

# ***A CLASH OF CONVICTIONS***

***by***

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***A Message for My Mormon Friends***

## *Acknowledgements*

A special note of love and gratitude to the following people:

Pastor Frank: Thank you for having the courage to confront me with the truth; for being instrumental in breaking the generational curse which held my family captive for far too long. You are a true warrior; battling in the name of the Lord for the souls of men.

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***Dedication: To Jesus Christ, the Lord and love of my life.  
May your name be glorified through my words until the day  
I have the privilege of falling at your feet and thanking you  
for saving me from the fire.***

## Note:

Bold type is used throughout this book for emphasis. References from “Mormon Doctrine” are taken from the 11<sup>th</sup> printing, 1973 edition. Scriptures are taken from the King James version of the Bible.

## Introduction

This book is written in love and with the hope of helping Mormons understand why Christian and Mormon convictions clash. Haven't you ever wondered why Christians do not consider Mormons to be Christians as well? It doesn't seem to make sense when the title of the Mormon church includes the name of Jesus Christ (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) and Mormons uphold Christian values. This book seeks to answer that question by first laying a foundation built on logic, reasoning, information, and fact. Answering the question before laying the foundation will lead to misunderstanding, so please read each chapter in order.

If a Christian friend or family member has given you this book, it is because they love you enough to want a deeper relationship with you; one built on understanding, not misconceptions. May this book be the catalyst for many meaningful conversations.

## *Chapter 1*

### *Perception*

My grandpa Jones was never wrong about anything; in *his* mind at least. If his children made the mistake of reporting what they had learned in school, grandpa would argue with them and tell them that their teacher didn't know what she was talking about. It didn't matter what kind of research had been done, Grandpa knew better. He knew more than any doctor—as he frequently disregarded their advice and did exactly what he wanted with his medications. Grandpa made the mistake of thinking that he couldn't possibly be wrong about anything; his perception was the only truth.

One year, when I was teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I found out that two of my students had been involved in the theft of an item belonging to another teacher. I called the mothers of both students. One mother said she wanted to come in and visit with me. When she came, she began shifting the blame for her son's behavior onto me. With her son seated beside her, she said that he didn't think I liked him, and how was he supposed to do well in school if his teacher didn't even like him? This student was constantly in trouble for breaking school rules. No matter how often I would speak with him or take away privileges, he continued his irresponsible behavior. I assured the mother that I did indeed like her son, but there had to be consequences for his negative behaviors. I couldn't just look the other way in regard to the stealing incident. This mother told me that her son hadn't "stolen" anything; he was just curious, so he took it. I was stunned by her reasoning. I told her that he had taken something without permission that wasn't his—which meant he had stolen something. She wouldn't agree. The same woman had an older daughter who became upset with her volleyball coach. While the mother watched, her daughter slapped the coach. The coach told the girl she was off the team. The mother walked up to her daughter and said, "It's alright, \_\_\_\_\_; I know you didn't do it." This mother refused to believe, regardless of the evidence, that her children could ever do anything wrong. It didn't even matter if she witnessed her children misbehaving—she would deny it had happened. Her perception was the only truth.

Consider the following imaginary scenario. It begins with your neighbor's house. You notice that there is smoke coming from one of the exterior walls of this good man's home, and rush over to tell him. It is difficult to get him to answer his door, as he is so busy inside. When he finally stops long enough to listen to what you have to say, his response is, "I don't see any smoke". You try to tell him that he could see the smoke if he would just step outside and look. He refuses.

"This is one of the best built homes in town, my family has lived in it for generations, and it won't burn down. No, I won't look at the smoke because I just know there isn't any. Stop persecuting me!" He shuts the door and you are

shocked! Why won't he look? He, his family and everything he has ever worked for are about to go up in flames, and he won't even look! How can he say you are persecuting him, when you are telling him the truth? What should you do? You tried to warn him. Should you give up and go home? You don't want to make this man your enemy, yet how can you sit in your comfortable home while your neighbor's house is, perhaps, only minutes away from destruction. You keep trying. You take pictures to prove to him that his house is truly on fire.

"I don't want to look at your pictures. I'm happy and I can't see or smell smoke." You try to tell him that if he'd step outside and take a deep breath, he would indeed smell the smoke. "No," he says. "Look at how well built and beautiful my house is. I've been told all of my life by my family and important, influential people that this house is indestructible. I like what they say; it makes me feel good. How could all those good people be wrong? I'm not going to believe you because what you are saying is making me feel uncomfortable. Besides, if I were to find out that you are right, then I might have to leave this house. I'm not willing to do that. After all, where would I go and what would people say? I'd simply rather believe there is no problem. I don't care what kind of proof you have, I can't be wrong."

People like my grandfather, the 6<sup>th</sup> grader's mother and the imaginary neighbor, are very frustrating. Are we like them? Do we view our perceptions as truth and refuse to look at other viewpoints or facts which may contradict our perceptions? Do we look at other viewpoints with an open mind, or are we like the neighbor who is so certain that he is right, that he will risk sacrificing himself and his family to prove it—despite the facts? If you have been taught that it is wrong or faith defeating to read or study anything that doesn't agree with your religious views, then you have been given some very ungodly advice.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

2 Timothy 2:15

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

Acts 17:11

"These were more noble than those Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

God expects us to study to find truth. The scriptures encourage us to do so. Can our religious beliefs stand up to studying and testing? If we firmly believe that we have the truth, then we will not be afraid to study other viewpoints or beliefs, for in that research we will further prove that our beliefs are right, or we

will find our way out of a false conviction. It is foolish to deal with situations in which our religious beliefs and perceptions of God are questioned by simply getting mad, tossing aside well-researched and documented materials, and refusing to deal with the facts. Far too many people would rather stick their heads in the sand than to come to terms with difficult questions; they take the coward's way out. We can't afford to have grandpa's perception and think that we already know it all. Pride will close the door to truth, and truth is the only way to God.

Millions of people may agree with our religious beliefs, but that doesn't mean we are right. If what we believe goes against God's word—it isn't God who is wrong. If we find out that God's word contradicts our way of thinking or our lifestyle, we must make a choice. We can ignore the truth and pretend there isn't a problem (God is wrong and I am right) or we can step out in courage and make the necessary changes in our lives. For me to presume that God could be wrong is utterly absurd. Could I possibly know better than God, who is all-seeing, all-knowing, and perfect in wisdom and love? If following God means we risk losing family, friends, or a job, do we have the courage to do it, or will we take the coward's way out?

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. **He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.**” (Matthew 10: 32-38)

I believe that into every life there comes at least one monumental moment; a moment at which a choice is made that will forever change the direction of life. One moment when the testing of character will determine courage or cowardice. One appointed moment that affects an eternity.

This book is based on the truths in God's Holy Bible. My opinions are of no consequence, but God's words are life changing and soul saving! I believe that God waits patiently as we approach our monumental moments; moments in which we must choose courage or cowardice; eternal life or a comfortable life.

## *Chapter 2*

### *Common Ground*

Would you, without question, believe a friend who told you that eating green, leafy lettuce is unhealthy for your body? Would you believe it if your mother or a religious leader told you the same thing? I would certainly hope that before you simply quit eating lettuce, you would do a little research. Just because you love and respect your friend, your mother and your leader, doesn't mean they couldn't be wrong. Many people have based their acceptance or lack of acceptance of the Bible on the beliefs of their parents, friends, or leaders, without checking out the facts.

I know that you believe the Bible to be the word of God—as far as it is translated correctly. It is part of the “standard works” of the Mormon Church. Christians believe the Bible to be the undisputed word of God. I decided a few years ago to research the Bible. Just how much of it could I believe? Were there parts that hadn't been translated or transmitted correctly? If so, which parts? What I found was absolutely incredible! Let me share just a few things I have learned about our common book of scripture.

The Bible is unique in so many ways. Its theme and purpose are consistent from Genesis to Revelations. This is quite remarkable when you consider that the Bible was written over a 1500-year span (1400 B.C. – 100 A.D), by 40 different men, on three continents (Europe, Asia, Africa), in different places such as the wilderness, dungeons, palaces and cities, and written in three languages (Hebrew and Aramaic—Old Testament, and Greek—New Testament). Yet despite all this, the Bible is consistent and harmonious.

The circulation and translation of the Bible are unique. This book has been read by more people and published in more languages than any other book. It was the first book translated, and has been translated and retranslated more than any other book in existence. Currently, the Bible has been translated into more than 2,200 languages!

The Bible is unique in its survival. The Jewish people preserved these manuscripts as no other. Only certain special classes of men in their culture were allowed to preserve and transmit these documents. These men were expected to do so with perfection. They actually counted the letters, syllables, words and paragraphs to make certain they had copied everything correctly! In comparison with other ancient writings, there is by far more manuscript evidence for the Bible than for any other piece of classical literature. For example, there are over 24,000 manuscripts in existence today which show how accurately the New Testament has been transmitted—copied and recopied down through the ages. Scholars list the accuracy of the New Testament at 98 – 99%. The book with the next greatest number of manuscript evidences is Homer's “Iliad”, with fewer than 650 Greek manuscripts.

