

WHAT EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW  
ABOUT THE HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND PRACTICE  
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

- PART TWO -

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## INTRODUCTION

The response to the 61-page paper that I did on Mormonism last February has been interesting. Various individuals have, so to speak, taken the football and run with it on their own, so that more people than I could hope to meet have had opportunity to hear for the first time and consider the facts and arguments of my paper.

There has also been a negative response to my paper. Mormons ask me: "Why do you feel that you have to attack us as a church when we don't attack Lutherans as Lutherans, or Catholics as Catholics, etc.?" They say: "If you want to find out about Lutheranism, ask a Lutheran ... if you want to find out about Mormonism, ask a Latter-day Saint. Why should a Lutheran feel that it is necessary for him to go around telling other people about Mormonism?"

My answer is that it was Joseph Smith who started the conflict, and that I am only defending my Christian faith. Joseph Smith, Jr. was born in New York State on Dec. 23, 1805. He said in his Testimony that early in the spring of 1820 he received his first vision, seeing the Father and the Son. "...I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right - and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in His sight; that those professors were all corrupt..."

This remains the opinion of Mormonism today. Though they say that they don't attack individual denominations, they do contradict the basic doctrines of Christianity, "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), the scriptures which they "wrest ... unto their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16). My conflict is not with individual Mormons and their desire to please God. My conflict is with the doctrines of "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" which, as this paper demonstrates, are blinding millions of people to the truth of Jesus Christ - who He is, and how salvation is our's as God's gift to sinners through faith in Him.

Also, with regard to the opinion of Mormons that they should be the only ones to say anything about LDS beliefs, we have the following letter printed in The Utah Evangel (August, 1982):

"...When we left the LDS Church the end of July, I was shocked ... that after 22 years of sincerely believing in and giving my life to the Mormon church to find out that ... I, and so many others, had been deceived. ... The Mormon church looks and sounds and acts so Christian. The people are so sincere and trying so hard to do what is right ... It all sounds and looks so good. But the problem is that I bet 99% of the Mormon people don't really know what the doctrines of the church really are. I know I sure didn't! ... There is so much that is being hid by the leaders of the LDS Church from the Mormon people. And the leaders warn the church members not to read anything that is anti-Mormon. They say it is of the devil and will destroy your faith and testimony, but I am sure they are afraid if people read it they will begin to think for themselves and ask some questions ... and the church really can't stand that kind of investigation ..."

Can we trust the LDS missionaries to tell us everything that we might want to know about the history or doctrines of Mormonism? The fact is that at the present time there is a great controversy within the LDS between Mormon scholars and writers, who want to publish real history, and Mormon leaders who would prefer to see only faith-promoting articles that would present Mormonism in the best light possible, ignoring less attractive aspects of LDS history, doctrine and practice.

Still on the subject of the negative response to my paper -- This summer I received a letter of testimony, dated July 31, 1982, from an LDS "zone leader," signed by him and three of the missionaries then serving under him ("in accordance with 2 Cor. 13:1-2"). In the last of five paragraphs he wrote:

"I solemnly declare to you this day that either you cease your 'unauthorized' literary attacks on the church, or you will stand before the Judgement bar of the Almighty God with no advocate for redemption. ..."

This well-meant warning doesn't bother me, for "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). As a believer in the undeserved forgiveness promised by God to every sinner by grace, received through faith in His Son's perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, I do "have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1).

But I am concerned about the lack of Bible knowledge on the part of those who claim to be the best teachers of God's truth, as shown in the fourth paragraph of the letter that I received:

"I know now, that if a man simply had more intellect than an ant or the understanding of a clod of mirey clay in a primordial (sic) swamp, he could see through your 'antiChrist' like behaviors. Paul spoke of such behavior: Acts 9:5. Since Christ nor the Apostles ever tore down other churches, I would venture to say that you are not serving them nor following very closely their example."

The last sentence in the quotation above deserves our close attention. Did Jesus and His apostles never tear down other churches? Did they never find fault with other systems of belief? I know that they did, and for the same reason that a surgeon excises a tumor.

In the following section we will see what Jesus had to say to the most respected religionists of His day, and we will explore how what He said would apply to the doctrine and practice of Mormonism today.

#### JESUS' EXAMPLE IN CONDEMNING FALSE DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

How could He who says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), not warn against that which is not true and ways that lead to eternal death rather than eternal life? In the New Testament we find Jesus warning against the false doctrine and practice of many who represented the "church" of His day.

There were the lawyers, men trained in the law, especially the law of Moses. The greatest spiritual concern in their lives is seen in the question that a certain lawyer asked Jesus: "Master, what

"shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25). The lawyers, elsewhere known as scribes, were the guardians of Jewish truth from the time of Ezra (Ezra 7:6) following the return of the Jews from their Babylonian captivity. The captivity did what God intended for the Jews; after it they took great pains to avoid idolatry. But as centuries passed before the birth of Christ, the lawyers or scribes, and with them the Pharisees, began to reason that since God gave them His commandments, the law, then He must have meant for them to gain eternal life for themselves by their faithfulness in obedience. That is why the lawyer asked: "...what shall I do ...?" (Luke 10:25).

Jesus condemned the self-righteousness of the lawyers (Luke 11:45-52), telling them (v. 52): "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." (See also Mat. 23:13).

God didn't give us His law as a means by which we might save ourselves. Instead, He intends for the law to be the means by which we might recognize that because of our sins of thought, word and deed we are lost and condemned sinners, deserving nothing but death and eternal damnation. (Study Gen. 8:21, Lev. 19:2, Deut. 27:26, Ps. 51:5, Is. 57:21, 64:6, Mat. 10:28, Romans 3:23, 5:12, 6:23, 7:7, 18, 8:7-8, Gal. 3:19, Eph. 2:3, 1 Tim. 1:9, James 2:10, 1 John 1:8). Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).

But what do we hear from the Utah "Saints"? At their 152nd semiannual General Conference, October, 1982, we heard this from President Gordon Hinkley, counselor in the first presidency:

"... gladness and peace and healing come in walking in obedience to the commandments of God as set forth in the teachings of the church."

From Elder David B. Haight, a member of the council of the twelve apostles, we heard these words:

"... How can we earn God's love? The Savior taught: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.' Love is a gift of God, and as we obey His laws, and genuinely learn to serve others, we develop God's love in our lives. ... May each of us adequately play our role ... by striving for perfection, by being obedient to all the laws and ordinances of the gospel, all strengthened by our compliance with the great commandments to love God and our neighbor ..."

