

SALT LAKE CITY MESSENGER

Utah Lighthouse Ministry

Bookstore - 1358 S. West Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

Editors: Jerald and Sandra Tanner

ISSUE 100

MARCH 2003

www.utlm.org

100TH COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

TOP STORIES OF THE DECADES

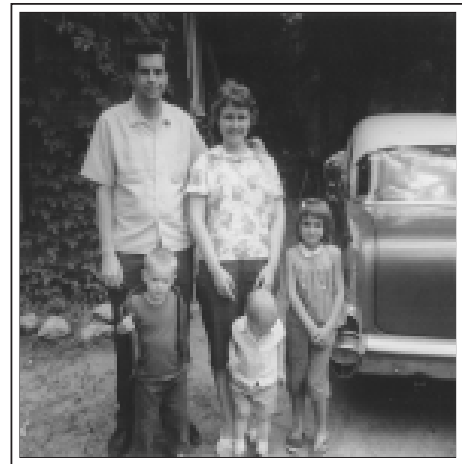
In November of 1964 we launched the first issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*. At that time we were operating under the business name of Modern Microfilm Company. (We became a non-profit organization in 1983.) Over the next thirty-nine years we covered many controversial topics. At times we felt like Joseph Smith when he said, "No man knows my history. . . If I had not experienced what I have, I could not have believed it myself." (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 317) The following is a brief overview of our newsletters.

1960's - A TIME OF SUPPRESSION

1833 Book of Commandments

The lead article of the Nov. 1964 *Messenger* was "*Mormon Church Suppresses Book Of Commandments: Deseret Book Store Ordered Not To Sell Wilford Wood's Reprint Of The Book Of Commandments.*" After recounting the problems we had trying to advertise our own reprint of the 1833 *Book of Commandments* we described the release of Wilford Wood's reprint entitled *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, Vol. 2. However, even his reprint ran into problems. We wrote:

Since Wilford Wood's reprint did not tell that the revelations had been changed, the Church did not try to suppress his book at that time. Instead they promoted it and allowed him to display his original copy of the *Book of Commandments* in the window of the Deseret Book Store (that is the Church book store). . . . the Church leaders evidently felt that they were safe as long as members of the Church did not compare it with present editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. It appears, however, that members of the Church did compare the two editions and found that many changes had been made. On Oct. 9, 1964, a man reported to us that the Deseret Book Store had refused to sell him copies of *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, V.1 and 2. On Oct. 10, 1964, Sandra Tanner



The Tanner Family in 1966

went to the Deseret Book Store 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 priest 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."

Years later, after many books and articles had been printed detailing the changes in Smith's revelations, the Deseret Bookstore once again allowed the volumes to be sold. A complete study of the changes can be found in *Joseph Smith's Revelations—Text & Commentary* by H. Michael Marquardt.

FREE VIDEO OFFER!

With an order of \$50 or more
(before the shipping charge)
receive a FREE copy of the new video

DNA vs. The Book of Mormon

(value: \$20.00)

Offer Expires May 31, 2003

Suppressed First Vision Account

The second article in our first issue was entitled “*First Vision*.” We briefly discussed a few problems with various accounts of Smith’s original vision, such as the history in the *Messenger and Advocate*, 1834-35, and the account written by Smith’s brother, William Smith. Neither account mentioned an 1820 vision. Instead, these accounts had Smith’s visions starting several years later.

During this period our friend LaMar Petersen told us of a conversation he had in 1953 with Levi Edgar Young of the Seven Presidents of Seventies in the LDS Church. Mr. Young told LaMar that he had read a “strange” unpublished account of the First Vision at church headquarters but was instructed not to divulge the contents to anyone. This led us to research the various accounts of the First Vision and the information was included in our book, *Joseph Smith’s Strange Account of the First Vision*. In this book we quoted from Paul Cheesman’s 1965 BYU thesis, *An Analysis of the Accounts Relating to Joseph Smith’s Early Visions*, and reproduced his appendix containing the 1832 First Vision account.

However, LDS scholars were reluctant to mention that we were the first to publish the 1832 account. In fact, the following misinformation was printed in the Autumn 1966 issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

In this issue, James Allen publishes for the **first time** substantial portions of two early accounts by Joseph Smith of his First Vision which became known in modern times and (to just a few people) only in the past two years.

In the January 1967 *Messenger* no. 12, we quoted LaMar Petersen’s letter to the editor of *Dialogue*, pointing out their mistake. While our original pamphlet on the First Vision is out of print the information is included in our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

In July 1967, we published *Messenger* no. 15 with the title “*Examining The First Vision*.” In it we discussed Smith’s suppressed 1832 account of his vision, where he only mentions Jesus appearing to him. We also mentioned the 1835 account which mentions “angels” but has nothing to indicate that God and Jesus appeared. We then quoted from Wesley Walters research on other problems with Smith’s 1820 vision. Walters found that Smith’s description of a revival in 1820 actually applied to a revival in 1824/25, which raises all sorts of problems for the story. He stated:

“... 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 contemporary records that the revival, which Smith claimed occurred in 1820, did not really 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.” (*New Light On Mormon Origins*, as quoted in the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, July 1967, p. 3)

Wesley P. Walters and H. Michael Marquardt further developed this research in their book, *Inventing Mormonism*.

Joseph Smith’s History

In the second issue, April of 1965, we wrote an article called “*Changes In Joseph Smith’s History*.” We discussed a large deletion from the *History of the Church* relating to Smith’s death as it was printed in the *Millennial Star* compared with its present printing. We also pointed out that a paragraph relating to Smith’s description of the word “Mormon” had been deleted from current printings. For more on this, see our book, *Changes in Joseph Smith’s History*.

Threats

We also mentioned the two letters we had received from LDS Apostles threatening us with lawsuits over what we were publishing. LeGrand Richards sent his letter Dec. 20, 1961 and Mark E. Petersen sent his letter Feb. 13, 1965. Neither one followed through with their threats, but they were hints of what was to come.

Book of Mormon

In the October 1965 issue, no. 4, we announced the publication of our book, *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*, and listed a few examples of changes. One of the examples we gave was Alma 29:4. In the original 1830 edition, page 303, it read:

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

But the 1968 edition deleted the middle of the phrase:

“... yea, I know that he allotteth unto men according to their wills, ...” (Alma 29:4)

Interestingly, that verse was changed back to the 1830 reading in 1981.

Blacks and the Priesthood

In November 1965 we issued no. 5 with the title “*Negroes In The Priesthood.*” At that time Blacks were not allowed to hold the LDS priesthood. We stated:

For many years the Mormon Church leaders have taught that a Negro cannot hold the Priesthood. . . . 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.

Although we were aware of the fact that a “colored man” by the name of Elijah Abel held the Priesthood in the Mormon Church [in 1836] we were very astonished to learn that his descendants have also been 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. . . . Ordained an Elder November 10, 1900.
(son of Elijah) by John Q. Adams, Logan, 5th Ward, Utah.

Elijah Able. . . . Ordained a Priest July 5, 1934.
(grandson of Elijah) by J.C. Hogenson
son of Enoch Ordained an Elder September 29, 1935.
by Reuben S. Hill,
Logan 10th Ward, Utah

. . . We have obtained a photograph of Elijah Abel’s grandson’s ward membership record which **proves** that he was ordained to the Priesthood.

In the January 1966 issue, no. 6, we quoted from the *New York Times*, December 27, 1965, pages 1 and 18:

“Within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—more commonly known as the Mormon Church—the liberal intellectuals are hungry as never before for avenues of discussion. . . .

“For many of these liberals the paramount question is the church’s attitude on Negroes, who are permitted to become members but cannot attain to the priesthood open to all other male members or become church officers.

“At the other end of the doctrinal spectrum, some conservatives are causing concern by taking to polygamy—a practice officially discarded by the church 75 years ago—for which they are excommunicated. . . .

“Only by excommunication can a person leave the church. This may be had for the asking, but few ask, even when disenchanted 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.”

We then quoted from the December 28, 1965, *New York Times*:

“The church moves slightly toward the Negro all the time. Proselytizing is heavy now in Brazil, where many persons of mixed Negro blood live and where many such have undoubtedly been taken into the priesthood.

“However, sometimes the church missionaries have been required to go to new priests and tell them they no longer may perform their priestly function—that research has shown they have Negro ancestry. Orders for this come from Salt Lake City.

“The church will identify only one Negro who was ever a priest. He was Elijah Abel, an undertaker in Nauvoo, Ill.—and a good friend of Joseph Smith, the founder. . . .

“Although there is ferment for change, many observers believe it probable that the majority of the church’s nearly 2.5 million members today would oppose changing the exclusionary rules on Negroes.”

It would be another 13 years before the LDS Church would officially remove its ban and offer priesthood to males of all races.

Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar

In the April 1966 issue, no. 7, we published our first article challenging the Book of Abraham titled “*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 Ancient Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a Work of His Imagination.*” (At that time we did not realize that the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York was preserving the original papyri owned by Joseph Smith.) On page 3 we stated:

Although the Mormon Church Historian’s Office has the original document [Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar] and also a microfilm copy, members of the Mormon Church have been required to get special permission from Joseph Fielding Smith, Church Historian, to even see the microfilm.

