there to argue. I stated that I felt I had a right to know specifically what he believed I was giving up. He then stated I was forfeiting my right to the Celestial Kingdom.

The Bishop was visibly shaken by the proceeding. He was almost tearful. I was the first person he had excommunicated and he obviously believed he was literally sentencing me to spend eternity outside the presence of God. I tried to comfort him by telling him I felt no sorrow about being excommunicated and I

was fully ready to face God as an ex-Mormon since I was trusting in Christ, not church membership, to save me. I thanked the men for removing my name from the church records and left.

While it is true that we were excommunicated, the reader will notice from the photographs that we requested the action. We feel, therefore, that when Mormons mention our excommunication they should also explain that it was at our request. All sorts of false rumors have been circulated concerning our excommunication. We have been accused of adultery, polygamy, etc. For instance, in a letter dated May 18, 1971, we find the following:

I recently appeared on a Symposium with a Mormon professor . . . He spoke on the subject, “Why I Am A Mormon”. . . . After the two speeches, the Mormon professor . . . said . . . there is a couple in Salt Lake City who were disfellowshipped from the church because they wanted to continue to preach and practice polygamy. He said their names were Jerry and Sandra Tanner, and that they have been doing a lot of printing of untruths to try to get even. He also stated that the Tanners had started a new church. I had never run into that charge before, so thought I would ask you to please tell me what really happened, so if I run into that again, I will be able to intelligently answer the charges.

The reader can plainly see from the photographs on page 575 that there is absolutely no truth to these charges.

We have never regretted for a moment that we left the Mormon Church. In fact, we have had a real peace concerning this matter and would do it again if necessary.

**6. How do you feel about the Mormon people?** We have a feeling of love toward the Mormons, and pray only for their good. While we fight a system which we feel enslaves the minds of many people, we have no animosity toward any member of the Mormon Church. We are not in sympathy with those who hate the Mormon people and spread lies about them. We do not feel that it is right to make fun of the Mormons. They have a right to their beliefs, and while we may disagree with them, we have no right to mock them or to force them to believe otherwise.

Many times people have come to us with long stories of how their Mormon neighbors have “persecuted” them. When we hear these tales of persecution, we sometimes wonder if these people might in some way bring the persecution upon themselves. Now, while it is probably true that some people have suffered persecution in predominantly Mormon areas, we must not be carried away to the point of believing that it is impossible to live with the Mormons. Actually, we have been able to get along very well with our Mormon neighbors in Salt Lake City. It is true that a Gentile in Utah sometimes has a hard time renting an apartment or finding a job, and we have heard of cases where Mormon bishops have advised women to leave their husbands because they have apostatized from the church. Nevertheless, we must not look for offenses. If we are going to have any influence on the Mormon people we must learn to love and understand them. Jesus said that we are to “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt. 5:44). Before we can have any real effect upon others we must be sure that our own hearts are right with God.

Perhaps we can all learn a lesson from a Negro who became a Christian. Tom Skinner grew up in Harlem and became the leader of “the Harlem Lords”—a gang of over 100 young men. He had “led the fellows in more than fifteen large scale gang fights.” In his book, *Black and Free*, he states:

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

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

One night Tom Skinner was “preparing strategy for a



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
CANNON SEVENTH WARD BISHOPRIC  
CANNON STAKE  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

August 9, 1960

SUICIDES

In the Cannon 7th Ward of the  
Cannon Stake of Zion


To Jerald D. Tanner:

Dear Brother

You are hereby requested to appear before the bishop's court of this ward in the bishop's office on the 14th day of August 1960 at 2:00 PM for alleged wrong doing on your part as follows:

voluntary request for your name to be stricken from the records and teaching doctrines which are not in harmony with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

You should be present, with witnesses, if you desire them, at the place and time specified. If there is any good reason why you cannot be present, please notify the undersigned in due time. In the event of your absence, without excuse, action must necessarily be taken in accordance with the evidence and the established procedure of the Church in such matters.