Elder Martin Petersen said:

"... He died for us. ... And He provided for us a resurrection from the dead. ... What a gift, what a Friend! ... Salvation in His kingdom is quite another matter. It comes only to those who faithfully obey His commandments and accept all of His orders. Have you ever thought of the process by which the gospel saves people? Faith, repentance and baptism come first, of course, but there's more, much more. ... We can measure our progress toward salvation merely by determining how Christlike we are. ... Unless we have this change of heart, unless we follow the Savior's teachings, our sins may cancel out all the benefits we otherwise might receive through the ordinances of the church. ..."

At this 152nd semiannual conference, the speakers made many fine statements about the atonement of Christ and salvation by faith in Him. But through it all ran the thought: "It's what you do that counts!" Even in the quotations above, "gospel" is a matter of "laws and ordinances," something that people do - not the Christian understanding of the gospel as the "good news" of what God has done for us all in the complete forgiveness won for us by Jesus Christ. Even "faith, repentance and baptism" are things that have to be done by an individual in obedience to God, rather than spiritual blessings from God who does the whole work Himself in raising us up to a new life when we were "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

Proposition No. 1. Jesus condemns every means of coming to God through an individual's reliance on "the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:20). Jesus says that any church which leads people to rely on obedience to "laws and ordinances" for salvation is only hindering people from discovering Him as the only hope of eternal life (Luke 11:52).

Consider Jesus' parable about the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14). The publican who prayed: "God be merciful to me a sinner" (v. 13), Jesus says, "went down to his house justified rather than the other" (v. 14). According to Mormon thinking, the Pharisee with all his attention to religious duties and with his high standing in the community should have been earning God's favor. But Jesus says no. In his pride the Pharisee asked God for nothing and that's exactly what he received. Self-righteous, he remained in his sins.

Salvation, meaning God's gift of forgiveness and eternal life to repentant sinners, is ours only by the grace of God, His undeserved mercy, His love for fallen sinners, raising us through Word and sacrament to the position of being His adopted children through faith in Christ Jesus, (Study Gen. 3:15, Isaiah 43:11,25, 53:5, Mat. 18:11, Luke 2:11, John 1:17,29, 3:16, 20:31, Acts 4:12, Rom. 1:16, 3:24,28, Romans 8:3-4,15, 1 Cor. 2:12-13, Gal. 3:26, 1 Tim. 2:5-6, 2 Tim. 3:15-16, 1 John 3:1). Mark this: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

As I showed in greater detail in my first paper, once a person is made alive in Christ, then he can't help spending the rest of his life serving God. "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). No true Christian would ever think of earning by his good works the blessings that are his already freely by the grace of God! His good works are to serve as means by which others who don't know the grace of God might be attracted to Him. As Jesus says: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 5:16).

Proposition No. 2. Jesus condemns the self-righteousness of any who reject His offer of Himself and His perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Study John 3:1-21, Jesus with Nicodemus).

In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the Pharisee says: "I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:12). Jesus had more to say about the Pharisees' attitude toward tithing (Luke 11:42). "But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

For the Pharisees, tithing was something to be exactly observed as they tried to merit God's favor. It's the same for the LDS. As one missionary told me, a Mormon who refuses to tithe can't hope to reach the highest level of heaven (where, as they imagine it, the faithful Mormon can become a god himself) because of his "lack of obedience." However, "sincere repentance" and the resumption of tithing would open the way again for him.

By contrast, Christians know that God's command to tithe was given to the Jews of the Old Testament times. In the New Testament age God motivates us to give as He has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:2), our love responding to His love (1 John 4:19), so that we don't ask: "How much (10%) do I have to give?" but: "How much more has God made it possible for me to give; what does He want to accomplish through me, His steward?" And if some only have a little to give, they can still use the talents that God has given to them to serve Him in other ways. "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

Proposition No. 3. Jesus says that tithing, in and of itself, has nothing at all to do with a person's going to heaven. If a Christian chooses to tithe, this is just another fruit of his faith as God helps him in sanctified living.

How important is membership in a particular church, in and of itself? In Jesus' day, the religious leaders of Israel took great pride in their physical descent from Abraham as if that gave them an automatic ticket to heaven. But hear John the Baptist attacking them: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ... And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Mat. 3:7-9). Jesus also called the Pharisees a "generation of vipers" (Mat. 12:34), and condemned them for their pride in their descent, also their rejection of Him as their only Savior. (Study John 8:33-59). "Ye are of your father the devil," Jesus told them (v. 44).

Membership in the LDS Church is all-important for anyone who wants to reach the Mormons' highest levels of heaven. That is why they practice baptism for the dead - to give to people who never had a chance (or who never took the opportunity to join Mormonism) the chance to make such a decision at the resurrection. (However, this contradicts Hebrews 9:27. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Where is there a second chance?)

What did the Apostle Paul say about all this? Read Romans 4. Paul, too, was a descendant of Abraham, his "father, as pertaining to the flesh" (Rom. 4:1). But this meant nothing at all to him as having anything to do with his being saved. Instead, Paul said, he and every gentile believer was saved by a personal faith in the promise of God concerning the Messiah who came to bear the sins of all. (Rom. 4:16-17). "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3).

Proposition No. 4. Jesus had nothing good to say about people who encourage others to think that membership in "the right church" is a prime requirement for salvation.

What about "authority"? The LDS emphasize that they have their apostles and the priesthood without which there can be no true church. The Pharisees questioned John the Baptist's authority to baptize (John 1:19-28). They didn't accept Jesus' authority to forgive a repentant sinner (Luke 5:21, 7:49). They asked: "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" (John 7:48). The Pharisees made people afraid to "step out of line" in confessing Christ (John 12:42-43). (See also Luke 20:1-2, Mark 1:22).

Claiming for themselves alone the right to speak for God, the Pharisees faulted Jesus for healing on the Sabbath (Mat. 12:10-14, Luke 6:6-11), for letting His disciples "thresh grain" on the Sabbath (Mat. 12:1-2), and for not teaching His disciples to observe "proper" ceremonies such as washing their hands (Mat. 15:1-14, Mark 7:1-13, Luke 11:37-40). Jesus gave them God's answer (from Isaiah 29:13): "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat. 15:9). "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Mat. 15:3).

The LDS have their "traditions," the Doctrine and Covenants, for instance, which contradict the Word of God, the Bible. They would have us accept their "traditions" simply on the authority of their "prophets" who have given them to the LDS. They emphasize the authority vested in their leaders. They emphasize the importance of their temple ceremonies such as the washing, for instance, connected with their temple marriages.

Proposition No. 5. Jesus condemns those who substitute their own traditions for His truth. Authority, in and of itself, is worth nothing if those who are given authority reject God's truth.