We also quoted from BYU Professor James R. Clark:

“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 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, as quoted in *Salt Lake City Messenger*, April, 1966, p. 3)

Our reprint of *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* is still available. See our book list.

Also in no. 7 we mentioned the *New York Times*, December 29, 1912, article "***Museum Walls Proclaim Fraud Of Mormon Prophet.***" The full article is reprinted on our web site [www.utlm.org].

Today the Book of Abraham continues to be a hot topic as the papyri and grammar provide ample evidence that it is not an authentic translation.

Smith's Egyptian Papyri Found

The most surprising development of the 1960's was the rediscovery of the Joseph Smith papyri collection. The February 1968 newsletter, no. 16, was titled "***The Mormon Papyri Question.***" In it we stated:

For a long period of time the Mormon leaders claimed that the original papyri were burned in the Chicago fire. On November 27, 1967, however, the *Deseret News* announced:

"New York—A collection of papyrus 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*, November 17, 1967, page 1)

We went on to discuss the problems with Facsimile No.1 and its connection with the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

In our March 1968 *Messenger*, no. 17, we announced: "***Fall Of The Book Of Abraham.***" We wrote:

The fall of the Book of Abraham has been brought about by the identification of the piece of papyrus from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham. . . . The identification of this fragment . . . has been made possible by a comparison with Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. . . . Before publishing photographs of the papyri, the *Brigham Young University Studies* had advertised that they were going to print pictures of the Book of Abraham Papyri. When the photographs appeared there was an apology which read: "Our calling them the Book of Abraham Papyri in some of our advertisements did not reflect the official Church identification which is the present title we use: The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri."

The Mormon publication, *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, contains color photographs of the papyri. The fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham is found on page 41—the very last photograph. It is labeled: "XI. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)." . . . The reader will find the word "sensen" on the fourth line of the papyrus identified as the original used by Joseph Smith as the basis for the Book of Abraham. . . . The reader will note that Joseph Smith used less than four lines from the papyrus to make 51 verses in

the Book of Abraham. These 51 verses are composed of more than 2,000 English words! A person does not have to be an Egyptologist to know that it would be impossible to translate over 2,000 words from a few Egyptian characters. (*Salt Lake City Messenger*, March 1968, p. 2)

Messenger numbers 16 through 21 were devoted to the problems of the Book of Abraham, which we later incorporated into a chapter for our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

More recent resources on the problems in the Book of Abraham include the book, *By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus*, and the video, *The Lost Book of Abraham*.

Orson Pratt and Apostolic Succession

In September 1966, no. 9, we discussed Orson Pratt and his original problems with polygamy which caused him to lose his seniority in the council of twelve apostles. When his wife told him that Joseph Smith had approached her to become his plural wife, it caused Pratt to have a nervous breakdown. He was later reconciled to Smith, but his time out of the church affected his apostolic standing. After discussing changes in various printings of the *History of the Church* we stated:

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 president of the Mormon Church. The changes in Joseph Smith's history evidently were made to cover up this fact. . . . Although Orson Pratt was finally able to accept the doctrine of plural marriage, he again ran into trouble when Brigham Young announced the Adam-God doctrine." (*Salt Lake City Messenger*, no. 9, p. 2)

Orson Pratt's struggle with church authority is explored in the new book by Gary Bergera titled, *Conflict in the Quorum: Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith*.

Joseph Smith and Polygamy

The lead article in issue no.12, January 1967, was "***Joseph Smith and Polygamy***" where we announced our book by the same name. In this issue we presented evidence that Smith had married women who already had husbands and even asked various apostles for their wives. We went on to discuss the problems with the 1890 manifesto, showing that it did not end polygamy amongst the leaders. These issues have since been addressed in such books as Todd Compton's *In Sacred Loneliness*, Richard VanWagoner's *Mormon Polygamy: A History* and Newell and Avery's *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*.

Political Kingdom of God

The May 1967 issue, no. 14, of the *Messenger* was titled “*The Mormon Kingdom*.” In it we discussed Smith’s efforts to establish the political kingdom of God on earth, even having himself ordained King, and the secret Council of Fifty. We quoted Apostle John Taylor’s statement:

“We do believe it, and we 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. 7, page 170)

This topic was later covered in D. Michael Quinn’s two volumes, *Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* and *Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*.

LDS Temple Ceremony

In the May 1969 issue, no. 23, page 3, we published probably the first photograph of someone dressed in the complete temple clothing. The article was titled “*Secret Temple Ceremony*.” This included a side-by-side comparison of the wording of the penalties from the 1931 and the 1969 version of the temple ritual. In 1931 the temple participant swore, “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**.”

This was later modified and in 1969 a person swore, “I will never reveal the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with its accompanying name, sign or penalty. Rather than do so I would suffer my life to be taken.” Little did we imagine that this part of the ceremony would be deleted in 1990. This is detailed in our book, *Evolution of the Mormon Temple Ceremony, 1842-1990*.

1970’S - REVELATIONS

Blacks and Priesthood

Our first newsletter for 1970, no. 26, was titled “*Led By Revelation?*” In it we discussed various problems facing Mormonism. We stated:

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

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

This doctrine is derived from Joseph Smith’s “translation” of the Book of Abraham. . . . Since the Book of Abraham contains the verse that is used for “denying the Priesthood to Negroes,” it should be examined with a very critical eye.

Blacks Given the Priesthood

The anticipated revelation giving priesthood to Blacks was announced June 9, 1978, by President Spencer W. Kimball. In the July 1978 *Messenger*, no. 39, we wrote:

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.) . . . As early as 1963 we printed a sheet entitled, “*Will There Be A Revelation Regarding The Negro?*” At the bottom of this sheet we predicted: “If the pressure continues to increase on the Negro question, the leaders of the Mormon Church will probably have another revelation which will allow the Negro to hold the priesthood.”

On page 7 of the July 1978 issue we observed:

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.

For more information on the pressures that were exerted against the LDS Church prior to their changing their prohibition on priesthood for Blacks, and the doctrinal implications, see our books, *Mormons and Negroes* and *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

Joseph Smith’s Occult Connection

Another important topic in the 1970’s was Smith’s involvement with the occult. In Fawn Brodie’s landmark biography of Joseph Smith, *No Man Knows My History*, she wrote about Smith’s early participation in magic, treasure hunts and money digging. One of the issues she raised was the charge that Smith was arrested in 1826 as a result of these activities. In our newsletter for October 1970, no. 29, we discussed the evidence for this claim, citing the account from the 1877 *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, Vol. 3, pages 810-819. We also quoted from the court record as printed in *Fraser’s Magazine*, 1873, p. 229:

“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... That he had a certain stone which he had occasionally looked at to determine where hidden treasures in the bowels of earth were...”

At that time we presented evidence from other historical documents to support the court record. However, since there was no original, LDS scholars continued to dismiss the printed record as an invention of anti-Mormons in the 1870’s.

Wesley Walters, a non-Mormon scholar, became intrigued with this early period of Smith’s life and made numerous trips to New York to search for any documents still in existence in various public offices. While searching through court documents in Norwich, New York, Rev. Walters uncovered the bundles of the 1826 court documents for Bainbridge. On page 3 of our August 1971 newsletter, no. 32, we wrote:

The document which Wesley P. Walters has found is Justice Albert Neely’s bill showing the costs involved in several trials in 1826. The reader can see from the photograph on page 2 that the fifth item from the top mentions the trial of “**Joseph Smith The Glass Looker.**” 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*, Feb. 1873, page 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.”

While further research seems to indicate that this was an examination, or preliminary hearing, not a trial, the importance of the event remains. Another document found by Walters was the bill from Constable Philip DeZeng for his costs relating to Smith’s arrest for this hearing. These documents prove that Joseph Smith was deeply involved in magic during the very period when he was supposedly being prepared by the Angel Moroni for his role as God’s instrument to bring forth a new book of scripture. For more on Walters’ research, see his pamphlets, *Joseph Smith’s Bainbridge, N.Y., Court Trials, New Light on Mormon Origins* and his book with Michael Marquardt, *Inventing Mormonism*.

Secret Polygamy Revelations

Two previously hidden revelations of Joseph Smith came to light in the 1970’s. In the May 1973 newsletter, no. 35, we reported on Smith’s July 27, 1842 revelation to N. K. Whitney instructing him on the ceremony to be said for Smith’s plural marriage to his daughter, Sarah Ann Whitney. The most peculiar part of this event was that Smith had Sarah enter into a pretend marriage with Joseph Kingsbury to hide the fact that she was secretly married to Smith. Michael Marquardt detailed this situation in his pamphlet, *The Strange Marriages of Sarah Ann Whitney to Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Heber C. Kimball*.

The other suppressed revelation was one given by Smith in 1831 and brought to light by Michael Marquardt. In the May 1974 *Messenger*, no. 36, we wrote:

Recently a revelation given by Joseph Smith, which has been suppressed for over 140 years, has come to light. Although Mormon leaders have never published this revelation, they have referred to it and admitted that it was given to Joseph Smith in 1831. They maintain that it supports the doctrine of polygamy and that it is a forerunner to the revelation on polygamy—given July 12, 1843—which still appears in the *Doctrine and Covenants* as Section 132.... Mr. Marquardt learned what appears to be the real reason why the revelation has been suppressed. This is that the revelation commanded the Mormons to marry the Indians to make them a “white” and “delightsome” people.