The problem with the Old Testament was that before 1947, the oldest complete extant (existing) Hebrew manuscript was dated at around 900 A.D. Many changes could

have occurred during this period of time. However, with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, manuscripts were found which scholars dated at before the time of Christ. In fact, every book of the Old Testament has been found within the Dead Sea Scrolls except the book of Esther. Scholar after scholar has stated that the manuscripts they have studied show that the standard Hebrew Bible we have today lines up within 95% to these ancient manuscript writings. The variations they found consisted of slips of the pen and variations in spelling. What does this mean? It means that the Old Testament we have today is the same Old Testament that Jesus quoted from. If there had been errors in it, wouldn't He have fixed them instead of quoting from them?

The Bible is unique in its prophecies. It is the only book in which is found a large number of prophecies relating to individual nations, to Israel, and to all the peoples of the earth. Every prophecy in the Bible—excluding end time prophecies yet to be fulfilled—has come to pass. Think about it. One hundred percent accuracy! There are over four dozen prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah. Some of these include His virgin birth, His birth in Bethlehem, His genealogy as a descendent of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, His coming from the tribe of Judah, His betrayal, manner of death and resurrection. The chances of one person fulfilling each one of these prophecies is astronomically impossible! And yet, each one was fulfilled in Christ.

Archaeology has shown the Bible's history and geography to be accurate. This book is absolutely incredible! Archaeological artifacts have never contradicted any statement in the Bible. Not only do we have all the above evidences (and more) for the reliability of the Bible, but we have God's promises to preserve His word:

Isaiah 40:8	“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”
Matthew 5:18	“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”
Matthew 16:18	“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
Matthew 24:35	“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
Luke 16:17	“And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.”
1 Peter 1:25	“But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

In summary, the Bible has not been mistranslated (from one language to another) or transmitted incorrectly (taking a document from one time period to another). All the evidences prove quite the opposite. Dr. Gleason Archer, in his book, “Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties,” has stated:

“There is a good and sufficient answer in Scripture itself to refute every charge that has ever been leveled against it. But this is only to be expected from the kind of book the Bible asserts itself to be, the inscripturation of the infallible, inerrant Word of the Living God.”

People I have encountered who claim the Bible has not been correctly translated, and is, therefore, full of errors, simply have not done their research. They have relied upon statements made by others, instead of checking out the facts. My experience has been that people who claim the Bible to be full of contradictions are:

- a) not familiar with the Bible or historical Christianity.
- b) taking scriptures out of context.
- c) exaggerating or distorting the facts.
- d) mixing the doctrines of men with holy scripture.
- e) failing to recognize figurative language contained in the Bible.
- f) lacking a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages, from which the Bible was translated.
- g) trying to make the Word of God fit into their perception of truth, which may be at odds with God’s truth.

I don’t expect you to just believe me, so I will list a few resources which will help you in your research. It will amaze you at how astounding God has been in preserving His word for us—His truth. There are so many people in this world believing and promoting various beliefs about God which contradict biblical teachings. We have God’s authenticated, proven word in the Bible, and it is our obligation, once we know how reliable it is, to hold all other beliefs and opinions up to its truth; otherwise we may be contentedly sitting in our lovely homes, unable to see that our house is truly on fire.

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## *Chapter 3*

### *Fires*

Fires can destroy lives—physically or spiritually. A spiritual fire begins when a man or woman decides that the word of God needs some revision. The flames of this fire represent the flames of Hell which lull people into a false sense of security as they follow leaders who have twisted and distorted biblical truths. Historically, many people have added to or subtracted from the Bible in order to promote their own ideas and agendas. Religious cults begin this way; a self-proclaimed leader distorts the teachings of historical Christianity and sets himself up as the ultimate authority on God. Many people who join cult groups are highly intelligent and would never consider themselves to be cultists. Cult leaders are powerful and deceptive. They are masters at manipulating their followers through the use of mind control techniques; techniques which distort truth and turn a leader's twisted perception into reality for an entire group of people.

Sun Myung Moon (The Unification Church), Marshall Herff Applewhite and Bonnie Lu Trousedale (Heaven's Gate), David Koresh, Jeffrey Lundgren, and Jim Jones are examples of cult leaders. Each one turned away from biblical Christianity and began a cult group based on personal interpretation of scripture. Each one claimed to have had divine revelations or visions. Each one used behavior, information, thought, and emotional control to govern their followers.

Behavior Control. Cults have a rigid schedule for their members. Free time is restricted because of the demands put upon their people. Activities and fellowship revolve around the cult group, thus isolating their followers. Individualism in thought, behavior, dress, etc. is discouraged. The leader does the thinking for them. There is a chain of command, and obedience to the leader is top priority; his word is followed without question. Doubting or questioning is discouraged or even punished. Cult leaders set many strict rules for their followers, yet the leaders view themselves as above the laws and rules of society as well as those they set for their followers. These groups are usually preoccupied with recruiting new members and/or making money.

Information Control. Cult members are told that the majority of their reading should be cult-related. They are not to read or study anything which is critical of their leader or beliefs. Members spy on each other and report infractions or negative comments made about the cult leader. Members are told not to associate with ex-members or critics. By controlling information, cult leaders disable people from finding out the truth about the cult or the leader. Denying information keeps members from making sound judgments. New recruits are told general information which attracts them to the cult, but the insider doctrines are unveiled gradually as a person gets more deeply involved in the cult and less likely to break away.

Thought Control. Cultists have been taught that any information given to them which is critical of their doctrines or leaders, is simply an attack on the cult. They are trained to automatically disbelieve any criticism, no matter how reliable the source.

Members are taught techniques which keep them from entertaining or thinking about anything negative in regard to the cult or their leader. Since the cult doctrine and leaders are promoted as perfect, any problem that arises is assumed to be the fault of the cult member. The cultist learns to blame himself and work harder. Thought control effectively blocks out any feelings that are not in harmony with the group doctrine.

Emotional Control. Members are told that they are an elitist group and yet at the same time, the cult leader uses guilt and fear as effective tools to keep his followers under control. Happiness consists in suffering for a cause, following a leader, recruiting new members, and status within the cult. Loyalty and devotion are the most highly respected emotions of all. Cultists are not allowed to feel or express negative emotions except toward outsiders. Members are taught that they should not be concerned for their own needs, but always think of the group and never complain. Confession of past sins or wrong attitudes is a device cult leaders use for emotional control. Guilt and confession reinforce the insecurities of the members, while elevating the cult leader. Cultists live with fear, guilt and shame. They feel guilt and shame within the cult because they can never meet the standards of perfection set for them. They fear leaving the cult because they have been taught to fear anyone outside the cult. Cultists are told that if they leave the group, they will be lost and defenseless, and terrible consequences will befall them. Cultists feel that there is no security outside the group. When anyone does decide to leave a cult, the former love they received turns to anger, hatred or ridicule.

(To check my sources and for further information on cults: “Combating Cult Mind Control”, by Steven Hassan—international expert on cults; “Cognitive Dissonance Theory”, by Leon Festinger—psychologist; “Deception, Dependency & Dread—The Conversion Process”, by Michael D. Langone—Ph.D.; “Conditions for Thought Reform”, by Margaret T. Singers—Ph.D. Check the internet for these and other resources regarding cults.)

Cults are easy to join, but difficult to escape. They look very good on the outside—they may be involved with charitable work, they may promote virtuous lifestyles, etc. Deep within the center of each cult, however, lies a deceptive, controlling center--the cult leader-- who steals away the minds of his members and turns them into sheep who are willing to blindly follow his/her questionable leadership and doctrines. A cultist’s perception becomes so distorted, that he/she is unwilling to listen to anything which contradicts the cult’s beliefs; the cult leader’s perception has become the only truth.

No one wants to find out that they have been part of a religious cult—living and promoting a twisted and distorted Christianity. The only way to avoid being taken in or to escape, is to hold all doctrines and leaders up to God’s proven word in the Bible. If the religious leader or doctrines contradict those in the Bible, this group cannot be considered to be Christian. The Apostle Paul warned us about false Christs and a false gospel that would seek to infiltrate the world.

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; **for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness;** whose end shall be according to their works.” (2 Corinthians 11: 4, 13-15)

Paul is talking to the body of believers in Corinth. Apparently, some of those who had received the true teachings of Christ, were being led astray by false teachers who were teaching a different Jesus and a different gospel (cultists). The problem with accepting a different Jesus and a different gospel is that there is only one Jesus Christ and one true gospel. If we believe in a different Jesus, we don't have salvation—which then means we will spend an eternity without God. If we believe in a different gospel, we believe a lie. Lies don't lead people to Christ. Do you see how careful we have to be about who and what we believe in? Those choices have eternal consequences.

Cult leaders want people to believe that their salvation is dependent upon the leader, the organization, and the level of perfection they achieve within the cult. In contradiction to this, the Bible says:

“**That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed . . . For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:9-11, 13)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**” (John 6:47)

“That **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. **He that believeth on him is not condemned:** but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. . . **He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:** and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:15-18, 36)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**” (John 6:47)

Confessing belief in Christ brings salvation. In the book of John 3:14, 15 we read:

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**”

The Israelites were complaining against Moses when God sent serpents to afflict them. People began dying from the bites, which caused a change in the Israelites’ attitudes. They went to Moses in a state of repentance, asking him to intercede with God to take away the serpents. God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole; anyone who was bitten could look up at the serpent and live. God made it easy to be healed! So it is with Christ. Many people believe salvation is something we must work for; we must earn. Not so! It is the free gift of God.