  
Alma E. Kehl Bishop

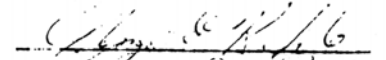
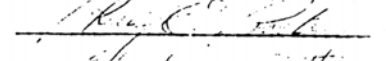

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
CANNON SEVENTH WARD BISHOPRIC  
CANNON STAKE  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

August 28, 1960

Brother Jerald Tanner

The decision of the bishop's court following your trial August 14, 1960 is that you have been excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

In accordance with your request your name has been removed from the records and you are no longer considered a member of said Church.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD WARD BISHOPRIC  
SAN FERNANDO STAKE  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

July 2, 1960

Mrs. Sandra Tanner  
11946 Hart Street  
North Hollywood, California

Dear Sister Tanner:

In accordance with your request, a Bishop's Court will be held in the North Hollywood Ward, Burbank Stake, at 10837 Collins Street, North Hollywood on Thursday, July 7, 1960 at 7:00 p.m.

If you so desire, your presence is requested at this time.

Sincerely,

  
Bishop Lyman P. Pinkston

LPP:kw

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD WARD BISHOPRIC  
BURBANK STAKE  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

July 29, 1960

Mrs. Sandra Tanner  
17703 Truman Rd.  
Independence, Mo.


Dear Mrs. Tanner

You are hereby notified of your excommunication from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. This action was taken at a Bishop's Court held in the North Hollywood Ward on July 7, 1960.

Your name is no longer on the records of the church.

Reason for excommunication: Apostasy, and engaging in activities contrary to the best interests of the church.

Sincerely Yours

  
Lyman P. Pinkston  
Bishop No. Hollywood, Ward

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

Mr. Skinner was converted to Christianity and decided to leave the gang. On pages 68-69 of his book, Mr. Skinner gives this interesting information:

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

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

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

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

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

I became convinced that the only answer to the prejudice, the bigotry, and the hate that exists in our world today is that people allow the love of God through the Person of Jesus Christ to be expressed through them. (*Black and Free*, pp. 68-69)

**7. Dr. Nibley has stated that your publication “*The Case Against Mormonism is based largely on stolen microfilms; . . .*” Is it true that you have stolen films from the Church Historian’s Office?** This charge is completely false; we have never stolen any document or film, neither have we encouraged nor advised any person to steal from the Mormon Church. We disapprove of this type of thing, and have obtained all of our information and microfilms in an honorable way. Although it has taken longer to obtain the material in this manner, we have the satisfaction of a clear conscience.

Some of the Mormon Church’s own scholars have gained access to rare microfilms and have had them duplicated without the knowledge of the Church Historian. We have been given copies of films the Church Historian’s Office did not want to be made public, but we have never advised anyone to steal films from the Church Historian’s Office. In fact, in one instance a member of the Mormon Church told us that it would be very easy for him to “borrow” a very important film from the Historian’s Office, and that it could be duplicated and returned without anyone knowing what had happened. As much as we wanted a copy of the film, we told him that this would not be right and we advised him against

doing this. We felt that no matter how much we wanted copies of these documents, we could not encourage anyone to “borrow” them from the Historian’s Office without their knowledge.

The reader may be interested in knowing how we obtained a photograph of Elijah Abel’s grandson’s ward membership record. (This is the record that proves that the Negro blood in Abel’s descendants has not prevented them from holding the Priesthood.) The LDS Genealogical Library had a microfilm of this record, but they had a policy which stated that they could not make photocopies of membership records. We felt that we must have a copy of this record, but we did not want to remove the microfilm from the Genealogical Library without permission. Therefore, we brought a number of large negatives (which were not very sensitive to light) to the Genealogical Library in a purse. They allowed us to look at the film in one of their readers. We set our own negatives in the microfilm reader and let the light shine down upon them. We timed each exposure with our watch. When we had made a number of different exposures we put our negatives back in the purse, and later developed them at home. Thus, although the negatives cost a few dollars and it took us a number of hours to complete the process, we ended up with a perfect photograph of the record.

We have been accused of stealing Paul Cheesman’s thesis—i.e., the thesis which contains the “strange account” of the First Vision—from the Brigham Young University Library. This accusation has absolutely no foundation in fact. Actually, we obtained a Xerox copy of this thesis from a student at the BYU. This man had special privileges there and obtained a copy. We, of course, had to pay for the Xeroxing of the thesis. This copy was made on the Brigham Young University Library’s own machine, and the thesis was never taken from the building.

All of the documents we have obtained from the Mormon Church have been obtained in an honest way, and we can truthfully say that we have never stolen nor encouraged anyone to steal anything from the church.



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## INDEX TO MORMONISM—SHADOW OR REALITY?

The index required some 175 hours to prepare; that time is given with gratitude to Jerald and Sandra, who knew the truth and had the courage to publish it.

Michael Briggs  
Orangeville, Utah  
29 Jan. 1984

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