We published a photo of this revelation with related documentation in our book, *Mormonism Like Watergate?*

Smith’s Diaries and the History of the Church

One of the problems discussed in the January 1979 *Messenger*, no. 40, was the suppression of Joseph Smith’s diaries. On page 3 was an article titled “**Joseph Smith’s Diaries Deal Fatal Blow To History Of Church.**” In this we stated:

Since we now know that more than 60% of Joseph Smith’s *History* was not compiled until after his death, the question arises as to what were the sources which 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 as a source in preparing the history, but we were denied access to them. Finally, in August, 1976, we were able to examine microfilm copies of these important documents . . .

The first thing we noticed is that there are large periods of Joseph Smith's life that are not covered by extant diaries. . . . Only three of the last six years of Smith's lifetime as it appears in the *History of the Church* can be checked against his diaries. The famous Rocky Mountain Prophecy, for instance, appears in the printed history under a date when Joseph Smith did not keep a diary. In *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* we demonstrated that this prophecy was not written in the original manuscript of the *History of the Church* until after Joseph Smith's death. . . .

On page 4 of issue no. 40 we discussed the need for publishing Joseph Smith's diaries. Since it looked like the LDS Church historical department was not planning on publishing them any time soon we worked with Michael Marquardt to publish a typescript of Smith's 1832-34 diary. We went on to state:

In this publication we have also included the first photographs of all six pages of the document which contains Joseph Smith's "strange account" of the First Vision. Mr. Marquardt has done a line-for-line transcription of this important document.

Joseph Smith's diaries were later printed by Signature Books under the title, *An American Prophet's Record: Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*.

B. H. Roberts' Manuscript

In the December 1979 *Messenger*, no. 41, we had an article titled "**B. H. Roberts' Secret Manuscript**." In this issue we stated:

We are often asked how a young man like Joseph Smith could produce a work like the Book of Mormon. As we have already indicated, we feel that the Bible was the main source. Many of the stories found in the Bible were simply rewritten and inserted into the Book of Mormon. Hundreds of passages have been lifted from the New Testament and appear in the Book of Mormon in the style of the King James Version.

Besides the Bible, however, Joseph Smith had access to a great deal of source material. One of the most interesting books 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 read *View of the Hebrews* and evidently became concerned because of the many parallels between it and the Book of Mormon. He prepared a manuscript in which these parallels are listed. Copies of Roberts' list of parallels were "privately distributed among a restricted group of Mormon scholars," . . .

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. Roberts concluded:

"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." (B. H. Roberts' manuscript, quoted in *Salt Lake City Messenger*, Dec. 1979, p. 15)

In 1980 we were the first to publish the entire B. H. Roberts manuscript under the title, *Roberts' Manuscripts Revealed*. His manuscripts have since been printed in a paperback edition by Signature Books under the title, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*.

1980'S - TRYING TIMES

Hofmann's Forgeries

The July 1980 *Messenger*, no. 43, was the start of our coverage of the Mark Hofmann documents. In that issue we quoted the May 3, 1980, *Deseret News*:

"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. . . ."

Unfortunately, this was the beginning of the greatest fraud scheme to hit the LDS Church, which would end with the murder of two Mormons by Mr. Hofmann.

In issue no. 49 we discussed the new Anthon transcript found by Mark Hofmann. It would be over a year before we started to seriously question Mark Hofmann's finds.

The March 1984 *Messenger*, no. 53, bore the title "**Moroni Or Salamander? Reported Find of Letter By Book of Mormon Witness**." We opened with the statement:

For a month or two there have been rumors circulating that an extremely important letter written by Book of Mormon witness Martin Harris has been discovered. Although there has been an attempt to keep the matter quiet until the document has been published, we have been able to piece together the

story and to learn of the remarkable contents of this letter. The document was apparently purchased by Mark Hofmann, a Mormon scholar who has made a number of significant discoveries in the last few years.

We went on to warn:

At the outset we should state that we have 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. The serious implications of this whole matter, however, cry out for discussion.

We quoted the following extract from the purported Harris letter:

"... I found it 4 years ago with my stone but only got it because of the enchantment the old spirit come to me 3 times in the same dream & says dig up the gold but when I take it up the next morning the spirit transfigured himself from a white salamander in the bottom of the hole..."

The September 1984 *Messenger*, no. 54, brought reports of yet more early documents linking Smith with magic. Again, these were documents found by Mark Hofmann. Again we expressed caution:

Although we can see no obvious historical problems with the letter to Stowel, we will withhold judgment concerning its authenticity until we obtain more information concerning it.

We then discussed the newly found 1830 letter by Martin Harris to W. W. Phelps. We concluded with this statement:

We have learned that Mark Hofmann originally tried to sell this letter to the Mormon Church for a large sum of money. When his offer was turned down, he sold it to Steven Christensen. One of the most important things in determining a document's authenticity is finding its pedigree. We have tried to find out where this letter came from but have not achieved any success. Hofmann claims that he has told the buyer (Christensen) the source, but cannot tell anyone else... While we have expressed some doubts about the authenticity of the letter, they are based strictly on the text itself. The results of tests on the document as well as the establishment of a pedigree could alter our conclusions.

In the January 1985 *Messenger*, no. 55, Jerald wrote an article titled "***Dilemma Of A Mormon Critic***." In this article he laid out his concerns that the Harris letter was a forgery. He then quoted from a September 1, 1984, *Deseret News* article:

"... outspoken Mormon Church critics Jerald and Sandra Tanner suspect the document is a forgery, they told the *Deseret News*."

As the months went on more information and documents came forward and then tests were done on the paper that seemed to vindicate them. However, Jerald's doubts continued. In the June 1985 *Messenger*, no. 56, we even had to go to a split editorial, Jerald giving his reasons for believing the Hofmann documents to be forgeries and I [Sandra] giving my reasons for accepting the documents. Little did we realize that in just over three months the whole issue would literally blow up.

In January 1986, no. 59, we issued our largest newsletter, forty pages long. The lead article was titled "***LDS Documents & Murder***." Jerald then related the events of October 15, 1985, when Steven Christensen, a Mormon bishop, document collector and friend of Mark Hofmann, was murdered in front of his downtown Salt Lake City office when he picked up a package loaded with explosives. Later that morning a Mormon woman on the east side of town stopped at the front of her garage to pick up a package. But it, too, was full of explosives and killed her instantly. The next day Mark Hofmann was injured in a bomb blast while trying to enter his car. Unexpectedly, the October 17th issue of the *Deseret News* stated, "police say Hofmann is considered not just a third victim but also a prime suspect in the Tuesday killings. . ." As the investigation continued it became obvious that Mark had concocted a whole series of false documents.

Issues no. 60, 61 and 62 contained unfolding information on the police investigation into the 1985 murders and Hofmann's documents. On February 4, 1986, the Salt Lake City Police Department announced that Mark Hofmann had been charged with two counts of first-degree homicide and 26 counts of fraud and forgery. In April 1986, a preliminary hearing began for Mark Hofmann which lasted into May and was called "the most complex and lengthy preliminary hearing in Utah history." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, May 13, 1986)

The March 1987 *Messenger*, no. 62, carried the heading "***Hofmann Confesses: Admits He Killed Two People And Forged Mormon Documents***."

Hofmann entered into a plea bargain agreement to avoid a possible death sentence. He was sentenced to "one prison term of 5 years to life and three other prison terms of 1-to-15 years for his role in the bombing deaths of two people and the forgeries and frauds that led to those murders." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 24, 1987)

In issue no. 63 we also discussed the implications of the LDS apostles being fooled by Hofmann. On page 12 we wrote:

The Mark Hofmann affair raises some serious questions for the Mormon Church. For instance, in a statement published by the church, the General Authorities now acknowledge that they were the victims of fraudulent activities:

"Like other document collectors throughout the nation, the Church has relied on competent authorities in document acquisition and with the others has been a victim of the fraudulent activities which have now been acknowledged in the courtroom. As earlier announced, the Church acquired forty-eight documents directly from Mark W. Hofmann...." (*The Ensign*, April 1987, page 77)

...That Spencer W. Kimball and all the other leaders of the church were deceived by Hofmann time after time does not seem to square with their claim to have the same powers as the ancient Apostles in the Bible. At least two of the documents they obtained contain revelations purporting to come from the Lord. It now appears that a wolf in sheep's clothing can write revelations comparable to Joseph Smith's and that it is even possible to get them past the scrutiny of the highest officials of the Mormon Church.

For more on this case see our book, *Tracking the White Salamander: The Story of Mark Hofmann, Murder and Forged Mormon Documents*.

Changes in the Book of Mormon

In 1981 the LDS Church released a new printing of their scriptures. However, there had been changes made. In our October 1981 Messenger, titled "*A White Pure And Delightful People*" we noted:

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. . . .

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 delightful people." (2 Nephi 30:6) In the new edition this has been altered to read that the Indians "shall be a **pure** and delightful people." . . .

Besides all the evidence from the original Book of Mormon manuscript and the first two printed editions [that the reading should be "white"] 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 they have changed the verse appearing as 2 Nephi 30:6. . . .

Like Joseph Smith, President Brigham Young taught that the Indians would "become 'a white and delightful people.'" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 143).