In Doctrine and Covenants (98:23-44) we find: "But if he trespass against thee the fourth time (i.e., not being at all repentant) thou shalt not forgive him, but shalt bring these testimonies before the Lord; and they shall not be blotted out until he repent and reward thee four-fold..." (v. 44). This Mormon "doctrine" exactly follows the old Jewish teaching that three times was enough (The Interpretation of Matthew, by R. Lenski, p. 708). The Apostle Peter is to be commended for more than doubling the maximum of three, since he asks Jesus if seven times is enough (Mat. 18:21). Jesus replies (v. 22) that Peter should be willing to forgive "seventy times seven" times, that is, without ever trying to keep track of the offenses - and He never qualifies His directive by requiring repentance on the part of the one who has committed the trespass.

Proposition No. 6. A church that prides itself in giving itself the name of "The Church of Jesus Christ..." ought to teach correctly what Jesus Christ said about forgiveness.

Joseph Smith's "revelation" on polygamy is in Doctrine and Covenants 132. (See my first paper, pages 51-52). Wasn't God's true revelation (1 Tim. 3:2,12) that bishops and deacons should be the "husbands of one wife" good enough for him? Contrary to Lev. 18:18, Smith married 5 pairs of sisters. He also married at least 12 women who were married to other men at the very time that he married them. (Brodie, No Man Knows My History, a biography of Joseph Smith, Jr.)

When the Pharisees asked Jesus: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (Mat. 19:3), they had in mind their own lax practice in following the school of Hillel (Josephus, Antiquities, 4, 8, 23). They practiced a "consecutive polygamy" such as we have in today's divorce-ridden society. Jesus told them that they were wrong, that God intended for one man and one woman to be joined in marriage until death ended the union (Mat. 19:4-6).

Proposition No. 7. A church that prides itself in the name of "The Church of Jesus Christ ..." ought not to blindly follow a founder who by word and deed contradicted Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

Note: Jesus also corrected the unbelieving Sadducees (Mat. 22: 23-33, Mark 12:18-27, Luke 20:27-38), pointing out, contrary to LDS doctrine, that marriage is only for this life since in heaven we shall be "as the angels" (Mat. 22:30) who, as everyone should know, are never ever married. It is mere sophistry for the LDS to argue that although people can't get married in heaven, as Jesus says, marriages entered into here on earth do last forever. The LDS are wrong to argue that their idea of marriage continuing in heaven is supported by Jesus' words to His disciples: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Mat. 16:19, 18:18). The context in which Jesus spoke these words shows that He was talking about heaven being opened for all who confess Him as the Christ, their only Savior, and heaven remaining closed to all who in unbelief refuse to repent of their sins.

Jesus said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:20). It is because Mormonism resembles the religion of the scribes and Pharisees in so many essential areas that Christians can't help being concerned for the salvation of people who are attracted by the outward righteousness of the Mormons

Other instances of Jesus' enemies finding fault with Him are recorded (Luke 7:31-35, Mat. 9:34, 12:24, Mat. 9:10-13, 11:19, Luke 5:30, 7:39, 15:2). They tried to "entangle Him in His talk" (Mat. 22:15-40, Luke 20:20). They understood what Jesus was teaching (Mat. 21:45, 27:64), yet demanded that Jesus give them a sign of His being sent from God (Mat. 12:38-45, 16:1-4). Note the pride of the Pharisees (Luke 11:43, 14:1, 7-11), and consider how hard it must be for a Mormon who considers himself to be "a god in embryo" to show the proper humility that Jesus requires in the relationships of His believers with others. (Note also Mat. 11:16-19, Luke 5:36-39, 16:14, John 8:13).

Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their hypocrisy in doing alms, praying, and fasting (Mat. 6:1-18, 9:14). Jesus warned against the example of the scribes and Pharisees, "for they say, and do not" (Mat. 23:3). See also Mat. 16:6, 12, Luke 12:1-2. Jesus warned the Pharisees against their own spiritual blindness (John 9:40-41). "For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

And finally, if any would still say that Jesus never "tore down other churches," let him read Matthew 23:1-39! "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of



hell than yourselves" (v. 15). It is worth noting that when LDS missionaries go out from door to door, they don't call it "evangelizing," that is, preaching the Christian gospel, God's "good news." Rather, they call it "proselytizing," (which is illustrated in Webster by the practice of persuading an athlete to attend and play for a certain school by making the athlete an attractive offer).

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides ... ye fools and blind ... hypocrites! ... Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mat. 23:16,17,19,27,33).

Proposition No. 8. Jesus, in His concern for souls being led to eternal destruction, did indeed speak against every form of unbelief. Christians today should do the same, putting on "the whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:10-18), and not neglecting the use of "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

Why should we want to do this? Out of love for souls, and the assurance that God does work through the proclamation of His Word! In John 3:1 we note that Nicodemus, a Pharisee, came to Jesus. He defended Jesus (John 7:50-52), and ended up a believer (John 19:39). We read also that because of the witness of the New Testament Church "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). God can work the same miracle of faith in our day, too, by His grace. Let us pray for this blessing! As there was a "division" among the Pharisees concerning Jesus (John 9:16), so there are many Mormons today who are not happy, not satisfied that the way that they have been shown to heaven is really God's way. Let us show them Jesus in all we do and in a clear witness of His grace.

A final note. Jesus said: "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord" (Mat. 10:24). "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18,19-25). It didn't take long for Jesus' enemies to transfer their hatred to His disciples (Acts 4:1-12,21, 5:17-18,28,40, 7:57-60, 8:1, 12:1-3). We should not expect the situation to have changed any to this day.

Nevertheless, we should keep in mind Peter's advice: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ... But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Peter 4:14-18).

(Word study. Should some LDS missionary notice that in the quotation above Peter uses the expression "obey not the gospel" (v. 17) and try by that to prove that the gospel is a matter of laws and our obedience, they should leave the King James Version and study the original. Here the Greek word form for "not obey" is apeithountōn, from the root word peithō, meaning: to persuade, prevail upon, win over; to believe, trust; to listen to, obey, yield. Obedience, as in Ephesians 6:5, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters..." is a different Greek word: hupakoē).

In October, 1982, at the 152nd LDS semiannual World Conference, televised from the Salt Lake City tabernacle, in a speech read for him by his personal secretary, President Spencer W. Kimball said:

"Now, my dear brothers and sisters, there are some in the world who mistakenly say that we are a non-Christian church, a cult; that we worship Joseph Smith rather than our Savior, Jesus Christ. How far from the truth they are! What heresy!"

He continued with a fine-sounding statement of belief in the atonement of Christ, and salvation by faith in him. (But he didn't give a Mormon definition of the words that he used.)