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

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

We look in faith to Christ, admit we are sinners, repent of our sins, accept Him as our Savior, and ask Him to be Lord of our lives. That’s how simple it is! Belief in Christ is EVERYTHING! It is the only way to gain eternal life!

We could call many people by the name of Jesus Christ, but it wouldn’t mean they have the power to save us from our sins—as does the biblical Jesus. A cult leader can create a different Jesus by twisting and distorting not only who Jesus is, but what He taught. There is only one Jesus who can save. Consider this example. You need a loan. I tell you to go talk to my friend, Sam, who works at the local bank. However, there is more than one Sam who works at the bank. So, I tell you that Sam was born in Chicago, Illinois, he has five brothers and two sisters, and that he has worked at the bank for fourteen years. You go into the bank and easily find Sam the loan officer because I gave you an accurate description. Let’s change the situation a little. You need a loan. I tell you about my friend, Sam, who works at the local bank. This time I tell you where Sam was born, how many brothers and sisters he has, and how long he has worked at the bank. However, I add that Sam has multiple real estate investments in Las Vegas, has been married two times and is the father of seven children. You go into the bank and ask to speak to the Sam I have just described. You are told that there is no such man who works there. You see, I gave you SOME correct information, but then I added things which were not accurate—thus twisting and distorting Sam into someone who did not exist.

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:22,23)

We may think we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and repented of our sins, but what if the Jesus we have accepted is a false Jesus who has no power to save us? Scary, isn't it? We could be living for and promoting a false Jesus who cannot save us or anyone else—our house could be on fire!

The fire scares me because I know what it represents—the flames of Hell and an eternity without God. The only thing that can extinguish this fire is the truth. We must know and accept the one true Jesus Christ or, as the Bible tells us, we will spend an eternity in Hell without Him. No one can live a good enough life to be accepted into heaven on his/her own merits.

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)

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

The only way any of us will ever make it to heaven is through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross at Calvary. For the blood to take its cleansing effect, we must admit we are sinners, ask Christ to forgive us, accept Him as our Savior, and ask Him to be Lord of our lives. This only works if we have the right Jesus!

The Bible tells us that there are two choices—Heaven or Hell. What will life without God be like; life in Hell? Matthew 25:46 tells us that it will be an everlasting punishment. Mark 9:43 describes Hell as a fire that will never be quenched. Revelations 20:12-15 speaks of Hell as a lake of fire. The following chart outlines biblical truths about God. Is your house on fire, or do you have the one true God, the one true Jesus Christ in your life who can save you?

### **GOD(S) OF MORMONISM**

- 1. Material (a physical body of flesh and bones)**  
--Joseph Smith, “Journal of Discourses”, Vol. 6, p.3  
--Mormon Doctrine, p. 278
- 2. Mortal (a time when He didn't exist)**  
--Orson Pratt, “The Seer”, 1853, p. 132  
--Mormon Doctrine, p. 321

### **GOD OF THE BIBLE**

- 1. Immaterial (spirit)**  
--Jeremiah 23:24  
--John 4:24  
--1 Timothy 6:16
- 2. Immortal (has always existed)**  
--Psalms 90:2  
--1 Timothy 1:17  
--1 Timothy 6:16

## **GOD(S) OF MORMONISM**

- 3. Changeable, Evolving**  
--Wilford Woodruff, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 6, p. 120  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 11, p. 286.
- 4. Physically localized (is in one place at a time)**  
--Mormon Doctrine, p. 319
- 5. Polygamous**  
--Orson Pratt, "The Seer", Nov. 1853, p. 172.  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 1, pp. 50, 51
- 6. Polytheistic (thousands of Gods)**  
--Mormon Doctrine, pp. 576-577  
--Doctrine and Covenants 132:20
- 7. Tritheistic (3 Earth Gods—Father, Son and Holy Ghost)**  
--Mormon Doctrine, p. 319
- 8. Exalted, Saved Man**  
--Joseph Smith, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 5, p.3  
--Mormon Doctrine, pp. 321, 742

## **GOD OF THE BIBLE**

- 3. Immutable (doesn't change)**  
--Malachi 3:6
- 4. Omnipresent (many places at one time)**  
--Jeremiah 23:24
- 5. Celibate**  
--no mention anywhere in the Bible that God the Father was married.
- 6. Monotheistic (one God)**  
--Isaiah 43:10-11  
--Isaiah 44:6, 8  
--Isaiah 45:5, 6, 14, 21  
--Isaiah 46:9  
--Deuteronomy 4:35, 39  
--Mark 12:32  
--Romans 3:29, 30  
--1 Corinthians 8:4  
--Ephesians 4:6  
--1 Timothy 1:17  
--James 2:19
- 7. Trinitarian (3 personages = 1 God)**  
--John 14: 7, 10-11  
--1 Peter 1:2 (The Father is God.)  
--John 20:28 (Jesus is God)  
--Acts 5:3, 4 (The Holy Spirit is God.)  
--Matthew 28:19  
--1 John 5:7
- 8. Eternal Deity**  
--Numbers 23:19  
--Hosea 11:9  
--Romans 1:22-23

## **GOD(S) OF MORMONISM**

- 9. Eternally Progressing in Certain Attributes**  
--Wilford Woodruff, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 6, p.120  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 11, p. 286
- 10. Feminine Counterpart (heavenly mother)**  
--Mormon Doctrine, p. 516
- 11. Adam, Once Considered God**  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 1, pgs. 50, 51
- 12. Jesus, Begotten by Elohim's Physical Intercourse with Mary**  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 8, p. 115  
--Mormon Doctrine, pgs. 546, 547
- 13. Polygamist Jesus—Probably Married to Martha and Mary Magdalene**  
--Orson Hyde, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 2, p. 210  
--Brigham Young, "Journal of Discourses", Vol. 11, p. 328  
--Orson Pratt, "The Seer", Nov. 1853, p. 172.
- 14. Jesus Christ—Firstborn spirit child of Heavenly Father. Brother of Lucifer. Brother of all mankind. Existed with mankind in a pre-existent state.**  
--Mormon Doctrine, pgs. 129, 192, 193

## **GOD OF THE BIBLE**

- 9. Eternally Immutable in All Characteristics**  
--Malachi 3:6
- 10. No Feminine Counterpart**  
--no mention anywhere in the Bible of a feminine counterpart
- 11. Adam, A Creation of God**  
--Genesis 1:26, 27
- 12. Jesus Begotten Supernaturally by the Holy Spirit**  
--Matthew 1:20
- 13. Jesus Celibate**  
--no mention anywhere in the Bible that Jesus was married
- 14. Jesus—Has always existed as God**  
--John 1:1  
Lucifer was an angel, not a brother  
--Ezekiel 28:13, 14, 15  
Mankind is a creation of God, not brothers or sisters.  
--Genesis 1:26, 27  
Did not live in a pre-existent state with man—mankind did not exist spiritually first.  
--1 Corinthians 15:46, 49

***\*The LDS Church News reported: “In bearing testimony of Jesus Christ, President Hinckley spoke of those outside the Church who say Latter-day Saints ‘do not believe in the traditional Christ. No, I don’t. The traditional Christ of whom they speak is not the Christ of whom I speak. For the Christ of whom I speak has been revealed in this the Dispensation of the Fulness [sic] of Times’” (June 20, 1998).***

The above chart explains why devout Christians do not accept Mormons as Christians. Christians are followers of Jesus Christ—the Jesus of the Bible. Mormons have been taught to trust in a different Jesus. Our Jesus’ are both born in Bethlehem, died on the cross and were resurrected. But Mormonism has added things to the character of Jesus which are not biblical—thus changing who Jesus is. If your belief in Jesus is based on the teachings of the leaders of the Mormon church, please read on as we hold those teachings and leaders up to the proven, infallible word of God. If being right with God is the most important thing to you, don’t be afraid to look for the truth; the God of the Bible encourages it. In doing so, you will prove that your beliefs are right, or you will begin to find your way out of a false conviction. Either way, you win.

## *Chapter 4*

### *Testimonies*

Perhaps you feel that differing Jesus' don't matter because you have a testimony that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the only true church; that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. Let's talk about testimonies. According to my dictionary a testimony is a declaration of faith, but it is also evidence in support of a fact or statement. When you tell me that the LDS church is the only true church, that Joseph Smith was a prophet and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God—you need to be able to provide some kind of evidence that what you are saying is indeed true. If you claim to know these things are true because of a “burning in your bosom”, or because you simply know in your heart, that is insufficient proof. Let me explain.