Today the LDS Church will not discuss their views on race. They simply side-step the issue by referring people to the 1978 revelation giving priesthood to men of all races. However, this does not explain the church's past racial teachings or racial concepts in their scriptures.

Book of Mormon on Trial

The *Messenger* for May 1987, no. 63, carried the title "*Mormonism And Plagiarism*." In this issue we discussed the possible sources for entries in the Book of Mormon. We compared Alma, chapter 19, with the gospel of John, chapter 11, showing the Book of Mormon dependence on the text of John. Next we compared Moroni 7 with I Corinthians 13 and Moroni 10 with I Corinthians 12. Since the writers of the Book of Mormon were supposedly separated from Israel by an ocean and a different language and culture, one is forced to conclude that the similarities can only be accounted for by plagiarism of the Biblical text.

One Mormon scholar tried to explain the dependency by arguing for an expanded text, with Smith supplying additional material beyond what was on the plates. Our newsletter gave this quote from Blake Ostler:

"Many Book of Mormon doctrines are best explained by the nineteenth-century theological milieu. . . it is likely that Joseph Smith expanded the Book of Mormon. . . some doctrines in the book's pre-Christian sections are simply too developed and too characteristic of the nineteenth century to explain as pre-exilic ideas. The presence of the KJV in the book is, it seems to me, indisputable. . .

"The model of revelation I propose here is that of creative co-participation. It seems to me that the Book of Mormon makes most sense if it is seen as both a revelation to Joseph Smith and as Joseph's expansions of the text. . . It also appears that the usual relationship existing between a translator and an identifiable, objective text did not exist for Joseph Smith, for the ancient text merged with his own thought processes." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1987, pages 76-112)

Further on in the *Messenger* article we concluded:

While Ostler's idea that Joseph Smith did not really realize that he was expanding the text may remove the sinister element in some people's minds, it certainly does not instill confidence in the contents of the Book of Mormon. If Ostler is correct, then it is obvious that at least part of the Book of Mormon is the

work of Joseph Smith's own imagination. The reader will remember that Dr. Hugh Nibley claimed that a "forgery" is defined as "any document which was not produced in the time, place, and manner claimed by it or its publishers." If Ostler's theory is correct, then at least part of the Book of Mormon must be considered as forged material. While it might make some people feel better to believe that Joseph Smith really thought he was translating this material from gold plates, it would not change the fact that the material is spurious.

In July 1989 we published issue no. 72 titled "*A Black Hole In The Book Of Mormon.*" In this issue we showed that after Martin Harris lost the 116 pages of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon Smith was in a panic. Smith's mother remembered him saying, "All is lost! All is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned. . . ." (*Biographical Sketches*, pages 120-123.) We commented:

Joseph Smith's words, "All is lost! All is lost!," show the gravity of the predicament he found himself in. He realized that since he had not retained a copy of the 116 pages, he could **not** reproduce exactly the same material as the first part of the Book of Mormon. . . .

The theft of the 116 pages brought the translation of the Book of Mormon to a grinding halt. Joseph Smith claimed that "both the plates [i.e., the gold plates on which the Book of Mormon was supposed to have been written] and the Urim and Thummim [a sacred device used to translate the plates] were taken" from him. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 23) Later, however, the plates were restored and he received a revelation purporting to be from Jesus Christ. The Lord told him not to retranslate the missing pages because his enemies had altered them. . . the Lord told Joseph Smith that he could translate the small plates of Nephi and they would take the place of what had come from the large plates of Nephi—i.e., the missing 116 pages. . . . It was during this period of intense research in the Book of Mormon that a question began to arise concerning the wars in the Book of Mormon—i.e., why were the accounts of the wars in the later portion of the book given in such great detail, whereas the material replacing the lost 116 pages was so surprisingly sparse with regard to details?

This question aroused our curiosity and we began to look at names, dates, cities, lands, directions, kings, etc. In all of these areas we found an abundance of material in the later books, but scarcely nothing in material coming from the "small plates of Nephi." This discovery eventually led to the formulation of our theory that there is a black hole in the Book of Mormon.

This research was expanded in issue no. 74 and then published under the title, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*. This has since been incorporated into our current book, *Joseph Smith's Plagiarism of the Bible*. Issue no. 63 also announced the 1987 edition of our book, *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?*

Are the Tanners Communists?

Our February 1981 newsletter, no. 45, was captioned "*Communists In Zion? FBI Documents To Be Sought In Court.*" After an employee of the Mormon Church, who was also a former FBI employee, was found to be spying on us, using an alias, we decided to ask the FBI if they had any files on us. We submitted a request under the Freedom of Information Act. In our newsletter we reported:

After a long delay, FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C., provided us with some documents. A great deal of material, however, had been blacked out and eighteen full pages were "withheld entirely." In one of the documents, dated Oct. 4, 1974, a full page of material has been blacked out.

Evidently someone had turned in a report to the FBI in 1974 that we were Communists. One of the FBI documents stated:

"On [material suppressed] telephonically advised that captioned individuals, husband and wife, who reside at 1350 South West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah, are **allegedly communists**. [material suppressed] stated [material suppressed] had been advised the **Tanners** moved to Salt Lake City from California several years ago and that **Jerald J. Tanner** operates the Modern Microfilm Company. [material suppressed] also stated [material suppressed] had been told the **Tanners** have been circulating petitions against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that they have been 'trouble-makers' in that respect."

So there you have it. If one is opposed to the Mormon Church he must be a communist. We suspect this false charge came about due to our public criticism of the LDS Church due to its racial policies.

Mormonism and Magic

The December 1982 *Messenger*, no. 49, was titled "*Mormonism & Magic.*" In it we reproduced a photo of one of the Smith's magic parchments owned by a Smith descendent, and discussed Joseph Smith's Jupiter talisman. This research was expanded in our book, *Mormonism, Magic and Masonry*. Also see D. Michael Quinn's book, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*.

Your gifts help fund our web site.

www.utlm.org

Ministry is Born and is Sued

In the March 1983 *Messenger*, no. 50, we announced that as of January 1, 1983, we had changed from being Modern Microfilm Co. to a non-profit organization, Utah Lighthouse Ministry. In the next newsletter, June 1983, we announced that a lawsuit had been filed against us:

Since publishing the March newsletter things have been very exciting at Utah Lighthouse Ministry. On May 7, 1983, we were served with a summons to appear in court. The paper made it clear that we were being sued for reproducing extracts from William Clayton's diaries. This is the first time that anyone has actually taken legal action against us. . . . The plaintiff in the suit that has been filed against us is Andrew F. Ehat [a BYU student], and the attorney is listed as Gordon A. Madsen, the "authorized agent of Religious Studies Center" at the Mormon Church's Brigham Young University. . . .

The complaint alleges that we violated Mr. Ehat's rights when we produced the book *Clayton's Secret Writings Uncovered*. The suit asks for damages of up to "the sum of \$50,000," and the costs of the action to the plaintiff, . . . The plaintiff also requests that we "be ordered to deliver up on oath for destruction all infringing copies of said notes, together with all plates, matrices and other means for making such infringing copies."

Notice, we were not sued for making false claims but for printing suppressed historical documents in our book, *Clayton's Secret Writings Uncovered: Extracts from the Diaries of Joseph Smith's Secretary William Clayton*.

The Clayton Nauvoo diaries, among other issues, contain information on how Joseph Smith was secretly practicing polygamy and Smith's success in convincing Clayton to also enter the secret practice.

The case continued until March 25, 1984, when Federal Judge A. Sherman Christensen, a BYU graduate, dismissed the copyright claim but awarded Andrew Ehat \$16,000 for what he said was "unfair competition" and damage to Ehat's reputation. We then appealed the decision to the Federal 10th Circuit Court. In the April 1986 *Messenger*, no. 60, we announced:

Finally, on December 30, 1985, the U.S. Court of Appeals For The Tenth Circuit ruled in our favor and completely overturned Judge Christensen's decision.

Our two and a half year ordeal was finally over and we had been vindicated. This whole event is detailed in our book, *The Tanners on Trial*. A larger collection of Clayton diary material has been published in the book, *Intimate Chronicle—Journals of William Clayton*, edited by George Smith.

General Authority Excommunicated

Our opening article in issue no. 73, October 1989, of the *Messenger* related to the discipline of a top LDS leader. The heading read "***Excommunication: Mormon Leader Expelled After Charging Church With Racism.***"

On September 2, 1989, the *Salt Lake Tribune* made this startling announcement:

"The only American Indian general authority in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was excommunicated Friday after claiming church leaders are perpetrating a 'silent, subtle scriptural and spiritual slaughter' of his race.

"George P. Lee, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy since 1975, was stripped of his membership by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 'apostasy' and 'other conduct unbecoming a member of the church.' He is the first Mormon general authority excommunicated in 46 years. . . ."