So, is Mormonism a cult, or is it not? Our best answer is to focus on the question that Jesus asked: "What think ye of Christ? whose son is He?" (Mat. 22:42). The Mormon Savior is:

1. A created spirit-being who became a man and evolved to become a god. (Mormon Doctrine, p. 129).
2. One god in a pantheon of gods. (Mormon Doctrine, p. 321).
3. Spirit-brother of Satan in the preexistence. (Mormon Doctrine, pp. 192, 193, 744, 826, 828, 589, 590, 526).
4. A polygamist who celebrated his own marriage to "both the Marys and to Martha." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, pp. 345-346, Vol. 4, pp. 259-260, Vol. 2, p. 210).
5. Born of Adam-God, not the Holy Spirit. (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, pp. 50-51, Vol. 13, p. 95).
6. The blood of Jesus Christ is ineffective for cleansing some sin, such as murder. (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, pp. 53-54, 385, also the Deseret News, 1956, p. 235).

The points above come from notes accompanying The Counterfeits, six excellent films by Ron Carlson, president of Christian Ministries, International, #4 on Mormonism. (In his LDS film, Carlson does repeat the common mistaken idea that Mormons believe the American Indians to be descendants of "the lost ten tribes of Israel." The Book of Mormon says that the Indians started with only a few families of Jews who crossed the Pacific to the New World.)

Still on the point of the LDS attitude toward Christ - We have this report from The Utah Evangel (Nov., 1982, Utah Missions, Inc., Box 348, Marlow, Oklahoma 73055, a free monthly newspaper):

"In March of this year, the Mormon Apostle Bruce McConkie, spoke at BYU on 'Our Relationship With The Lord.' He declared vehemently 'we worship the Father and him only and no one else. We do not worship the Son ... Christ worked out his own salvation by worshipping the Father.' Later in the same message he declared 'our relationship with the Son is one of brother or sister in the pre-mortal life....' Then he said, 'In an effort to be truer than true they devote themselves to gaining a special personal relationship with Christ that is both improper and perilous.' Finally he said, 'And you have never heard one of the First Presidency or the Twelve, who hold the keys of the kingdom ... advocate this excessive zeal that calls for gaining a so-called special and personal relationship with Christ.'"

Why don't we hear this on television? Review Proposition No. 5 above, and the paragraphs leading to it.

## DID THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST NEED TO BE "RESTORED"?

In a paragraph starting on the bottom of page 52 in my paper, I quoted from an LDS pamphlet, The Falling Away and Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ Foretold, in which Dr. Martin Luther was quoted by the LDS as if he agreed with their claims of a Christianity completely fallen from God's truth when Joseph Smith was called by God in 1820 and years following to restore it. I knew that Luther never would have meant or intended to convey the ideas that the LDS had him supporting.

The Utah Evangel (Sept., 1982) sets the record straight. As I expected was the case, it shows that the three sentences quoted from Luther were set together from widely different sources. And, as I expected, the meaning of the third sentence had been changed. Where the Mormons quoted: "I simply say that Christianity has ceased to exist among those who should have preserved it," they cut off the last four words of the original: " - the bishops and scholars." Honesty in quoting would have required at least an elipsis (three dots) at the end of the LDS quotation. Even in the new, corrected edition, and in a Salt Lake City church display, this hasn't been done.

In the second sentence quoted by the LDS, Luther says: "The spiritual powers have been not only corrupted by sin, but absolutely destroyed; so that there is now nothing in them but a depraved reason and a will that is the enemy and opponent of God." If by this Luther meant to say that all of Christianity, leaders and followers alike, had lost God's truth in his day, he would have been misrepresenting the case entirely.

For we find that after Martin Luther became a monk and a priest (ordained in 1507), when he was still greatly troubled by his sinfulness and the fear of being lost forever, help was near. "In John Staupitz, the sympathetic and understanding superior, Luther found comfort and help. Staupitz assured him that the grace in Christ was to be set over against the wrath of God caused by his sin." (Conrad Bergendoff, The Church of the Lutheran Reformation, 1967, p. 33).

Jesus' promise concerning His Church, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat. 16:18), has never been withdrawn.

## IS MORMONISM JUST ANOTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION?

Mormonism wants to have people think of it as being a fully Christian denomination -- the impression that they try to give in their Reader's Digest advertisements. But one should read the LDS publication Which Church Is Right? (1974). This pamphlet favorably quotes Will Durant's judgment: "Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it" (The Story of Civilization). We read further:

"...the societies or churches are man-made organizations without divine appointment. Such groups may accomplish much good. They may be a great comfort to their members. But when it comes to saving souls in the kingdom of God, that is a different matter."

Do Mormons really expect that they can say such things and that no Christians will feel it necessary to defend themselves?

Reading more in Which Church Is Right?, the Lutheran reformation is mentioned. "Prince John ... decided to withdraw his support from the pope and sustain Luther." So he set up a state church.

"...Branches of the Protestant movement ... were efforts either to reform the existing church or to organize a new church, based on individual views gained from a private reading and interpretation of the Bible ..."

If the LDS are against "private reading and interpretation," then was Joseph Smith, Jr. any different? He even added to the Bible! If the LDS fault Lutherans for state church involvement in Europe, and don't find this situation in the United States, then why don't they take the time to examine whether or not God did bring His Church back to Scripture truth in the reformation? If the LDS oppose a state church idea (and rightly so, for many reasons), then why are we told that "Mormon Church leaders feel it's their destiny to take over the country"? (Peter Bart, Denver Post, in The Utah Evangel, May, 1982).

According to Religious News Service (10-11-82), reporting on the LDS 152nd General Conference, Oct., 1982, Marvin J. Ashton, of the Council of Twelve Apostles, criticized "persons who are giving time and money to discredit, embarrass, ridicule and shame those who have religious views that differ from their own." The RNS article said: "Concerned that their church is often viewed as un-Christian, Mormon leaders announced that a new subtitle is being added to the Book of Mormon proclaiming it to be 'Another Testament of Jesus Christ'"

It will take more than this to convince a Christian to add the Book of Mormon to the Bible.

The LDS also released an 1873 letter by Martin Harris telling how he saw the plates from which Smith "translated" his book. Note, however, that Harris, 89 years old when he sent the letter, said that he saw the plates, holy spectacles, etc., "as I was praying unto the Lord..." He closed: "... and thus the vision was taken from us." This isn't the same as holding something in your hands to look at.