God's truth can be proven. The Bible has been proven to be accurate historically, prophetically, archaeologically, etc. The reliability of biblical testimony has withstood many tests and will continue to do so. In a court of law, a witnesses' testimony has to be corroborated through evidence in order for that testimony to be viewed as reliable. In order for me to view your testimony as reliable, the facts must bear it out to be such. You see, I have a testimony too. My testimony may be quite the opposite of yours. A Moslem may have a testimony that Allah is the one true God, that Mohammed was a true prophet and that the Koran is the word of God. Who can judge then, which testimony should be believed? We have to hold up a testimony to the already established truth in God's word. If a testimony contradicts the word of God, it is a feeling-guided testimony based on misinformation and emotions.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”  
(Jeremiah 17:9)

“He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.” (Proverbs 28:26)

God knows that we can be deceived by feelings. Satan can indeed create feelings in us; positive and negative. There is only one sure way to know if a feeling is from God or Satan—what does the word of God say about it? Satan is a master deceiver, and if we live our lives thinking that if we “feel good” about something then it must be right, we will make a lot of bad choices. If “feeling good” is the ultimate measure of truth, then we might as well throw out God's word and believe everyone and everything we hear. If Satan can cause us to feel angry and frustrated, why couldn't he also bring a false sense of happiness and contentment in order to keep us from progressing or learning too much? Using God's word, we can discern if the following testimony may be viewed as reliable: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the only true church, Joseph Smith was a prophet, and the Book of Mormon is the word of God.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Only True Church**

#### *A. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the Only True Church*

First of all, let's research the word "church". The New Testament—wherein the word "church" is found—was translated into English from Greek. The Greek word for "church" is Ekklesia; Ek meaning "out" and kaleo meaning "to call". The "church" therefore, is the people who are called out as believers in Christ. The "church" is the body of believers, not an institution or organization. The Mormon church teaches that unless a church is specifically called "The Church of Jesus Christ", it can't be the true church. Other requisites include that the true church must have the same organization (apostles and prophets), as did Christ's original church (see Mormon Doctrine, p. 139). Let's see how the apostle Paul addressed the "church" in his letters to them.

1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the **church of God** which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."

2 Corinthians 1:1 "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the **church of God** which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:"

Ephesians 1:1 "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to **the saints which are at Ephesus**, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 1:1 "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all **the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi**, . . ."

Colossians 1:1, 2 "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To **the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse**: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thessalonians 1:1 "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto **the church of the Thessalonians** which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thessalonians 1:1 "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto **the church of the Thessalonians** in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle Paul did not use a specific name to address the "church". Christ's "church" is the body of believers, not a specific organization. Paul was concerned, however, with making certain that the gospel was being taught accurately. The name of a

church will not tell you if it is a true Christian church, but the teachings taught therein will identify it quickly. If the Mormon church is a true Christian church, then it must strictly follow the biblical teachings of Christ—the Christ of the Bible. If the Mormon church is indeed the only true church, that must mean that all other churches are false—even those based on biblical truths. If the Bible is true, and there are churches which teach strictly from the Bible, how can these churches then be false? Is it their organization?

The Mormon church teaches that Christ’s “church” had the same officers and organization as the Mormon church has today. Let’s check it out, using the Bible as our accurate and reliable source of truth. Nowhere in the Bible do we see the following offices which the Mormon church has within its organization: the quorum of the First Presidency, Assistants to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, the first seven Presidents of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric.

Apostles: There was only one man chosen to fill the vacancy in the original twelve apostles from which Judas fell. In Acts 1:21-23 we can see there were certain qualifications that an apostle had to meet. **One called as an apostle must have accompanied Jesus and have been a witness of his resurrection** (Acts 1:21-26; 5:32; Luke 1:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:8). Paul claimed that he was the last person to see the risen Christ and to receive an apostolic calling (1 Corinthians 15:8). Now consider for a moment, the building of a house. A house needs a solid foundation. Once a foundation is built, there is no need to build another foundation. The house is built from the one foundation up. Ephesians 2:20 says, “And are built upon the foundation *of the apostles* and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;” The scripture doesn’t say, “built upon the foundation *of apostles* and prophets, . . .” This scripture tells us that Christ’s church is built upon **the** foundation (singular foundation) of **the** apostles (singular group). This foundation never needed to be rebuilt because the Bible tells us in Matthew 16:18:

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

In order for Christ’s church to have been taken off the earth (making a second foundation of apostles necessary), the gates of Hell would have had to prevail, making God a liar.

Prophets: “***For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.***” (Matthew 11:13)

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

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

These scriptures indicate that there was not a designated “prophet” after John the Baptist. There have been men and women who have been given the gift of prophecy since that time (Acts 13:1, Acts 15:32, Acts 21:10-11, Acts 21:9, Acts 2:16-18). The calling as prophet—spokesman for God—is different than the gift of prophecy. In the past, God spoke through a prophet. Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us that now God speaks through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Mormon church has a “prophet” when the word of God tells us we no longer need one.

High Priests. The duty of the Jewish High Priest was to offer sacrifices for sins. (Hebrews 5:1) Leviticus 8 tells how these sacrifices were to be made for sin, and how Aaron and his sons were called and consecrated as High Priests. The Mormon High Priests do not follow this biblical pattern. Hebrews 7 tells us that ***Christ was the last High Priest and continues as High Priest forever***—there is no need for others to be ordained. Christ offered a sacrifice for sin once for all when he offered up Himself. Why would we continue to need a High Priest when Christ made the last, ultimate sacrifice for sin?

Seventies. “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.” (Luke 10:1) This scripture speaks of a time when Christ sent out seventy witnesses or missionaries. ***There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate this is an office of the priesthood***, or that this was ever repeated.

Elders. Titus 1:5-6 gives the qualifications for an elder: “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be ***blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly***.” Unmarried Mormon males are ordained Elders before they can serve missions, even though the Bible teaches that an Elder must be a married man. The Mormon church does not follow the biblical guidelines for the office of Elder.

Patriarch or Evangelist. In the Mormon church, the patriarch gives blessings to members of the church. He seals blessings upon them and pronounces their lineage. However, ***there is nothing in the New Testament about the need of a Patriarch***. There is nothing that indicates that an evangelist is another term for Patriarch. Evangelists are preachers of God’s word (2 Timothy 4:2-5).

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

Priests: *The New Testament does not list the office of priest as part of the church.* And yet, young Mormon men, aged 16, qualify for this “office”. Priests were no longer needed after Christ became the last, ultimate sacrifice.

Teachers. The Mormon church ordains boys at the age of 14 to be teachers. The New Testament speaks of teachers: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, *the same commit thou to faithful men*, who shall be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

Deacons. Mormon boys as young as 12 years old are ordained as deacons. “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless “. . . *Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.*” (1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12) Twelve year old boys are not normally husbands and fathers.

Pastors. Ephesians 4:11 speaks of pastors. *The Mormon church does not have any pastors.* Instead they claim that a pastor is the same as a bishop even though the Bible lists them separately.

Regarding the above “offices”, I have found the following information: *Brigham Young didn’t believe that boys should be Deacons* (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, p. 89); *Brigham Young ordained his own sons to be Apostles when they were 18 and 11 years old* (“Church Chronology”, Compiled by Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, Salt Lake City, 1899, p. xxvii); *Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor to Brigham Young, ordained his boy a High Priest when he was only about 6 years old* (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 10, pp. 370-372).

The Mormon priesthood and its offices have changed repeatedly over time. If you want to do your own research, there is a fascinating book filled with excellent and accurate documentation. The title is: “The Mormon Hierarchy—Origins of Power” by D. Michael Quinn (Ph.D. from Yale University).

There is nothing biblical about the Mormon priesthood. *When Christ shed His blood, making an atonement once and for all, the Aaronic Priesthood was no longer needed* (Hebrews 7-10). The whole purpose of the Aaronic Priesthood was to act as mediator between the people and God in regard to sin. These were the men who offered up the animal sacrifices for the people, which sacrifices acted as a covering for sin. Christ was the last, ultimate sacrifice for sin. Secondly, *in order for a man to hold the Aaronic Priesthood, he would have to be a Jew who was a literal descendant of Aaron--of the Tribe of Levi* (Hebrews 7:5; Exodus 28:1, 29:9,44; 31:10; Numbers 3:1-10). Jesus did not meet this qualification, and yet every Mormon male does?

*The Melchizedek priesthood could never have been given to Joseph Smith because Christ alone holds it forever* (Hebrews 7). The Melchizedek priesthood can only be held

by one person at a time. This priesthood is a saving office that only Christ could hold. ***There is no mention anywhere in the New Testament of believers having the Aaronic or Melchizedek priesthoods conferred upon them.***

Just because a church uses the name of Jesus Christ in its title, does not make it Christ's one true church. The "church" is the body of believers who are following Christ, not an organization or institution. For the "church" to be true, the people must be learning and teaching true principles as set forth in the Bible. Distorting "offices" or "priesthoods" from those in the Bible would indicate that a "church" is not following Christ, but promoting the views of its leader.

## Chapter 6

### Prophet

#### B. Joseph Smith was a Prophet

If I were to call myself a prophet and tell you that I had seen visions and knew that I was to start a new church, God’s one true church—would you simply believe me? I hope not. We need to investigate before simply believing any self-proclaimed prophet. God has given us ways to determine whether or not someone is truly a prophet of God. In Deuteronomy 18:20-22 we are told about one of these ways:

“But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? **When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken,** but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

If I am going to presume to speak for God, to be His prophet, then every single one of my prophecies must come to pass. If I am wrong about even one of them, I am a false prophet. If we are to believe the testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet, then we need to check his prophecies for accuracy—100% accuracy.