1990'S - DISPOSING OF PROBLEMS

Changes in the Temple Ceremony

Although the LDS Church has never published their secret temple ritual, many accounts have been printed through the years by former members. Many objected to the oaths of secrecy, oaths of obedience, ridicule of other ministers, etc. Quietly, without any forewarning, the ceremony was revised in April of 1990. Immediately, however, there were reports that the changes had occurred. In our July 1990, no. 75, and November 1990, no. 76, *Messenger* we discussed many of the changes and their implications. In the November 1990 issue we wrote:

Since the temple ceremony was supposed to have been given by revelation to the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith, some members of the church . . . are very disturbed that the current church leaders would make changes in the sacred ritual. Although some Mormon apologists would have us believe that the changes were really very minor or were only made so the ceremony could be shortened, the evidence we present in *Evolution of the Mormon Temple Ceremony* clearly demonstrates that many of the changes were major and affect very important Mormon teachings.

In our last newsletter we noted that in the 1990 version of the temple ceremony the Mormon leaders removed the "penalties" for revealing the secrets. These penalties had previously been considered "most sacred." We have always felt that these penalties were not compatible with Christian teachings and have strongly opposed them in print for over twenty years. . . .

One very important change in the temple ceremony is the removal of a portion of the ceremony in which the Devil hired a Christian minister to preach the "orthodox religion" to the

people. This portion of the ceremony made it clear that in the eyes of the Mormon leaders the orthodox Christian religion was the Devil's religion.

Ritual Abuse

Our November 1991 *Messenger*, no. 80, launched into a totally new topic for us. The lead article was titled "***Ritualistic Child Abuse And The Mormon Church: Mormon General Authority Warns That A Satanic Conspiracy May Be Functioning In The Church.***" We wrote:

On July 2, 1991 we were presented with a copy of a very sensational memo purported to have been written by a General Authority of the Mormon Church. This memo was authored by Glenn L. Pace, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric of the church. It is dated July 19, 1990, and is directed to the "Strengthening Church Members Committee" of the Mormon Church. In the memo Pace states that he has met with "sixty victims" of "ritualistic child abuse," and that "All sixty individuals are members of the Church."...

Bishop Pace strongly believes that "these activities are real and cannot be ignored" (page 6 of his report) and states that "the Church needs to consider the seriousness of these problems" (p. 4). Even though Pace goes so far as to charge that "bishops, a patriarch, a stake president, temple workers, and members of the Tabernacle Choir" may be involved and that "sometimes the abuse has taken place in our own meetinghouses" (p. 5), he does not believe the Mormon Church itself is behind the satanic activity; instead, he feels that "the Church is being used."

We also included in this issue photos of the entire Pace memo. This set off a whole series of news articles and TV reports. This topic was further explored in no. 81. One of the issues we dealt with was how the pre-1990 temple oaths seemed to trigger memories of ritual abuse for many people.

THE INS & OUTS OF MORMONISM

by Dan Carlson

Special Price: \$7.00

The narrative of an Evangelical minister's conversion to Mormonism—recounting his doubts and misgivings. This intriguing story takes you step by step through his investigation process, punctuating his emotions, fears and struggling faith—**and beyond!** Here is part of a testimonial:

I've read many books on Mormonism but have found few that I would actually give to Mormons. [Others] have great and valuable information but the love of Jesus is often veiled. I really appreciate the manner and style you used and would comfortably give it out to Latter-day Saints I witness to. JKH, Cedar City, Utah.

Scholars Excommunicated

The lead article for the November 1993 issue, no. 85, was "***Mormon Inquisition? LDS Leaders Move To Repress Rebellion.***" We wrote:

While the Mormon Church continues to grow at a rapid rate (it now has close to 9,000,000 members), it is obvious that internal problems are also beginning to mount. Consequently, church leaders have decided to take an uncompromising stand against Mormon historians who wish to tell the unvarnished truth about church history and other dissenters within the church.

FIVE EXCOMMUNICATED

In an apparent show of strength just before the October, 1993, General Conference of the Mormon Church, six prominent church members were summoned to stand trial in church courts for apostasy. On October 2, 1993, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported concerning the results of those trials:

"Three men and three women have been charged with apostasy for their writing and speaking about Mormon subjects. Paul Toscano, Avraham Gileadi, D. Michael Quinn, Maxine Hanks and Lavina Fielding Anderson were excommunicated. Lynne Kanavel Whitesides was disfellowshipped..."

On page 6 of no. 85 we quoted the following from the *Arizona Republic*, October 10, 1993:

"Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Steve Benson—first grandchild of Ezra Taft Benson, the ailing head and prophet of the Mormon Church—has resigned from the church... His wife of 16 years, Mary Ann Benson, 36, also resigned... The Bensons said they resigned to protest what they believe is an increasingly intolerant church leadership..."

Tanners Criticized

In June of 1994 we published no. 86 with the title "***The Book Of Mormon: Inspired Scripture Or A Work Of Fiction?***" In this issue we discussed the recent critical reviews of our work, mainly in response to our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, done by scholars at BYU and the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.). While we have no problem with anyone printing a different point of view, we were surprised by some of the disdainful verbiage used, such as referring to us as "our sagacious swamis" and "our gallant pedagogues, the Tanners." While we have published critical material against Mormon claims for years we have tried to be courteous in our comments. If we had ever used such demeaning language in reference to LDS scholars we would have never lived it down. This is just another example of the double standard we encounter in dealing with Mormonism.

The May 1996, no. 90, issue had the title “*Mormon FARMS: Battling The Antimormonoids.*” In this article we observed:

It is obvious that many of those who write for FARMS view us and others who question Mormon doctrine with contempt. Professor Louis Midgley, of Brigham Young University, refers to us as, “the Tanners (those shadows of reality who operate the anti-Mormon Utah Lighthouse Ministry).” . . .

In a footnote on page 139 of [Review of Books on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 5] . . . Professor Midgley refers to Mormon critics as “antimormonoids”: . . . “The more moderate faction of antimormonoids is best illustrated by the late Reverend Wesley P. Walters, who generally tended to be more circumspect on such matters.”

After reviewing other such dismissive statements we quoted a few positive statements from non-Mormon scholar Lawrence Foster, who has published his own criticisms of our work. These statements are from his paper presented at the May 6, 1983, Mormon History Association:

“Jerald and Sandra Tanner are without doubt among the most complex and multi-faceted of all the figures whom I have encountered in Mormon history, past or present. . . .

“Jerald and Sandra Tanner have functioned with regard to Mormonism in much the same way that Ralph Nader has functioned with regard to American business. The Tanners have challenged the Mormon church. If it really believes in its own ideals, . . . If it really believes in its own history, to find out what that history really was. They have challenged the Mormon church . . . to correct its sectarian provincialisms, such as the former policy of excluding Blacks from full church membership. Such challenges have obviously not been popular, yet through them the Tanners have prodded the church to begin, however haltingly and imperfectly to develop a more realistic sense of itself. I would imagine, for example, that much of the flowering of Mormon historical studies in the 1970’s, which has helped to give at least some Mormons a richer and more vital knowledge of their own heritage, has been more than tangentially related to the desire of Latter Day Saint historians to prove the Tanners wrong by showing that a full and honest history of the Latter Day Saints can indeed be written. Much like the irritating grain of sand in the oyster, the result has been a pearl. . . .” (*Salt Lake City Messenger*, May 1996, no. 90, p. 19)

Our August 1998 Messenger, no. 94, carried the title “*A Surprising Development: Mormon Newspaper Publishes Article On The Tanners.*” In the article we wrote:

To our surprise, . . . when the Associated Press writer Kristen Moulton wrote an article about our work the *Deseret News* picked up the story. . . .

The article appeared in the *Deseret News* on May 16, 1998, under the title, **Tanners Are Wellspring Of Documents. . . .**

The article contains several Mormon scholars’ comments on our work:

“‘As far as LDS history goes, there’s no one out there who has the documents mastered as they do,’ said Peterson, chairman of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies at BYU. ‘They occasionally have forced us (LDS Church defenders) to sharpen a line of reasoning or come up with a line of reasoning.’ . . . Historian Michael Quinn says the Tanners’ contribution of early documents is often overlooked.”

2000’S - LEGAL ISSUES

Lawsuit Over LDS Church Handbook

The lead article in the February 2001 issue, no. 96, was titled, “*LDS Church Sues Ministry.*” It started with this comment:

At approximately eleven in the morning, October 13, 1999, Sandra Tanner was working in the Utah Lighthouse Ministry Bookstore when she was surprised to encounter two well-dressed men who turned out to be representatives of the Mormon Church’s law firm. They served legal papers on Utah Lighthouse Ministry and the Tanners, ordering us to immediately remove some material that was posted on our Ministry’s web site [www.utlm.org]. The material in question was limited portions of the *LDS Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*, (1998).

On page 2 of no. 96 we gave some background:

On July 15, 1999, we posted on Utah Lighthouse’s web site . . . a page called “How to Remove Your Name from the LDS Records.” Included with this entry was most of chapter 10 from the *Church Handbook of Instructions*, along with a few quotes from two other chapters. This was done strictly as a public service to answer the many questions we receive on this issue. There was no charge for this information.

While copyright laws are somewhat complicated we felt that what we had posted from the *Handbook* was within the guidelines of fair use.

The irony in all this is that by the very fact of making a legal issue about posting parts of the *Handbook*, the LDS Church made the general public aware that there was a secret handbook regulating church disciplinary action. This led to people all over the world searching on the Internet for copies. Their legal action amounted to blowing feathers in the wind and never being able to retrieve them.