There is a difference between the Bible of the Christian denominations and the Book of Mormon of the LDS. In the Bible, prophets of God spoke with authority: "Thus saith the Lord!" By comparison read 1 Nephi 19:6, Jacob 1:2, Jacob 7:26, Ether 5:1, Moroni 10:1. Can a book be inspired by God when it was written by men who chose what they considered to be "sacred," "to be most precious," "as seemeth me good," "according to my memory"?

#### WHAT ABOUT BOOK OF MORMON CHRONOLOGY?

The people of ancient Rome counted their years from the legendary date of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus, 753 B.C. The Christian Era, according to which we count "the year of our Lord," Anno Domini, A.D., was introduced by Dionysius Exiguus, a Roman monk, in A.D. 533. Dionysius fixed Jesus' birth in the year of Rome 754.

Today we know that Dionysius missed four years in his reckoning, so Jesus' birth should have been set no later than ca. 4 B.C., when Herod the Great died (Mat. 2:19). Thus the death and resurrection of Jesus, following a ministry of some 3½ years, was ca. A.D. 29/30.

According to the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 1:4, the history of the

book begins at the start of "the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (2 Kings 24:17-18). Today this is dated at 598/597 B.C., not at 600 B.C., as it is given in the footnote to 1 Nephi 2:4. (Jehoiakim, 2 Kings 23:36, was still king in Jerusalem in 600 B.C.!)

Then, in 3 Nephi 1:1, we are told that "it was six hundred years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem." This the footnotes date A.D. 1, the year of Jesus' birth as told in 3 Nephi 1:19-21.

Thus, according to real history, no more than 594 years passed from the coronation of Zedekiah to the birth of Christ. According to the Book of Mormon, this was no less than 600 years! CAN A BOOK BE TRUE THAT ADDS SIX YEARS THAT NEVER WERE TO WORLD HISTORY?

But Joseph Smith, "translator" of the Book of Mormon, can't be blamed! Mormons say that any mistakes in their book are the fault of the original authors! (For instance, note: "if there was no mistake" in 3 Nephi 8:1-5, where Jesus' crucifixion is dated A.D. 34.)

Or else Mormons will say that a discrepancy of six years in six centuries shouldn't bother us. They should tell that to the astronomers whose exact calculations of solar and lunar eclipses are a major reference point tying in with the records of kings and their empires.

Mormons can't add a year to the 594 years mentioned above, and they can't subtract a year from the 600 years of the Book of Mormon. They can't change 3 Nephi 1:1 to read: "about six hundred years..." because that would mean changing scores of references throughout the book, a regular, exact countdown of years to the birth of Christ!

For this confusion we are supposed to give up Bible certainty?

#### WHAT ABOUT THE GREAT SUCCESS OF LDS MISSIONARIES IN ENGLAND?

One question that needed answering when I was doing research for my first paper was why people in England, after LDS organization in 1830, were so much more easily converted than the people already settled in our eastern states. Knowing England as seen through the eyes of Charles Dickens (1812-1870), I knew that there were great numbers of people looking for a chance to improve their lot by coming to America. These would naturally follow anyone with a plan for a safe, caravan-type crossing with the way prepared for them by people who were already American citizens. Just before typing my paper, I found a passing reference to the poorer people who were most receptive of the LDS missionaries, and so wrote (p. 5, line 5): "The poor of industrial England were eager converts for LDS envoys."

Now, in The Utah Evangel (Oct., 1982, p. 2), we read about a book, Nauvoo Kingdom of the Mississippi, written in 1965 by RLDS historian Robert B. Flanders. Flanders said that: "Many fled England to escape social and economic distress." He called it an "emigration of desperation." Because of the great depression of 1836, minimal wages were reduced by 1/3 to 1/2, and many were unemployed. Flanders believed that discontent with the autocratic leaders of Methodism "paved the way for successful Mormon evangelism among English laboring classes." The Evangel article says that "America was presented to those hapless people as a land flowing with milk and honey. They could own their own land, be employed, be equals with their neighbors. ... To many, escape from conditions in England was their motivation." The Evangel also reminds us that "the Mormonism of that day contained few of the errors it has today."

We would say that the attitude of English converts to Mormonism was the same as that of the earthly-minded Israelites who were ready to return to "the flesh pots of Egypt" (Exodus 16:3), the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlick of Egypt (Numbers 11:5), without any concern for the fact that thereby they would be placing themselves again under the dominion of Egyptian idolaters.

MORE ON THE BRASS SHIELDS (Page 33 in my first paper).

On February 16, 1913, a lead plate was found buried in the ground overlooking the junction of highways 14 and 83 at Ft. Pierre, S.D., west of the Missouri River. This tablet was written, signed and dated March 30, 1743 by French explorers, the Verendrye brothers. They claimed for France the territory later included in the Louisiana Purchase.

Sir Francis Drake sailed around the world during the years 1577-1580. After raiding Spanish ports on the Pacific coast of South America, he stopped for supplies just north of what is now San Francisco. Finding the people there friendly, he nailed a brass plate to a post claiming the land for England. This was in the year 1579. Drake's brass plate was discovered in California in recent times.

Mormons claim that the Indian tribes discovered by the Spaniards in South and Central America were direct descendants of the people whose "history" the Book of Mormon "records." We disagree. It is true that the ancient Indian civilizations left behind great works of architecture and tons of artifacts, but no link to Jewish culture has ever been proven (wishful LDS claims to the contrary).

Instead of arguing about Mayan or Aztec origins and artifacts, let's concentrate on North America between the Mississippi River and the Atlantic Ocean, and the fact that not one real artifact of Mormon "history" has been discovered! This is an area where millions of soldiers 2000 years ago and later supposedly fought and died. Alma 43:18-21, Ether 15:15, etc., describe innumerable "swords...cimeters...shields...breastplates...headplates."

People found the Verendrye and the Drake plates. We ask the Mormons: Show us just one brass shield! Or a piece of a "cimeter" blade! WITHOUT THESE, THERE IS NO MORMON HISTORY!

Some Mormons suggest that brass artifacts aren't found because they have all rusted away. This is hard to believe because brass or copper are much more durable than iron, which rusts much faster. Metallic copper found in copper ore is colored blue-green by the copper salts that form on the outside surface of the copper, but this covering is easily removed, as when, for instance, native Americans made their copper projectile points which have survived to this day.

Even if a large brass object such as a shield buried in the ground were to decompose over many thousands of years, its presence in any archeological site would be impossible to miss because copper salts never leach away. (The brightly-colored copper salts preserve by their bacteria-killing properties many adjacent organic remains such as cloth or hair).