Joseph Smith wrote a letter to N.E. Seaton, on January 4, 1833. He stated: “And now I am prepared to say, **by the authority of Jesus Christ**, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; **pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land**, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country . . . flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, **for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things**, which I have spoken, fulfilled.” (History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 315-316) *This never happened.*

“Verily **this is the word of the Lord**, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, **which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord**, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house. (Doctrine & Covenants 84:4-5) *This revelation was given in September of 1832. It has now been over 170 years since Joseph Smith prophesied that the temple would be built in “this generation” in the western boundaries of the state of Missouri (Independence). The people of that generation never did return to build a temple, and one still does not exist there today.*

In 1835, Joseph Smith prophesied that the second coming of Jesus Christ was near, and that 56 years would wind up the scene. (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 182) (See also: Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, Vol. 2, pp. 128-129) *If this had been a true prophecy, Christ would have returned in the year 1891.*

In 1829, when the Book of Mormon was being printed, more money was needed to finish it. Joseph Smith and other church leaders had been waiting on Martin Harris to sell his farm to raise the money needed. After some time, Hyrum Smith and others became impatient and wanted to raise the money another way. Hyrum said it had been suggested that some of the brethren go to Toronto, Canada to sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon. Hyrum convinced Joseph to inquire of the Lord. Joseph looked into the hat in which he placed the seer stone and received a revelation instructing some of the brethren to go to Toronto, Canada and sell the copyright. Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but they failed to sell the copy-right.

B.H. Roberts (noted LDS Church Historian) has stated, trying to justify the above revelation:

“The revelation respecting the Toronto journey was **not of God**, surely; **else it would not have failed**; but the Prophet, overwrought in his deep anxiety for the progress of the work, saw reflected in the ‘Seer Stone’ **his own thought**, or that suggested to him by his brother Hyrum, **rather than the thought of God** . . . in this instance of the Toronto journey, **Joseph was evidently not directed by the inspiration of the Lord.**” (A Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 164-165) *There is no way to justify this “mistake” being made by a man claiming to be a prophet of God.*

“I will say here, that I could tell you other false revelations that came through Brother Joseph as mouthpiece, (not through the stone) but this will suffice. Many of Brother Joseph’s revelations were never printed. The revelation to go to Canada was written down on paper, but was never printed.” (An Address to All Believers in Christ, by David Whitmer, 1887, p. 31)

On October 15, 1843, Joseph Smith stated: “**I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God of Israel**, anguish and wrath and tribulation and the withdrawing of the Spirit of God from the earth await **this generation, until they are visited with utter desolation.**” (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 58) *Another false prophecy.*

Joseph Smith made at least 53 false prophecies of which I am aware. For a list of these prophecies, write to:

H.I.S. Ministeries International  
P.O. Box 900415  
Sandy, UT 84093

Or, you may access this information at [www.hismin.com/53FlsPro.htm](http://www.hismin.com/53FlsPro.htm). Check out the references for yourself. There is no way of escaping the fact that Joseph Smith made many false prophecies.

Matthew 7:15, 16 tells us of another way to discern a true prophet from a false prophet:

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. . .”

The fruits of an apple tree are apples, not pears. The fruits of Christ “tree” would reflect the teachings of Christ. The fruits of an evil tree would distort the teachings of Christ. God would never command a prophet to speak in opposition to His established word; to contradict His holy scriptures.

In chapter three, we see that biblical teachings about the nature of God have been drastically changed by Joseph Smith. The God of the Bible is not the God of Mormonism—Gordon B. Hinckley admitted the same. Listed below is one of many other examples wherein Joseph Smith’s church is in contradiction to biblical teachings.

Genealogy: The Mormon church has spent millions of dollars maintaining one of the world’s greatest genealogical societies. There are hundreds of millions of names and data about people who have lived in the past which are available for study. The reason for this genealogy, is so that work can be done for the dead in Mormon temples--baptisms, endowments, sealings. Mormons believe that 1 Corinthians 15:29 promotes baptism for the dead as a biblical teaching. The apostle Paul said:

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

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

“None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) (Psalms 49:7, 8)

The Bible tells us that genealogies are pointless, and that no one can do redemptive work for another person. The scripture in 1 Corinthians 15:29 says, “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” Throughout 1 Corinthians, Paul refers to the Corinthian believers and himself using first-person pronouns (“we”, “ye”, “I”). But when he comes to 1 Corinthians 15:29—the verse dealing with baptism for the dead—Paul switches to the third person pronoun (“they”). Paul is referring to people other than Christians in Corinth. Paul seems to be disassociating himself from the group practicing these proxy baptisms. There is no mention of baptism for the dead anywhere else in the Bible. The Bible contains no specific authorization of this doctrine, or of endowments and sealings. Christ does not mention them, nor do any of the apostles, save Paul, who makes only an indirect reference to baptism for the dead.

If you found out that a good friend had been lying to you and other people for years, do you think it would be wise for you to disregard those lies and promote this friend of yours as trustworthy to yourself and others? There are no examples in the Bible where God tells one of His prophets that it is permissible to lie. God's prophets do not lie about His truths. In this regard, we must ask, "Did Joseph Smith ever lie about what he claimed were God's truths?"

In the beginning, the Mormon Church did not believe in plural marriage. In the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, printed in 1835, section 101:4 states:

" . . . Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again."

However, even before this 1835 statement, Joseph had already married one plural wife, Fanny Alger. At the time Joseph Smith recorded the revelation on plural marriage, in 1843, he had twenty-eight plural wives. There could possibly have been more. The data shows that 33% of Joseph Smith's wives were teenagers—14 to 20 years old. Another 27% were 21 to 30 years old. In Joseph Smith's peer group, ages 31 to 40, the percentage was 24%. Only 6% were ages 41-50, and 9% were ages 51-60.

Eighteen of Joseph's wives (55%) were single when he married them and had never been married previously. Another four (12%) were widows. The remaining eleven women (33%) were married to other husbands with whom they were living, when Joseph Smith married them. All together, before Joseph Smith died, there is documentation that shows he was married to at least thirty-three women besides Emma.

In the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, printed in 1835, section 101:4 states: "**All legal contracts of marriage made before a person is baptized into this church, should be held sacred and fulfilled . . .**" Joseph Smith was not following his own doctrine.

Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants today states that the revelation on plural marriage was **recorded** on July 12, 1843. But, before 1890 it read "**given**" July 12, 1843. Joseph F. Smith (Journal of Discourses Vol. 20, p. 29 in 1878), in order to justify the fact that Joseph Smith had already married many plural wives before this revelation came out said:

"To put this matter more correctly before you, I here declare that the principle of plural marriage was not first revealed on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1843. It was written for the first time on that date, but it had been revealed to the Prophet many years before that, perhaps as early as 1832."

Regardless of the above statement, the fact is that the following statements by Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith were given at the same time plural marriage was being practiced:

“But, for the information of those who may be assailed by those foolish tales about two wives, we would say that **no such principle ever existed among the Latter-Day Saints, and never will**; this is well known to all who are acquainted with our books and actions, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants; and also all our periodicals are very strict and explicit on that subject, indeed far more so than the bible.” (Joseph Smith, Millennial Star, Vol. 3, p. 74 in 1842)

“All legal contracts of marriage made before a person is baptized into this church, should be held sacred and fulfilled. Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: **we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband**, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again.” (Joseph Smith, “Times & Seasons”, Vol. 3, p. 909 in 1842)

“. . . Whereas brother Richard Hewitt has called on me to-day, to know my views concerning some doctrines that are preached in your place, and states to me that some of your elders say, that a man having a certain priesthood, may have as many wives as he pleases, and that doctrine is taught here: I say unto you that that man teaches **false doctrine, for there is no such doctrine taught here; neither is there any such thing practiced here**. And any man that is found teaching privately or publicly any such doctrine, is culpable, and will stand a chance to be brought before the High Council, **and lose his license and membership also**; therefore he had better beware what he is about.” (Hyrum Smith, “Times & Seasons”, Vol. 5, p. 474 in 1844)

“As we have lately been credibly informed, that an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter-day Saints, by the name of Hiram Brown, **has been preaching Polygamy, and other false and corrupt doctrines**, in the county of Lapeer, state of Michigan.”

“This is to notify him and the Church in general, that **he has been cut off from the church, for his iniquity**; and he is further notified to appear at the Special Conference, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April next, to make answer to these charges.” (Joseph Smith, “Times & Seasons”, Vol. 5, p. 423 in 1844)

Despite Joseph F. Smith’s reasoning, Joseph Smith was lying to the public about Polygamy, which he later called the “most Holy Principle.” This fact alone would disqualify Joseph as being a true prophet because true prophets would never lie about God’s doctrines of salvation. For more information on this topic:

“In Sacred Loneliness The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith”

--Todd Compton/Signature Books, Salt Lake City

(Todd Compton, Ph.D., among other noteworthy achievements, is the recipient of a Best Article Award from the Mormon History Association.)

If a prophet of God translated ancient writings from one language into another, claiming that he did so with the power of God, wouldn't you assume that the translation would be correct? Let's examine Joseph Smith's ability to translate “The Book of Abraham.”