Both times that legal action has been taken against us it has been over releasing suppressed documents, not printing falsehoods. On page 4 of no. 96, February 2001, we stated:

On December 6, 1999, the judge disregarded our arguments against the Temporary Restraining Order and issued a Preliminary Injunction, which greatly expanded the issues and charged us with Contributory Infringement [aiding others in violating the Church's copyright]. The Injunction was to stay in effect until the lawsuit was resolved.

This Injunction, dealing with posting links on a web site, became a national concern among Internet users. The *New York Times*, Dec. 10, 1999 stated:

"Jessica Litman, . . . an expert on intellectual property, said she believes the court was wrong to issue a preliminary injunction. . . . Litman asserted, the mere posting of a Web address could not amount to actively encouraging someone else's infringement."

When we appealed the Injunction to the Federal 10th Circuit Court we agreed to meet with a court mediator to see if a solution could be reached before setting a court date. We entered into negotiations with the 10th Circuit Court Mediator and the LDS lawyers in February of 2000 and finally reached an agreement on November 30, 2000. We agreed to limit our use of the Handbook and the Church agreed to the dissolving of the Preliminary Injunction. We did not pay them any money and we did not admit to any wrong doing.

Another point of irony is that the international attention given the lawsuit helped quadruple the number of people coming to our web site.

Polygamist Abuse Cases

The October 2001 issue, no. 97, highlighted the ongoing legal hassle over the current practice of polygamy in Utah today. The lead article was titled "***Polygamist Sentenced To Five Years In Prison.***" We opened with this statement:

Tom Green, a modern-day polygamist in Utah, was given a five-year prison sentence on August 25, 2001. Green might never have come to the attention of the state if he had kept a low profile. Instead, he appeared on various television programs and granted numerous interviews, explaining his polygamist life-style.

The newsletter continued with accounts of child abuse in the Kingston polygamist group and in the LDS Church.

Mountain Meadows Massacre

The May 2002 *Messenger*, issue no. 98, dealt with the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the ongoing cover-up of the event, including the rushed reburial of some of the victims' bones accidentally unearthed in 2000. Since then Will Bagley's landmark book, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* has been published. In the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Feb. 20, 2003, page C1, is an article announcing a new documentary film on the massacre, *Burying the Past: Legacy of the Mountain Meadows Massacre*, produced by Brian Patrick of the University of Utah.

Arrington Papers Censored

Another act of censoring was the October 2001 effort of the LDS Church to suppress items in the Leonard Arrington collection at Utah State University. In issue 98 we wrote:

Then, on Nov. 4, 2001, University of Utah Professor Dean May wrote to the *Tribune* protesting that the Arrington papers did not belong to the LDS Church and should be given to the Utah State University as Arrington requested (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Editorial page p.AA3).

In a letter to the *Tribune*, Steven Sorensen, director of LDS Church Archives, argued that Arrington's papers included items owned by the LDS Church and they should be returned to them. "Among those items were some 70 years of minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, temple records, employment files, and other materials considered by church officials to be sacred, private or confidential." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 11, 2001, page AA11)

One wonders how the church determined what was "sacred, private, or confidential"? Or was the real criteria whether the documents were potentially embarrassing? After all, most of this material is about 150 years old and some of it is already available in college libraries.

Book of Mormon - History or Fiction?

One of the articles in the November 2002 newsletter, no. 99, was "***Why Not Accept the Book of Mormon?***" We wrote:

The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported on President Gordon B. Hinckley's talk at the October 2002 LDS Conference:

He [President Hinckley] also wondered why other Christians do not accept the Book of Mormon, . . .

"I would think they would be looking for anything and everything that would establish without question the reality and the divinity of the savior of the world," Hinckley said. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 7, 2002, page A6)

President Hinckley seems to have overlooked the basic problem. If the Book of Mormon is not a genuine historical document, it does not provide any additional proof or witness to the reality of Jesus.

DNA Versus The Book of Mormon

Problems relating to the historical claims of the Book of Mormon took a new direction this century over the issue of DNA research.

On March 17, 2000, a Mormon scientist in Australia posted on the Internet his struggle with DNA studies and its implications for the Book of Mormon.

... My name is Simon Southerton. I am married to Jane and we are the parents of five children. ... We left the Church together towards the end of 1998. At the time I was a bishop in Brisbane, Australia. ... During my PhD study I became fascinated with the power of molecular genetics to answer biological questions. I took the opportunity to learn many of the fundamentals of DNA technology in the stimulating and challenging environment of the John Innes Institute. ...

At the end of January 1998 I took time off work and spent two months studying for an exam to enter a graduate medicine degree at the University of Queensland. The first subject I studied was biology. ... Soon after completing my study I read an article on the Flood and the Tower of Babel in the January 1998 issue of the *Ensign* magazine. ... I concluded that the Internet was the quickest and most readily available avenue for me to find out what other Latter-day Saints thought about the Flood. ...

Without doubt the article that had the most impact on me was a statement published by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. concerning the Book of Mormon. In very strong language this statement spoke of a complete lack of evidence for any connection between the Old World and the New World. The strength of this statement jolted me. Scientists rarely make such dogmatic statements unless they have plenty of evidence (or none in this case) to back them up. I had been told in seminary that the Smithsonian had been known to use the Book of Mormon in their research. The statement utterly refuted this claim. ... I believed the Book of Mormon was true and that Hebrew civilization had occurred on the American continent. ... With this in mind I decided to look for myself for research that supported Old World migrations to the Americas.

I began searching for research papers having some connection with American Indians or Polynesians. Because I was familiar with plant genetics I became interested in recent research on the DNA of American Indians. The principles of DNA analysis are applicable to all living things so it was relatively easy to jump from the plant to the animal kingdom. I rapidly accumulated many scientific papers comparing the mitochondrial DNA of American Indians from numerous tribes with the mitochondrial DNA of other populations around the world. Mitochondrial DNA is passed from mother to child each generation. It is essentially a female genealogical lineage, or a maiden name if you like, stored in the mitochondrial DNA sequence. This part of the total DNA genome is used for population studies in many animal species. ...

In the last decade scientists from several research groups had tested the mitochondrial DNA of over 2000 American Indians from about a hundred tribes scattered over the length of the Americas. It soon became apparent to me that about 99% of their female lineages were brought into the Americas in excess of 12,000 years ago. Almost all of these lineages are most closely related to those of people in Asia, particularly in southern Siberia near Mongolia. Several tribes in Mesoamerica (which included Aztecs and Mayans) had been tested and all but a couple of individuals out of about 500 had mitochondrial DNA of Asian origin. The small fraction of Native American lineages that were not from Asia appeared to originate in Europe, most likely Spain. ...

For two weeks I wrestled with the research. I collected more and more research papers but failed to find anything that supported migration of Jewish people before Columbus. Enough is known about the DNA lineages of Jews to be very confident that they are clearly distinguishable from Asian lineages. They would also be easily identifiable if they were present in the Americas in significant numbers. I struggled with the complete discrepancy between the research and my understanding of the Book of Mormon and the doctrine of the Lamanites. The Book of Mormon describes the occurrence of Hebrew civilizations in the Americas numbering in the millions. It is clear that the victorious Lamanites would have numbered in the millions in about 400 AD. I could not understand how such large numbers of people could have escaped detection.

... As much as I wanted the Book of Mormon to be true, I suddenly knew that it wasn't. It might be full of some remarkable stories and scriptural writings, but it wasn't history about real people. My belief in the Book of Mormon was the foundation for my belief in Mormonism. When it was shattered it brought a lot down with it. I immediately knew that I must be released from my calling. ...

I became aware for the first time in my life about many other issues surrounding the origin of the Church. I was particularly troubled to learn more about the Book of Abraham, another Latter-day Saint scripture originating with Joseph Smith. Joseph claimed that it was a direct translation from some papyri written by the hand of Abraham. I learned that the papyri were thought to have been destroyed in a fire in Chicago, however, they were discovered in a museum in New York in 1966 and returned to the Church the following year. ... Pictures of the papyri were published in the *New Era* and *Egyptologists*, including several Latter-day Saints, translated the text. They were found to be nothing more than common funeral texts that were traditionally placed with mummies at burial and they dated to about 100 AD. This event occurred just before I was baptized into the Church. Thirty years later I had never heard anything about it. ...

There were large volumes of other "interesting Church issues" that I discovered. With my eyes now open the difficulties with the Book of Mormon seem endless. They range from a complete absence of all the Old World crops and animals mentioned in the text through to the absence of metallurgy,

horse drawn wheeled vehicles and any Hebraic or Egyptian-like writings in pre-Columbus America. With the origin of the Book of Abraham exposed, and my faith in the Book of Mormon so recently shattered, I have no faith in anything that the Mormon Church claims. At almost every turn, facts are distorted and truth concealed in order to maintain the faith of most inquiring Latter-day Saints. . . .

My brother and his wife and five children left at about the same time and are now happily attending another church. The DNA evidence was just another problem in a long list of issues that seriously troubled them about the church. My brother had served in many senior leadership positions including seven years as a bishop, as a stake young men president and as a member of a mission presidency. His wife had known for years that the Church was not true. She had realized that many of her friends shared just as strong feelings about the churches that they attended. She couldn't continue to feel that they were any less important in God's eyes, or that their feelings were any less valid. She struggled for years to hide this from the extended family group. They were both greatly relieved when all their children left with them. . . .