Civil War battlefields in the United States were obviously well picked over by people living in the area, yet even today pieces of

metal may be found where so many died. Why, then, should this not be the case for Book of Mormon battlefields which supposedly involved greater numbers of combatants in the same general areas? Metal objects last far longer than the skull bones, for instance, described by the poet Robert Southey (1774-1843) in his Battle of Blenheim:

"I find them in the garden,  
For there's many hereabout;  
And often, when I go to plough,  
The ploughshare turns them out;  
For many thousand men," said he,  
"Were slain in the great victory."

We repeat: Where there are no Mormon artifacts there is no history!

#### ARE THE AMERICAN INDIANS REALLY THE DESCENDANTS OF JEWS?

In 2 Nephi 5:21, it says that God cursed those who rebelled in unbelief, causing "a skin of blackness to come upon them." This condition has supposedly continued to the present day, giving us today's American Indians. In my paper, I suggested that the LDS leadership should give us another revelation explaining why there are so many other differences between American Indians and Jews. Were all these differences part of God's curse? And if so, why do American Indians share many of their different characteristics with various Asian races? Could a New World curse affect Old World inhabitants who weren't involved in the Book of Mormon falling away?

According to The Utah Evangel (Aug., 1982, "Indians Are What?", by Rick Branch), racial differences can be genotypical (genetic, to be discovered by laboratory research) or else phenotypical (physical, to be seen by simple observation).

Under genotypical differences, we have Tay-Sachs disease. In the United States 95% of all cases occur in Jewish families. Indians don't show the same incidence of this disease. Then there is the B-amino-isobutyric kidney excretion, a much higher level of which is produced by Asiatic people and American Indians. Finally, we have A and B blood types. "The major consensus is that among the Semitic Jewish population there is a 'greater percentage of type "B" blood.' The Encyclopedia Britannica states: 'blood type B is generally absent in the aboriginal population of the Americas, and type A is found mainly in North American Indians'" (Vol. 13, p. 215).

Under phenotypical differences, we start with skull-type. The Jewish skull is generally "brachycephalic," or short-headed, meaning that its width is 80% or more of its length. American Indians are generally "dolichocephalic," or long-headed, meaning that skull width is less than 80% of skull length. This is an important difference. According to the Britannica, American Indians are classified with Asiatic Mongoloids in many other ways. Both share "shovel-shaped" incisor teeth, which isn't a characteristic of Jews. Both have finger tip patterns "high in whorls." Indians also have "scanty beards and body hair." Their noses are well "within the Asiatic range," "from aquiline to concave." Jewish noses, we are told, are neither aquiline nor concave. There is also the Mongoloid spot, a patch of bluish skin at the small of the back, more noticeable among the infants of many American Indians and Asian races.

We should consider language differences, too. The Jews of 600 B.C. (including the supposed LDS "ancestors" of American Indians) knew Aramaic, the common language of the whole area, also the everyday language of Jesus and His disciples. In Aramaic, "Our Father, who art in heaven" reads: Abunan debismayya. "Hallowed be thy name" is: Yitqaddas semak. "Thy kingdom come" reads: Tete malkutak.

If the hundreds of different tribes of North and South American Indians are all the descendants of Aramaic-speaking Jews, one would expect that at least some of their many different languages would resemble at least some words of Aramaic. So we ask today's Mormons to show us one real correlation between any Indian language and the Aramaic of 2000 years ago! Go to any Christian Indian mission that has had the Lord's Prayer translated into the language of the tribe. Compare it with the Aramaic. Is there any similarity?

Yes, languages change over the centuries, but how much? Just consider the "roots" of the English language. The Lord's Prayer was translated for the Goths by Ulfilas (born A.D. 311). Note the many underlined similarities recognizable between Gothic words and the English used by us today: "Atta unsara, thu in himinam, (1) Veihnai namo thein. (2) Quimai Thiudinassus Theins. (3) Vairthai vilja theins, sve in himina, jah ana airthai. ..."

It is strange indeed that after the same 2000 year period, when there are so many comparisons remaining between Gothic and today's English and German, that there shouldn't be any similar comparisons between Aramaic (or Hebrew) and any of the American Indian languages! If not, why not?

The Utah Evangel (May, 1982) features a piece on Quetzalcoatl, "The Plumed Serpent" of the Toltec Indians. It tells us:

"The story of the life of the Mexican divinity, Quetzalcoatl, closely resembles that of the Saviour; so closely, indeed, that we can come to no other conclusion than that Quetzalcoatl and Christ are the same being." (Statement by the prophet John Taylor, found in Bruce McConkie's Mormon Doctrine, p. 614.) This is what some Mormon missionaries have told Indians while trying to persuade them that they are of Jewish descent, as the Book of Mormon claims.

But if this identity is true, many questions arise:

1. Why should Christ/Quetzalcoatl be pictured as a serpent, and not as a man?
2. Why is Quetzalcoatl represented as receiving sacrifices, even human sacrifices, when Christ ended Jewish sacrifices?
3. If, according to the National Geographic (Dec., 1980, p. 762) Quetzalcoatl left Tula in disgrace because of his wrong conduct, how can this match the perfection of Jesus Christ?

Finally, Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought (Spring, 1972, p. 117) says: "The equating of Christ with Quetzalcoatl by many Mormons is another example of our naive myth building using comparisons, and our overcompulsion to find Book of Mormon 'evidence' ... There is no documentary evidence to support the birth of Quetzalcoatl (sic) prior to about 800 A.D., well outside the Book of Mormon time period."

Note the reference to Quetzalcoatl in the following section.



A MORMON DEFENDS THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

(See pages 37-42, my paper, especially p. 39 on D.J.Nelson).

Since publishing my research on the Book of Abraham, one of the LDS revelations, I was loaned a copy of a work by Robert L. Brown, 1981, Brownsworth Pub. Co., Box 2671, Mesa, Arizona 85201, sold for \$7.98 by the Deseret Book Co., 266 pages, 8½ x 11".

This work is called They Lie In Wait To Deceive - "The amazing story of how 'Dr.' or 'Prof.' Dee Jay Nelson, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, and other anti-Mormons work to obstruct and distort the truth."

In this work, Brown proves beyond a doubt that "Nelson has no valid educational degrees." "The only degree Nelson can claim is a Ph. D. degree from a 'diploma mill' known as PACIFIC NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY ... owned and operated by one man, Archillo O. Bourque." "Nelson never attended the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago. ... Nelson's true educational credentials indicate 2 years of high school and less than one quarter of college." (Brown, p. 1).

With regard to D. J. Nelson's claims regarding the Book of Abraham and his work on it, Brown quotes statements by Dr. Hugh Nibley and President N. Eldon Tanner, both saying that they never appointed Nelson to be the official translator of the Joseph Smith papyri that were discovered in 1967. (Brown, p. vi.).