On July 4, 1835, Michael H. Chandler was in Kirtland, Ohio, exhibiting his collection of four Egyptian mummies. (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 235) Several of the brethren in the LDS Church were very interested in this exhibit because of the ancient writings written on papyri which had been found with the mummies. These brethren paid Mr. Chandler \$2,400.00 to purchase the entire exhibit. These men then presented it to Joseph Smith. (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 236)

“... with W. W. Phelps and Oliver Cowdery as scribes, I [Joseph Smith] commenced the translation of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt, etc.—a more full account of which will appear in its place, as I proceed to examine or unfold them. Truly we can say, the Lord is beginning to reveal the abundance of peace and truth.” (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 236)

Along with the translation of the papyri, Joseph Smith also prepared an alphabet and grammar of the Egyptian language. The Saints felt that if Joseph Smith could decipher Egyptian characters from the papyri, it was further evidence that he was a prophet of God.

As the translation of the Book of Abraham papyrus continued, its contents began to justify the newer doctrines that Joseph Smith had recently introduced into the church, such as: eternal progression, plurality of Gods, the pre-existence of spirits, and priesthood authority.

Up until the year 1799, when the Rosetta Stone was discovered, Egyptian hieroglyphics could not be understood. After many years of dedicated work on the Rosetta Stone, scholars were able to decipher Egyptian. In Joseph Smith's day, however, very few people in the world had any understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Although the Saints had no one to check the authenticity of the translation, they believed that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and could truly decipher this ancient language.

When the Saints left Nauvoo after the death of Joseph Smith, and headed for the Salt Lake Valley, the papyri stayed behind in the possession of Emma Smith. Although the original papyri stayed with Emma (Joseph's widow), copies of the facsimiles (pictures from the papyri) had been made and were taken, along with Joseph's translation of the Book of Abraham, to Utah.

The facsimiles and Joseph Smith's accompanying explanations were printed in the Pearl of Great Price and many copies made their way to England. In 1856, one of these pamphlets turned up in the Louvre in Paris. M. Theodule Deveria was shown this booklet and was asked to comment on it. Deveria was a pioneer in Egyptology. As he studied the facsimiles, he recognized these pictures as being common funerary documents. He had seen many of these before. Enough of the writing was legible so that Deveria could decipher the names of different Egyptian gods and goddesses. Deveria claimed Joseph Smith's explanations of the facsimiles were nonsense. ("A Journey to Great Salt Lake City", by Jules Remy, 1861)

In 1880, the Book of Abraham was officially recognized as scripture. In 1912, Rt. Reverend Franklin S. Spaulding, Episcopal Bishop of Utah, sent copies of the facsimiles from the Book of Abraham to leading scholars of Egyptology, asking them for an assessment of the interpretations. The eight Egyptologists and Semitists who responded were in agreement as to the interpretations. The following are a few of these scholars' names and comments:

Dr. Arthur Mace, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.  
"Joseph Smith's interpretation of these cuts is a farrago of nonsense from beginning to end," and he added that "five minutes study in an Egyptian gallery of any museum should be enough to convince any educated man of the clumsiness of the imposture;"

Dr. A. H. Sayce, Oxford England.  
"... difficult to deal seriously with Smith's impudent fraud," he wrote. "Smith has turned the Goddess into a king and Osiris into Abraham."

James H. Breasted, Ph.D., Haskell Oriental Museum, University of Chicago.  
"... very clearly demonstrates that he (Joseph Smith) was totally unacquainted with the significance of these documents and absolutely ignorant of the simplest facts of Egyptian Writing and civilization."

W. M. Flinders Petrie, London University.  
"... the attempts to guess a meaning are too absurd to be noticed. It may be safely said that there is not one single word that is true in these explanations."

Church spokesmen charged the scholars with using erroneous criteria; faulty methods, and questionable motives. Mormon writer John Henry Evans said that the only way scholars could accurately test Joseph Smith's ability to translate Egyptian would be to examine the original papyrus, or a copy of it, from which the Book of Abraham was translated (Improvement Era, Vol. 16, February 1913, p. 343).

In 1966, Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, a professor of Arabic Studies from the University of Utah found the Joseph Smith papyri in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. On November 27, 1967, the Salt Lake City Deseret News announced:

“NEW YORK—A collection of pa[p]yrus manuscripts, long believed to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871 was presented to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints here Monday by the Metropolitan Museum of Art . . .”

“Included in the papyri is a manuscript identified as the original document from which Joseph Smith had copied the drawing which he called ‘Facsimile No. 1’ and published with the Book of Abraham.”

Members of the Mormon church were very excited. There was no doubt as to the authenticity of the papyri. The reverse sides of the paper to which the papyri had been glued, contained, among other things, drawings of a temple and maps of the Kirtland, Ohio area. Now that the original document was accessible, the Church could prove that the arguments of the critics were faulty. The papyri were turned over to some of the Church’s top scholars at BYU for translation.

Dr. Sperry and Dr. Clark from BYU recommended a professional be consulted to work on the papyri. LDS leaders were not comfortable with having a non-Mormon doing the translation. Dr. Hugh Nibley of BYU was given the job of studying and translating the papyri. Nibley knew he was not a qualified Egyptologist. Nibley asked Dee Jay Nelson, a Mormon elder who had been involved in the study of Egyptology for 20 years, to help him. In January 1968, they began to examine the original papyri and the papyri photographs.

As he was translating, Nelson discovered something which disturbed him greatly; not only did the papyri (including facsimile no. 1 and the small sensen fragment) NOT contain the Book of Abraham, but there was no connection at all between their contents and Abraham. They were ordinary Egyptian funeral documents. Nelson sent the results of his work to the LDS Church. The Church declined publishing his findings. Dr. Nibley praised Nelson’s work, calling it a “conscientious and courageous piece of work,” and pointing out that it supplied students with “a usable and reliable translation of the available papyri that once belonged to Joseph Smith.” (Brigham Young University Studies, Spring 1968, p. 247)

When the Church refused to publish his work, Nelson submitted it for publication elsewhere. At this time, the editors of “Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought”, decided to get a number of renowned Egyptologists to give their interpretations of the Joseph Smith papyri.

Dr. John A. Wilson (University of Chicago), confirmed that all the fragments were funerary texts.

Dr. Klaus Baer (University of Chicago) and Professor Richard Parker (Brown University), each agreed in all essentials with Nelson.

Egyptologists have dated the papyri at after 500 B.C., fifteen-hundred years or more later than Abraham's time. (John A. Wilson in "Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought", Summer 1968, p. 70)

Thomas Stuart Ferguson, was a stalwart defender of the Mormon faith. He established the New World Archaeological Foundation at BYU, wrote "One Fold and One Shepherd", and co-authored the book "Ancient America and the Book of Mormon". Ferguson stated in a letter he wrote dated March 10, 1971: ". . . Since 4 scholars, who have established that they can read Egyptian, say that the manuscripts deal with neither Abraham nor Joseph—and since the 4 reputable men tell us exactly what the manuscripts do say—I must conclude that Joseph Smith had not the remotest skill in things Egyptian—hieroglyphics. To my surprise, one of the highest officials in the Mormon Church agreed with that conclusion when I made that very statement to him on Dec. 4, 1970—privately in one-to-one [c]onversation . . . ."

Mormon writer, Klaus Hansen remarked: "To a professional historian, for example, the recent translation of the Joseph Smith papyri may well represent the potentially most damaging case against Mormonism since its foundation . . ." (Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Summer 1970, p. 110)

Another document related to the Book of Abraham was Joseph Smith's "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language". It had been brought from Nauvoo and had been in the Church Historian's fireproof vault in Salt Lake City. Late in 1965, a microfilmed copy of the entire work was obtained. By 1966, the first photo reprint of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar was produced. Grant Heward submitted this work to professional Egyptologists for examination. I.E. Edwards, Keeper of the Department of Egyptian Antiquities, said the whole work was, "largely a piece of imagination and lacking in any kind of scientific value." Dr. Labib Habachi, and Richard A. Parker (Department of Egyptian Antiquities, British Museum) also declared Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" to be fraudulent. (For more information: ". . . by his own hand upon papyrus", by Charles M. Larson)

What would you think of a man who claimed he was superior to Christ? Would God call a man like this to be a prophet? The following statement was made by Joseph Smith:

"I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him; but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet." (History of the Church, Vol. 6, pp. 408, 409)

Prophets of God do not give false prophecies, promote non-biblical teachings, lie about sacred doctrines, mistranslate ancient writings, and think they are superior to Christ.

## *Chapter 7*

### *The Word of God*

#### C. The Book of Mormon is the Word of God

In order for the Book of Mormon to be considered the word of God, it should be able to stand up to the same tests as does the Bible. Archaeology confirms the historical accuracy and reliability of the Bible. Can the same be said for the Book of Mormon?

For years, rumors have been circulating throughout the LDS church claiming that archaeology backs up the Book of Mormon. The Smithsonian Institute and the National Geographic Society reject archaeological claims made concerning the Book of Mormon. The Smithsonian still sends out the following statement:

1. "The Smithsonian Institution has never used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see no direct connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the book."