(The entire text of Dr. Southerton's statement can be read at <http://www.exmormon.org/whylft125.htm>)

Later that year, the *Salt Lake Tribune* ran an article entitled "BYU Gene Data May Shed Light On Origin Of Book of Mormon's Lamanites." The article stated:

Generations of Mormons grew up with the notion that American Indians are descended from a lost tribe from the House of Israel...The problem is mainstream science has failed to back that story. Instead, archaeologists, linguists and genetic experts outside Mormon culture say all the evidence points to Asia as the place from which American Indians originated. . . .

But most scientists outside LDS culture argue that if a band of Israelites did come to America 2,600 years ago, they left neither a linguistic nor an archaeological trace. . . .

Past DNA studies at other universities have shown no evidence of a connection between American Indians and Israel, notes Simon Southerton, a former Mormon bishop and molecular biologist who has extensive background in DNA research. He predicts BYU data will show the same. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 30, 2000)

This issue surfaced again in December, 2002, when Thomas Murphy, lifetime Mormon and chairman of the Edmonds Community College Anthropology Department in Washington, was threatened with excommunication over his research on DNA and Book of Mormon issues. *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported:

In December, the local stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints scheduled a disciplinary council and

informed Murphy he faced the possibility of excommunication, or expulsion from the church. But the president of the stake—a district made up of a number of wards—indefinitely postponed the council after the debate hit the press and supporters staged rallies across the country. . . .

"Sin, Skin and Seed: The Mistakes of Man in the Book of Mormon" is the title of Murphy's talk today at the UW. . . .

The "sin" and "skin" in his lecture refer to Scripture linking skin color and behavior. The Book of Mormon states ancient Israelites came to the Americas about 600 B.C. and divided into two groups: the light-skinned, civilized Nephites and the dark-skinned, corrupt, Lamanites, who eventually defeated the Nephites. These Lamanites, according to the modern introduction to the Book of Mormon, are the principal ancestors of Native Americans.

In fact, says Murphy, DNA data, as well as anthropological studies, indicate American Indians are descended from Northeast Asians who migrated across the Bering Sea between 7,000 and 50,000 years ago.

The stir over his findings began when he published them on a Web site run by Mormon intellectuals and in a collection of essays on the Book of Mormon called "*American Apocrypha*."...

Murphy was frankly please with the publicity and subsequent response. He's received ... missives from Native Americans who say they're happy to finally see someone addressing the issue of racism in Mormon text. (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Jan. 13, 2003, page B3)

In a new video titled *DNA vs. The Book of Mormon*, several other scientists have joined with Dr. Southerton and Professor Murphy in a discussion of the problems DNA research poses for Book of Mormon claims. You can see clips from the video on the Internet at the following address: www.mormonchallenge.com. For a free copy of this video, see the special offer on the first page of this newsletter. Thomas Murphy also wrote a chapter on DNA problems for the book, *American Apocrypha*. Other important books dealing with Book of Mormon problems are *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, *Joseph Smith and the Origins of the Book of Mormon* and *Creation of the Book of Mormon*.

LDS Scholar Faces the Issues

After years of wrestling with the problems, Grant Palmer, retired LDS Institute of Religion director, has just published his research on the founding claims of Mormonism in *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*. His extensive treatment of questions of Book of Mormon authorship, translation process, modern influences, the witnesses, as well as a chapter on priesthood problems and the First Vision, presents a well-balanced, critical look at the beginnings of Mormonism. This is a great book to give to your LDS friends.

Mr. Palmer concludes:

That Joseph Smith literally translated ancient documents is problematic. He mistranslated portions of the Bible, as well as the Book of Joseph, the Book of Abraham, the Kinderhook plates, and a Greek psalter. There is no evidence that he ever translated a document as we would understand that phrase.

Furthermore, there are three obstacles to accepting the golden plates as the source of the Book of Mormon. First, although these records were said to have been preserved for generations by Nephite prophets, Joseph Smith never used them in dictating the Book of Mormon. . . .

Second, much of the Book of Mormon reflects the intellectual and cultural environment of Joseph's own time and place. We find strands of American antiquities and folklore, the King James Bible, and evangelical Protestantism woven into the fabric of the doctrines and setting.

Third, the only other conceivable reason for preserving the gold plates would have been to show the witnesses a tangible artifact. . . . Yet, the eleven witnesses gazed on and handled the golden plates the same way they saw spectral treasure guardians and handled their elusive treasures, in the spirit, not in the flesh.

The remaining foundational experiences are the first vision, the angel Moroni, and priesthood restoration. These appear to have developed from relatively simple experiences into more impressive spiritual manifestations, from metaphysical to physical events. (*An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*, by Grant H. Palmer, pages 259-260)

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS AND EMAILS

Aug. 2002. Thank you for a wonderful website, so informative and well done. I used to be a member of the LDS church until 2001 when I asked to be released - something that I have no regrets over; however I am still dealing with the guilt and brainwashing of 20 something years. That is not something easily dismissed. . . . Thank you.

Aug. 2002. So what exactly makes you better than any Mormon? What is your obsession with that religion? Are you profiting from the exploits of this church? . . . Would the savior spend his time tearing down other people's religions? . . . What talents has he given you? Have you wasted your talents? Is it possible you are the one in the wrong?

What would it take to change your mind? Do you feel good about what you do? . . . Did you learn who God is? Has Christ become your savior and friend? . . . Will he embrace you and tell you that you have been his good and faithful servant? Will he??? Does the spirit whisper peace in your ears now? Or do you feel uneasy and upset? Why so? I hope you don't feel that reading this has in any way wasted your time. -with love your brother

Aug. 2002. I want to write to express my appreciation for the work your organization is doing. I joined the church approximately 12 years ago, but experienced my first doubts during my initial Temple visit. For years I remained a loyal, (silent), member standing next to my devoted wife.

Three years ago I began to really study. This I had to do in secrecy, as you well know the implications of voicing doubt. . . . I have had countless hours of meetings with bishops, stake presidents and local church historians. They keep passing me along from "scholar" to "scholar", in the hopes that someone can answer the questions. Most of the time I feel I would like to stay a member of this church for my wife and children, and in the hopes that perhaps I can exact more change from within.

However, I have been told to not talk to other members of the church about truths I have discovered, with the threat of excommunication awaiting me if I do not comply. I am sure you can certainly relate to what my life is currently like. I vacillate from feeling like I am about to go crazy, to wanting to run away like mad, to desperately wanting to help my wife and children.

Well, anyway . . . having other people who understand, (like you), surely helps people out here like me, (and there are plenty of us), get through the rough times. Thank you so much and God bless your work.

Aug. 2002. . . . I see no reason, I see no facts, to bad so sad. What a waste of time What a wasted life. . . . Get a life . . . Make every day count Make a difference Do something good. Be a positive influence to the human race. Love one another, HATE and FEAR should not drive your life. . . .

Aug. 2002. This is in regards to my recent study into Mormonism. I have been a member of the church for months now. There is much deception in getting someone to join the church, by only telling people only what the church wants them to know. Later on, after baptism we learn this incredible story that is so off the wall. If members don't believe this story, they are looked down upon in the church.

By looking at the material that you and others have made available, I have been able to look up contradictions in the book of mormon. Thank you for posting this information. Please keep this up. Other people thinking about joining the church have a right to know what is going on behind closed doors. . . .

I thank you for helping me find Christ, but most of all I thank Jesus for dying for my sins.

Aug. 2002. I thank you very much for helping me find Christ. I was once a Mormon and visited your web site four months ago and started reading at first I rejected this web site. It took months for me to accept Christ and leave the Mormon Church.

Sept. 2002. I write out of the loss of a lovely woman that was taken in by Mormonism. She is married now . . . She is heart broken because I did not join the church. And I am heart broken too. I don't think there will ever be anyone else for me in my life. I ask that your group will pray for R_____ that Jesus will show her the truth, and she will have the courage to contact you for guidance. Thank you. I am continually praying for your ministry and for both of you. God bless.

Sept. 2002. Thank you so much for writing me back, I am sure you have tons of people writing you. . . . I have only been seeking the truth for a little over a month now, but am hard pressed to continue believing in the LDS church.

I have read Mormon America, and have checked your as well as other websites, but the thing that really turned me was the Bible. Now I am contending with separating myself from my entire family and the community I have been in my whole life. I am scared to death at the prospect of having this division with my family and feel a need to seek "family" outside of them who I can go to for support and strength. I am married and do have an incredibly supportive husband, but he was not raised in the Church or was ever a part of it, so he doesn't quite understand what I am going through. . . .

Sept. 2002. . . . Your papers seem to be written toward the non-critically thinking person and generally not very scholarly in their approach. My question is, what type of market are you aiming for? If you ever need help writing something addressed to a deeper thinking group of people, I would love to read and critique your work. But then again, I suppose there is much better money to be made in selling to simpler minds and groups who need 'something to hate'.

Sept. 2002. Many historical references by other non-religious writers of the day and many archaeological finds have proven the Bible to be the Word of God. From what I have read on any of the mormon sites, there is not a shred of evidence that the book of mormon has any proof, historical or material.