Brown writes (p. 161), "If one has the knowledge, there is nothing wrong with being self-taught. However, in the case of Dee Jay Nelson, I can see no evidence of being self-taught academically in anything." This is Brown's personal judgment. Nelson did know enough about Egyptian writing and archeology to make a living for many years as a lecturer. It is a great shame that Nelson should have given Mormons reason to reject the integrity of people who are dedicated to exposing the errors of Mormonism. But one can see how Nelson, motivated by a desire to make a living as a lecturer, would think that he needed a title such as "Dr." or "Prof." so that he would be hired by people looking for lecturers.

I do not agree with Brown's contention that Jerald and Sandra Tanner knowingly joined Nelson in his deception. Brown (p. 256) prints the complete March 11, 1980 letter that the Tanners sent to Nelson expressing their great disappointment with him, and telling him that they would no longer sell his writings. In a letter sent by Nelson to Nibley on Jan. 9, 1978, Nelson says that he was working toward a doctorate. So if Brown accuses the Tanners of withholding information on Nelson's credentials then he should fault Nibley, too.

Nibley and the Tanners were both fooled, in my opinion, by Nelson's claim to European credentials; though it should be noted, as Brown tells us, that the Tanners were the only people who didn't put a "Dr." before their references to D. J. Nelson in the 2-3 years before his deception came to light. Since Nelson was also lecturing on the virtues of the bogus idea of "pyramid power," it may be that the Tanners in their contacts with Nelson detected other clues convincing them not to credit him with an earned doctorate.

My greatest disappointment after reading Brown's work is that he never follows up with proofs of his claim (p.179): "THERE ARE ANSWERS TO EVERY ANTI-MORMON CHARGE OR ACCUSATION. THERE ARE EXPLANATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS TO EVERY ANTI-MORMON QUESTION IF YOU ARE SINCERELY LOOKING FOR THE LORD'S ANSWER." The only questions that Brown tries to answer are questions concerning the Book of Abraham and the Jewish origin of the American Indians.

For Brown, an active missionary himself for many years, prayer is the best way of discovering the truth of any claim. He says that when LDS men "preach the gospel, they rely heavily on prayer. They ask their investigators to pray to their Heavenly Father to verify that what they are being taught is true." (p. 1.). Again we must reply that a Christian will not, for instance, ask God in prayer for permission to take His name in vain. Nor will a Christian ask God for a sign that anything else revealed in the Bible is to be canceled in favor of the contrary claims of LDS missionaries.

For information on the Hebrew origin of American Indians, Brown refers us to The Romance of the Book of Mormon (Josiah E. Hickman, Deseret, 1937) which purports to show linguistic relationships between many American Indian, Book of Mormon, and Hebrew words. Brown also tries to identify Quetzalcoatl with Christ coming to America as the Book of Mormon tells the story. (But check my page 76 again).

With regard to the Book of Abraham, Brown faults Nelson's identification of the four figures below the "altar" in Facsimile No. 1, which supposedly shows Abraham being threatened by a heathen priest. Brown follows Nibley and his book on the Book of Abraham. Brown says (p. 159) that the correct identification of the jackal figure is: Qebhsenuf, and the falcon figure: Duamutef. But according to the book Hieroglyphs For Everyone (pp. 82-83) where alabaster canopic jars for the four vital organs are pictured, the hawk is Qebhsenuf and the jackal is Duamutef. This agrees with Paul Johnson's The Civilization of Ancient Egypt (1978, p. 141). Brown should check it.

I would like to have Nibley show me an authority agreeing with him that Joseph Smith's "Korash" in Fac. No. 1 has anything to do with Nubia (Nhsy), as Brown records it (p. 156).

With regard to Joseph Smith's correct identification of Fac. 2, figure 6: "Represents this earth in its four quarters," we shouldn't forget that all his other identifications are wrong. Perhaps Smith, by the time he received the papyri, had read enough to have found out about the gods of Greek mythology, including Aeolus, the god associated with the winds from the four points of the compass. Then just seeing four figures would have made the connection for him.

If Smith knew anything at all, he would not have supplied a human head for the figure "threatening" "Abraham" in Fac. 1. The head is missing from the original papyrus as Nibley reproduces it. In innumerable Egyptian pictures showing the same embalming scene, it is "Anubis, the jackal-headed god ... ministering to the dead Osiris on the bier." (Quoted by Brodie, p. 422). If there was no human head for this figure, the whole story of the Book of Abraham was no point at all.

Brown does everyone a service (p. 160) by printing the opinion of the Tanners, that the unfortunate fact of Nelson's false credentials really has nothing at all to do with the question of the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. The point is, is Nibley qualified to give us the final word on the Book of Abraham? My reaction, after a careful reading of Nibley's book, was just like Nelson's reaction: bewilderment (similar to what one might feel after wandering all day in an English garden hedge maze that the designer had forgotten to furnish with an exit)! I especially take issue with the closing sections of Nibley's book, where he refers to various non-Christian writings of Apostolic times as being a link between Book of Abraham ideas and the principles of the New Testament Church. If these writings are important and true, why didn't the chosen Apostles tell us to use them?

If the Book of Abraham has no connection at all with the three facsimilies, which any Egyptologist can translate showing how they exactly fit the pagan ideas of Egyptian mythology, then there is no point to the last Mormon argument, that some of the papyri are still lost, and that they will give us the Abraham story. This, of course, is an unnecessary argument, since Mormons believe that Smith could "translate" by the power of God without even having the right manuscript, or any manuscript at all, to look at. In talking to the most knowledgeable Mormon that I've met to date, I made the point that Smith didn't know any Egyptian, "reformed Egyptian" or otherwise. He replied: "Of course, he could know only what God revealed to him; otherwise he knew nothing." So every argument always comes back to the first question: "Was Joseph Smith a prophet of God?"

One more thought concerning the Book of Abraham. In this work, supposedly translated by Joseph Smith with the help of God, in 2:4 it says that Abraham was 62 years old when he first left Haran for Canaan. According to Genesis 12:4, written by the prophet Moses, Abraham was 75 years old when this happened. Is Smith wrong, or is Moses wrong? In their Articles of Faith, No. 8, the Mormons say: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly..." I have to assume that the LDS believe that 62 years is the correct figure, and that 75 years (Gen. 12:4) is wrong.

But consider the impossibility of sixty-two becoming seventy-five as scribes carefully made copies of Moses' books through the centuries. In the Hebrew, in Genesis 12:4, we have: five (Kh-M-Sh) years and seventy (Sh-B-Ay-im) years. In Numbers 2:26, translated "threescore and two thousand," we find the words: two (Sh-N-im) and sixty (Sh-Sh-im) thousand (A-L-P). How could 62 be turned into 75 without someone noticing it, especially when this particular number having to do with Abraham was a number that his descendants the Jews would never let anyone mistakenly change?