2. "The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most closely related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. Archeological evidence indicates that the ancestors of the present Indians came into the New World—probably over a land bridge known to have existed in the Bering Strait region during the last Ice Age—in a continuing series of small migrations beginning about 30,000 years ago."

Anyone may request a copy of the entire statement by writing:

Public Information Officer  
Dept. of Anthropology  
National Museum of Natural History  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C. 20560

The National Geographic Society stated:

"... Neither representatives of the National Geographic Society nor, to my knowledge, archaeologists connected with any other institution of equal prestige have ever used the Book of Mormon in locating historic ruins in Middle America or elsewhere."

This statement can be verified by writing:

National Geographic Society  
1145 17<sup>th</sup> St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036-4688

One of the most well-known authorities on the New World is Michael Coe. He has stated:

“Mormon archaeologists over the years have almost unanimously accepted the Book of Mormon as an accurate, historical account of the New World peoples between about 2,000 B.C. and A.D. 421. They believe that Smith could translate hieroglyphs, whether ‘Reformed Egyptian’ or ancient American, and that his translation of the Book of Abraham is authentic. Likewise, they accept the Kinderhook Plates as a bona fide archaeological discovery, and the reading of them as correct. Let me now state uncategorically that as far as I know there is not one professionally trained archaeologist, who is not a Mormon, who sees any scientific justification for believing the foregoing to be true, and I would like to state that there are quite a few Mormon archaeologists who join this group . . . The picture of this hemisphere between 2,000 B.C. and A.D. 421 presented in the book has little to do with the early Indian cultures as we know them, in spite of much wishful thinking . . .”

“The bare facts of the matter are that nothing, absolutely nothing, has ever shown up in any New World excavation which would suggest to a dispassionate observer that the Book of Mormon, as claimed by Joseph Smith, is a historical document relating to the history of early migrants to our hemisphere.” (Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Summer 1973, pp. 41, 42, 46)

M. Wells Jakeman, Professor of Archaeology at BYU has stated:

“ . . . the Book of Mormon peoples . . . had cultures of mainly sedentary type, which—as proved by the results of archaeological excavation throughout the world—invariably leave behind extensive material remains!”

“ . . . Consequently, even if the Book of Mormon peoples had been mainly nomadic—which we have seen they were not—a great deal in the way of material remains or archaeological traces of their existence would have had to be expected . . .”

“ . . . it is inconceivable—and contrary to world-wide archaeological experience—that such civilizations could ever have existed without leaving some identifiable remains.” (The University Archaeological Society Newsletter, BYU, March 30, 1957, pp. 1-7)

Dee F. Green, a Mormon archaeologist stated:

“The first myth we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology exists.” (Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought, Summer 1969, pp. 74, 76-78)

The most compelling evidences of the fictional nature of the Book of Mormon, from an archaeological view, are the things which have not been found.

### *Plant Life*

There are four major crops mentioned in the Nephite records. These are:

- Barley
- Figs
- Grapes
- Wheat

No evidence has been found to support the existence of these plants. The existence of numerous non-Book of Mormon plants (maize, lima beans, tomatoes, squash, etc) has been supported by abundant archaeological findings.

### *Animal Life*

There are many animals mentioned in the Nephite records.

- Ass
- Bull
- Calf
- Cattle
- Cow
- Flocks
- Goat
- Herds
- Horse
- Ox
- Sheep
- Sow
- Swine
- Elephants

“Evidence of the foregoing animals has not appeared in any form—ceramic representations, bones or skeletal remains, mural art, sculptured art or any other form. However . . . evidence has been found in several forms of the presence in the Book-of-Mormon times of other animals—deer, jaguars, dogs, turkeys, etc. The zero score presents a problem that will not go away with the ignoring of it. Non-LDS scholars of first magnitude--some who want to be our friends--think we have real trouble here. That evidence of the ancient existence of these animals is not elusive is found in the fact that proof of their existence in the ancient Old-World is abundant. The absence of such evidence . . . is distressing and significant, in my view.” (Quest For The Gold Plates—Thomas Stuart Ferguson’s Archaeological Search for The Book of Mormon, by Stan Larson, p. 246)

## *Metals*

- bellows
- brass
- breast plates
- chains
- copper
- iron
- ore
- plows
- silver
- swords
- steel

“Metallurgy does not appear in the region under discussion until about the ninth century A.D. None of the foregoing technical demands are met by the archaeology of the region proposed as Book of Mormon lands and places. I regard this as a major weakness in the armor of our proponents and friends.” (Quest For The Gold Plates—Thomas Stuart Ferguson’s Archaeological Search for The Book of Mormon, by Stan Larson, p. 257)

The following two books are great references for further study concerning archaeology and the Book of Mormon:

1. Studies of the Book of Mormon, by B.H. Roberts
2. Quest For The Gold Plates—Thomas Stuart Ferguson’s Archaeological Search for The Book of Mormon, by Stan Larson

Both B. H. Roberts and Thomas Stuart Ferguson were Mormons in good standing within the Mormon church. Yet each came to realize that the Book of Mormon was a fictionalized account. The Book of Mormon fails the archaeological test.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the over 24,000 extant New Testament manuscripts have shown the Bible to be incredibly accurate. How accurate is the Book of Mormon? Have there been many changes?

Most of the 3,913 changes in the Book of Mormon are related to the correction of grammatical and spelling errors, but there are some that alter the meaning of the text. According to Joseph Smith’s own testimony, there should not have been any reason to make changes in the Book of Mormon. He stated that when he and the witnesses went out to pray concerning it, “We heard a voice from out of the bright light above us, saying, ‘These plates . . . have been translated by the power of God. **The translation of them which you have seen is correct . . .**’” (History of the Church, vol. 1, pp. 54-55) On another occasion Joseph Smith stated that he “told the brethren that **the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth . . .**” (Ibid., vol. 4, p. 461)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses made this statement, “I will now give you a description of the manner in which the Book of Mormon was translated. Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. **One character at a time would appear, and under it was the interpretation in English. Brother Joseph would read off the English to Oliver Cowdery, who was his principal scribe, and when it was written down and repeated to Brother Joseph to see if it was correct, then it would disappear, and another character with the interpretation would appear.** Thus the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God and not by any power of man.” (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, pg. 12.)

“Saturday, Feb. 25, 1881 . . . Heard Joseph F. Smith (the sixth president of the church) describe the manner of translating the Book of Mormon . . . **Joseph did not render the writing on the gold plates into the English language in his own style of language as many people believe, but every word and every letter was given to him by the gift and power of God . . . The Lord caused each word spelled as it is in the book to appear on the stones in short sentences or words, and when Joseph had uttered the sentence or word before him and the scribe had written it properly, that sentence would disappear and another appear. And if there was a word wrongly written or even a letter incorrect the writing on the stones would remain there . . . and when corrected the sentence would disappear as usual.**” (Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, p. 168 of typed copy at Utah State Historical Society).

The four most important changes Joseph Smith made in the Book of Mormon are related to the doctrine of the Godhead. A significant change was made in 1 Nephi 13:40. In the 1830 edition it was stated that the very purpose of the Nephite records was to make known that **Christ is the Eternal Father**: “. . . These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, **that the Lamb of God is the Eternal Father and Savior of the world** . . .” (Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., p. 32) In the current Utah edition, 1 Nephi 13:40, three words have been interpolated: “These last records, . . . shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people that **the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father**, and the Savior of the world . . .” Similar changes concerning the Godhead were made in three other places in the text of the Book of Mormon.

An important change concerning the name of a king was made in the book of Mosiah. In the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, p. 200, we read: “king **Benjamin** had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings . . .” In modern editions this has been changed to read: “. . . king **Mosiah** had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings . . .” (Mosiah 21:28) From chronology found in the Book of Mormon (see Mosiah 6:3-7 and 7:1), it would appear that king Benjamin should have been dead at this time. The name, therefore, was changed to Mosiah.

It is interesting to note that even the statement by the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon has been altered. In the 1830 edition the last page contained this statement: “. . . Joseph Smith, Jr. the **Author and Proprietor** of this work, has shewn unto us the plates . . .” In modern editions it was changed to read: “. . . Joseph Smith, Jun., the **translator** of this work, has shown unto us the plates . . .”

Alma 32:30 before 1981 had only 32 words, but in the new edition, it contains 67 words. The original edition had 67 words. One of the most frequent mistakes in the first edition of the Book of Mormon was the use of “was” instead of “were.” The following are extracts from the first edition in which “was” has been changed in later editions to “were”:

“. . . Adam and Eve, which was our first parents . . .” (p. 15)

“. . . the bands which was upon my wrists . . .” (p. 49)

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“. . . the priests was not to depend . . .” (p. 193)

“. . . those that was with him.” (p. 195)

“. . . there was many . . .” (p. 209)

“. . . I had much desire that ye was not in the state of dilemma . . .” (p. 241)

“. . . they was angry with me, . . .” (p. 248)

“. . . there was no wild beasts . . .” (p. 460)

Another common mistake in the first edition was the use of the word “is” when it should read “are.” The following are extracts from the first edition in which the word “is” has been changed to “are” in later editions:

“. . . there is save it be, two churches . . .” (p. 33)

“. . . the words which is expedient . . .” (p. 67)

“. . . And whoredoms is an abomination . . .” (p. 127)

“. . . here is our weapons of war . . .” (p. 346)

Another mistake in the first edition was the use of the word “a” where it was not necessary. In the following extracts “a” has been deleted in later editions:

“. . . as Ammon and Lamoni was a journeying thither . . .”