Sept. 2002. Subject: that is bull!! As a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I tell you that you internet site is full of false teachings and the Church dose not teach these things, Just because you were excommunicated for who nows what dose not mean the church is at falt Please stop publishing these lies.

LDS CLAIMS

Under the Searchlight

Recorded Message (801) 485-4262

(Messages are three to five minutes)

Sept. 2002. Thank you for a most wonderful site, opened my eyes. I left the lds many years ago after found many faults on my own, did not know there was all this info available. I am trying to get a mormon colleague to read this site as well—www.exmormon.org. thank you for your studies.

Sept. 2002. I've got to be honest. I think this site is full of lies. I haven't ever seen anything like this with the mormon church. You should be careful about what you say to others concerning beliefs you know nothing about, or in the case of the Tanners, things you felt strong enough about to joining the mormon church, and now are trying to destroy it. I don't see the validity of the material here, and I think you should rethink calling yourselves followers of Christ. You are not. Regretfully . . .

Sept. 2002. Thank you for caring for so many who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. I have a son who in a state of mental confusion joined that Mormon Church. . . . He feels to leave he will be lost in Mormon darkness and terrible things will happen. Just talking to him about Jesus doesn't seem to change his fear.

Oct. 2002. Greetings. . . . I am still fairly new in the LDS Church and already have serious doubts and questions about it being the True Church.

Whenever I have raised questions in Gospel Principles class or to my Bishop, it is like I am have committed a crime by even having doubts or concerns about Church Doctrine or Practice. A Christian friend of mine turned me on to the video; "The Mormon Puzzle", and that is how I found out about your ministry. I am desperately seeking the truth. Thanks. Sincerely a confused LDS.

Oct. 2002. Why do you two hate me so much? You are trying so hard to destroy a good thing here. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is wonderful, and true. But Besides that, you two would be doing a greater good by trying to help others. Imagine what you could accomplish if you put forth as much effort to stop child abuse as you are to destroying a church that loves our savior. I know nothing I say can change your mind . . . but I want you to know that even though you are set on hurting myself and others. . . . Including children . . . I still love you because Jesus does.

Oct. 2002. . . . This note is written for all the verbal abuse you guys suffer daily at the hands of those who hate you for taking your stand for the truth, (5 people against the millions). I'm proud of your stand in Christ and for having faith in the words of God and not in the words of man. I admire and love you two and your efforts to reach those who are seeking the truth of God and in helping to bring those who are seeking Him out of spiritual darkness and into the love and light of Christ.

Oct. 2002. I left the church in 1995 when I was 16 because of a feeling I had. I have been researching the churches history lately and of course I happened upon Utah Lighthouse Ministry. What a great site! I wish I knew about ULM when I was younger! . . .

Oct. 2002. I have written you before . . . Since my last correspondence, our entire family of 10 has left the Mormon Church officially and all have been saved through our Lord, Christ Jesus. Now that we have been saved and found a church family, we have been approached by numerous people requesting that we instruct a class on facts about Mormonism—and the culture of the church. We are going to pray about this and feel strongly that there is a need for this to be done locally here in Missouri.

Oct. 2002. I just wanted to share with all of you that today I accepted Jesus Christ as my savior and accepted his grace in a verbal prayer with my husband. I had been waiting until I felt sure; and also until I felt prompted by God that it was the right time. It first became clear to me on Sunday that it was time and so after some deep reflection and prayer I gave myself up to Christ today. My heart is full and overflowing and I feel on the verge of tears for how grateful I am, mostly for Christ coming in to my life, but also to all of you for being there and for supporting me. Thank you so much for welcoming me into your circle. Today I am going to start the process of having my name removed from the LDS records and then I am going to get baptized. Once again, thank you. God Bless. . . .

Nov. 2002. I am still in shock of what I have seen. I can not believe that so many have fallen into satans trap. Doesnt anyone know that the tanners are one satans greatest tools. Please people read the doctrine ask in faith and then tell us it is not true dont lie to yourselves. Please as GOD he will forgive you for falling into this trap. Dont let your salvation be ruined. My friends please dont be blinded by these writings. The church will always exist please dont be mislead. (Your friend)

Nov. 2002. It cracks me up to hear the hate mail you receive from all the faithful Mormons out there. I have been reading your Salt Lake messenger mailer for years and not once has a devout Mormon has ever had enough ammo to contradict your writings. All they say in their narrow minds Is leave the state or quit bashing our beliefs and you are going to rot in Hell. . .

Boy, Thats the real Christian way..... All I believe in is the golden rule . . . nothing more. God said to belive in me and thats all . . . Oh by the way I am a white very wealthy man and have a loving wife and children . . . And you guys out there thought you had to be Mormon to have that . . . Pity on you MO's

Nov. 2002. Your web site is full of inaccuracies and lies. If you think you have to dispute the Book of Mormon at least get your facts right.

Nov. 2002. Unsubscribe me from your mailing list immediately. Your time spent hatefully criticizing other religious faiths is both morally wrong and proof that your organization is in no way Christian oriented. Why not use your time more constructively for the common good? Your work is only creating hatred.

Nov. 2002. Joseph Smith was a true prophet why don't you just pray and ask God if this is so before coming to your erroneous conclusions and misrepresentations of facts. You will meet him someday after this life and then shall you know that he is a servant of God.

Nov. 2002. . . . Don't seek further to persecute something you know absolutely nothing about. You have no more light to base your findings on, for your light has become darkness and your hope is vain. So shall your lives be as the Nephites of another time. Your pride has become your downfall. May you find repentance in time or some sort of Glory when your lives are over. . . .

Nov. 2002. Sounds like you guys are really scared

Dec. 2002. Do not despair God is on the side of the righteous. You guys must have the Mormons very scared! I notice the Mormons never counter with facts, just nasty remarks. God love you guys. The wealthy powerful Mormons against your little ministry - I wonder what God thinks about that? He always helped the downtrodden trying to tell the truth.

Dec. 2002. . . . Everyone thinks they have it all, even I do sometimes. I have read through much of your materials and applaud your thorough research containing old copies of old anti-mormon books and research.

However, I must say that such information is for the weak minded and written by the weak minded (thats my opinion as well, and will always be). I say that because the church will continue to be one of the fastest growing church in the world, and will continue to build the Kingdom of God no matter how hard you try to convert people to your little religion.

. . . Nothing can convince you otherwise because your faith is based on the behaviors of other churches or based on facts published by media, or some crime committed by a certain person. Faith based on facts is no faith at all. . . . See you in the next life

Dec. 2002. Hello i would LOVE to thank you both for you're wonderful book "changing world of mormonism" I left the church 6 months back and knew A LOT as it was . . . after reading up to and part way of chapter 6 in your book i am blown away.

my mind can not understand how members such as Mr. H Nibly can defend the church knowing what he has or the other Church Apologist....my personal opinion is that when ones comes to this knowledge how can one remain in mormonism. . . . i now feel it my mission to inform others of my finding and tell them of your books. . . . i am so THANKFUL that i have come across your books . . . my mother had a few when she left the church. . . Thank you for all you're hard work and studies to help inform those who are like me. . . who knew much BUT know there is deeper facts to uncover!

Dec. 2002. It is sad to hear most of you have lost your testimony, a matter that you must explain when coming before God when we are judged. Will you refer Him to your website or will you be able to explain; what, where, when, how, and why you denied the truth that came to you through the Holy Spirit? I hope so for I would not care to see you weep with untold guilt standing before God. Surely the work of your life has aided Lucifer in supporting many souls to let go the Iron Rod for the words of man. . . . What kind of legacy will all this criticism bring? Someone is right and someone is wrong, either its a few dozen or millions? . . .

Dec. 2002. I have looked over your website and found it to be quite lame. Your columns were laced with blatant falisies that only imbusels would ever believe. One, out of many, I would like to point out is the plagerism column. Where in the column they are trying to prove that the Book of Mormon was plagerised they circle common words like spirit and phrases that are written in an entirely different manner than that of the other. Of course you are going to find similarities in the writtings they are both writting about the same subject. My intent on visiting your website was to investigate the Mormon religion not come out feeling as dumb as you blatantly are.

Dec. 2002. I am an ex-Mormon who has been saved by the Grace of God. I have spent many years studying sites like yours. Your site is one of the best I've seen. What a great blessing you are. The points made about many of the LDS doctrines and beliefs are wonderful. Very easy to understand and easy to discuss with LDS friends. Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your site!! God Bless.

NEW TITLES

- Conflict in the Quorum: Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith*..... \$22.50**
 Edited by Gary Bergera - Signature Books
- An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*..... \$22.50**
 Grant Palmer - Signature Books
- Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship (Second edition)*..... \$20.00**
 David John Buerger - Signature Books
- A Christian Woman's Guide to Understanding Mormonism* \$11.00**
 Donna Morley - Harvest House Publishers
- DNA vs. The Book of Mormon (Video)*..... \$20.00**
 Living Hope Ministries

**Mail Orders:
 Please add 15% mailing charge**

*Utah Lighthouse Ministry is a non-profit organization and donations are tax-deductible.
 Donations may be made with cash,
 check or credit card.
 Thank you for your support.*

**UTAH LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY
 PO BOX 1884
 SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84110**

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Salt Lake City, Utah
 Permit No. 3745