#### TWO STARTING POINTS: THE BIBLE, AND HUMAN REASON

I have found that it is almost impossible to make any point with a Mormon that does not agree with his LDS presuppositions. I can start from two possible bases in my discussions: 1. The Bible, or 2. Human reason, including anything of an historical nature outside the history recorded in the Bible.

So let's start with the Bible.

If I find anything in the Bible that contradicts LDS doctrine or practice, the answer is: "But can you prove that this passage has been correctly translated?" They don't want to believe that this reply is just a smoke screen, that there is no "magic" involved in translation, and that questions involving different readings of some passages have never made any difference in establishing Christian doctrines.

Since I'm not a Mormon, since I haven't learned to "study out" a problem in my own mind, with prayer, it's no wonder that I have trouble reading the Bible and LDS writings together! They find no contradictions - or at least so they claim. And if I show them a problem that they can't solve, they are willing to wait for God to solve the (apparent) contradiction for them when He so desires. Meanwhile, I should be following the directions given in James 1:5 more faithfully.

Supposing that we start with human reason. If I demonstrate the possibility, for instance, that Smith could have borrowed many of his ideas from Swedenborg (my first paper, pp. 48-50), then I get the answer: "Isn't it wonderful that God could inspire two different men with some of the same truths?" It makes no difference that both of the men involved were the kind of "false prophets" (Mat. 7:15-20) that Jesus Christ warned against.

If I demonstrate on archeological, anthropological, and chronological grounds that the Book of Mormon is impossible, then they go to the Bible: "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). All that you have to do to make Aztec and Mayan and Hopewell remains a "proof" of Mormon history is to believe it hard enough!

And any time that any teaching of any LDS leader (outside of the Prophet himself) is finally nailed to the wall as being mistaken, the individual Mormon that I show this to can reply that the man was only speaking for himself, as he understood the matter at the time. But still he's allowed to go on misleading others everywhere else.

Once again, every question comes down to this: "Do you believe that Joseph Smith, Jr. was a prophet of God?" And they ask this question of prospective converts without ever telling them the whole history of Joseph Smith. That "he died for his faith," of course, they know. Also, that he was "too young" to have made up his "visions."

Meanwhile, Mormonism goes on, confident that it has the organization and staying power to outlast any who oppose it. On April 2, 1982, the following information appeared in the Rapid City Journal:

"Salt Lake City (AP) - The Mormon Church has announced plans to build new temples in the states of Idaho and Colorado - one to serve its members in Rapid City, S.D. - and overseas in Taiwan and Equador. ... The church currently has 20 temples in operation worldwide, with 17 others in various stages of completion."

For additional reading: "I Once Lost My Way," by Rev. Vaughn G. Whiting, in The Lutheran Witness, July, 1982, pp. 216-218. This is an inspiring witness of how God brought one man, the author of the article, out of Mormon self-righteousness to the peace of conscience that a person can have only in knowing Jesus as his Savior from sin. Whiting: "...The whole Mormon system of religion seemed to be an attempt to teach people to ignore the Sermon on the Mount and to rely upon themselves and their own good deeds to get them into heaven."

### UPDATE ON THE BOOK OF MORMON

If you have any copy of the Book of Mormon older than the 1981 edition, you need to add 35 words to Alma 32:30. The original reads:

"But behold, as the seed swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow, then you must needs say that the seed is good; for behold it swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow.

Add: And now, behold, will not this strengthen your faith? Yea, it will strengthen your faith: for ye will say I know that this is a good seed; for behold it sprouteth and beginneth to grow."

From the fact that this addition is made to a page personally marked with red ink by a Mormon giving the copy away, I must assume that this addition to Alma 32:30 will help LDS missionaries make a point in their proselytizing. But check the footnotes to see if you ever find a notation such as: "These words were never revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr., but were added in 1981."

Watch for further changes, as needed, in future editions! Once you take the major step of adding something to the Bible, then there is no problem adding to your own additions. All that it takes is the proper LDS "authority," and everyone follows their leaders.

While talking with the LDS missionary who gave me the addition to Alma 32:30 over the phone as I was finishing this paper, I asked him when we might expect 2 Nephi 5:21 to be changed to bring it into line with 2 Nephi 30:6 where "white" was changed to "pure" in 1981. This change was widely publicized since it allows blacks to enter the priesthood now, and also makes it easier for LDS missionaries to start work in Africa. But the missionary that I was talking to knew nothing about this change in 2 Nephi 30:6! Another good reason why Mormons shouldn't be the only ones to tell us about Mormonism!

### CONCLUSION

But perhaps we've stumbled on an important advantage in having missionaries get "on-the-job training." So long as they don't know all the answers, they can think that there are answers for everything. So long as they haven't reached many dead ends, they can hope that what they believe will take them where they want to go. It is only when you have followed every question from start to end, and thereby discovered that what you hoped to find wasn't there, that you start doubting.

It must be spiritually frustrating, when someone who knows something about the Bible shows an LDS missionary where the LDS have been misusing a Bible reference, to have to fall back on the catchall reply: "Are you using a correct translation?" It must be even more frustrating when someone points out in the Book of Mormon a half dozen Christian doctrines that Mormonism today denies! (See my paper). What can you say when you don't even follow your own book, except maybe to suggest that God tells different things to different people at different times?

It must be intellectually frustrating, when someone who knows something about the outward evidence that disproves the history of

the Book of Mormon points out the problems, leaving only the reply: "We'll believe it, even if we can't see the outward proof showing you to be wrong. Someday that proof will come." Meanwhile, its safer not to have any doubts, to trust your leaders because certainly they must have the answers that you don't.

When all else fails, the last answer is: "I believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God! I know it! I trust his word more than anyone else's word and more than what my own mind tells me." But is this a safe stand, to let everything depend on one fallible man?

How can 5,000,000 Mormons be wrong, and one missionary with a few doubts be right? This question troubled Martin Luther, too, in the days of his awakening. But he broke with the church of his day, even though he knew that he might have to suffer for it. Really, God took him out of the church of his day - for it was when Luther went to the Bible for the answers that God opened His truth to him! In April, 1521, when Martin Luther appeared before the emperor himself at Worms, Germany, God gave Luther the courage to stand by the truth of salvation that He had revealed to him. "Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason ... my conscience is captive to the Word of God ... God help me. Amen." So long as we look to the Bible alone for the truth that God has revealed for our salvation we can say with Luther: "Here I stand!"

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).