“. . . he found Muloki a preaching . . .” (p. 284)

“. . . had been a preparing the minds . . .” (p. 358)

“. . . Moroni was a coming against them . . .” (p. 403)

The extracts that follow are from the first edition; the word “no” has been changed to “any” in later editions:

“. . . have not sought gold nor silver, nor no manner of riches . . .” (p. 157)

“. . . they did not fight against God no more . . .” (p. 290)

“. . . neither were there Lamanites, nor no manner of Ites . . .” (p. 515)

(To check on these references: “Joseph Smith Begins His Work,” Vol. 1, Book of Mormon 1830 First Edition, by Wilford C. Wood)

The Book of Mormon is supposed to contain the fullness of the gospel” (D&C 27:5; 135:3). Joseph Smith said, in speaking of the Book of Mormon: It is “the most correct of any book on earth, and **the keystone of our religion**, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.” (History of the Church, Vol. 4, p.461) Mormon Doctrine, p. 333 says that **the highest laws and ordinances are contained in the Book of Mormon**. If this is true, why were the following doctrines and ordinances not mentioned in the Book of Mormon, but rather added with the creation of additional Mormon scripture?

- Pre-existence
- God is an exalted man
- Plurality of Gods
- Celestial marriage
- Plural marriage
- Organization of the church
- Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods
- Three degrees of heaven
- Temple rites
- Baptism for the dead
- Sealings
- Sacred garments
- Word of wisdom
- Men and women can become Gods

The Bible is linguistically accurate. The languages it was originally written in were the actual languages being spoken in those regions at that time. How does the Book of Mormon rate? Dr. John McLaughlin (Linguist, Utah State University) states that there is evidence of between 800-900 different languages which have or are being spoken on the American continent for the last few centuries. Among all of these languages, there is absolutely no evidence that shows the Hebrew language origins which are claimed by the Book of Mormon (DNA vs. The Book of Mormon, [www.livinghopeministries.info](http://www.livinghopeministries.info)). The Book of Mormon fails the linguistics test.

In addition, DNA studies have proven that there was no Hebrew migration to the Americas as is stated in the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. The American Indians are not of Hebrew/Israelite descent. DNA has shown that American Indian DNA is found in populations of people from Asia. These facts can be confirmed by the following experts:

Dr. Stephen L. Whittington (Anthropologist, University of Maine)  
Randall Shorridge, Ph.D. (Molecular Biology, University at Buffalo, N.Y.)

Thomas Murphy (Mormon Anthropologist and Scholar)  
Simon Southerton, Ph.D. (Molecular Biologist)  
Dr. David Glen Smith (Molecular Anthropologist, University of California at Davis)  
Dr. Dennis O'Rourke (Molecular Anthropologist, University of Utah)  
(DNA vs. The Book of Mormon, [www.livinghopeministries.info](http://www.livinghopeministries.info))

You might claim that there were witnesses to the Book of Mormon, therefore it must have come from God. In all fairness, we need to research the character of these witnesses so that we may discern the reliability of their testimonies.

Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris claimed that an angel of God showed them the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. Eight additional witnesses claimed to have seen the plates, although they saw no angel.

There are two statements in Mormon publications which seem to indicate that these witnesses had some doubts.

“Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who handled the plates and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel.” (Brigham Young—Journal of Discourses, Vol. 7, p. 164)

A poem appeared in the Mormon publication “Times and Seasons” in 1841:

“Amazed with wonder? I look around  
To see most people of our day,  
Reject the glorious gospel sound,  
Because the simple turn away,  
Or does it prove there is no time,  
Because some watches will not go?  
...

Or prove that Christ was not the Lord  
Because that Peter cursed and swore?

**Or Book of Mormon not his word  
Because denied, by Oliver?”**

(Times and Seasons, Vol. 2, page 482)

Some of the most damaging statements against the Book of Mormon witnesses, have come from Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders. Joseph Smith gave two revelations in which Martin Harris (one of the three witnesses) was called a “wicked man”. (Doctrine and Covenants 3:12-13; 10: 6-7)

Apostle John A. Widtsoe made the following statement concerning Hiram Page (one of the eight witnesses):

“Hiram Page (1800-1852), appears to have been somewhat fanatical. He found a stone through which he claimed to receive revelations, often contrary to those received by Joseph Smith. For this he was reprimanded.” (Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth, page 58)

Joseph Smith admitted that Hiram Page (one of the eight witnesses) gave false revelations, and that the Whitmers (four of the eight witnesses) were believing in these false revelations. (History of the Church, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 1, pp. 109-110)

Martin Harris (one of the three witnesses) was in trouble with the Church quite often.

“The council proceeded to investigate certain charges presented by Elder Rigdon against Martin Harris; one was that he told A.C. Russell, Esq., that Joseph drank too much liquor when he was translating the Book of Mormon; and that he wrestled with many men and threw them; and that he (Harris) exalted himself above Joseph, in that he said, ‘Brother Joseph knew not the contents of the Book of Mormon, until it was translated, but that he himself knew all about it before it was translated.’

“Brother Harris did not tell Esq. Russell that Brother Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the Book of Mormon, but this thing occurred previous to the translating of the Book; he confessed that his mind was darkened, and that he had said many things inadvertently, calculated to wound the feelings of his brethren, and promised to do better.” (History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 26)

George Albert Smith (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 7, pages 114-115) speaks about a widespread apostasy from within the church which included “. . . One of the First Presidency, several of the Twelve Apostles, High Council, Presidents of Seventies, the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, Presidents of Far West, and a number of others standing high in the Church . . .”

The three witnesses were excommunicated. Martin Harris accused Joseph Smith of “lying and licentiousness.” Joseph Smith (Elders’ Journal, Aug. 1838, p. 59) accused Martin Harris of “. . . swearing, lying, cheating, swindling, drinking, with every species of debauchery, . . .” (Elder’s Journal, August 1838, p. 59)

In 1838, Oliver Cowdery accused Joseph Smith of adultery, lying and teaching false doctrines. Joseph Smith gave testimony against Oliver Cowdery, claiming that a “non-member of the Church by the name of Sapham had told him in Kirtland that a warrant had been issued against Oliver ‘for being engaged in making a purchase of bogus money and dies to make the counterfeit money with.’ (A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839, page 146)

“Evidence to support the final charge, namely, that Oliver was guilty of retaining bank notes after they had been paid and had forsaken the cause of God to seek after ‘the beggarly elements of the world,’ was also abundant. Joseph Smith, for example, testified that Cowdery had informed him that he had ‘come to the conclusion to get property, and that if he could not get it one way, he would get it another, God or no God, Devil or no Devil, property he must and would have.’ Joseph Smith also claimed that Oliver told him

that since he had been dishonestly dealt with by others, it was his intention in the future to deal dishonestly.” (A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839, page 147)

David Whitmer, just before his death, published “An Address to All Believers in Christ” in which he stated:

“If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838, God spake to me again by his own voice from the heavens, and told me to “separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them.” (An Address to All Believers in Christ, by David Whitmer, 1887, p. 27)

Martin Harris changed his religious position eight times during his life in Kirtland, Ohio. (Improvement Era, March 1969, p. 63)

Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin stated that: “Martin Harris was an unaggressive, vacillating, easily influenced person who was no more pugnacious than a rabbit . . . . His conviction of one day might vanish and be replaced by doubt and fear before the setting of the sun. He was changeable, fickle, and puerile in his judgment and conduct.” (The Historical Background for the Doctrine and Covenants, p. 23, as quoted in an unpublished manuscript by LaMar Petersen)

If we are to believe that all eleven witnesses to the Book of Mormon were men of perfect integrity, then we must also believe they had just cause to disassociate themselves from the Mormon church. If we are to believe the derogatory remarks made about these witnesses by Joseph Smith, then these witnesses definitely lack credibility.

In the LDS Church Almanac, it states that the three witnesses viewed the plates **in a vision**. (Deseret News 1993-94 Church Almanac: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (SLC: Deseret News, 1992) pg. 338. See also Orson Pratt’s statement about David Whitmer’s experience in “Journal of Discourses”, Joseph F. Smith, ed. (1854-86; reprint, SLC: BYU Press, 1967, 7:29. Also D. Michael Quinn, “Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power” (SLC, in association with Smith Research Associates, 1994, pg. 10)

Martin Harris, after being asked, “Did you see those plates with your naked eyes?” told John Gilbert (the printer who set up the majority of the type for the Book of Mormon), “No, I saw them with a spiritual eye.” Harris later answered the same question of an attorney who came to Palmyra. He said, “I did not see them as I do that pencil-case, yet I saw them with the eye of faith; I saw them just as distinctly as I see anything around me—though at the time they were covered with a cloth.” (As related to J.A. Clark, who was then in Palmyra. See “Gleanings by the Way”, pp. 256-7.)

On April 15, 1838, Harris stated publicly: “He never saw the plates with his natural eyes only in vision or imagination, neither Oliver or David and also that the eight

witnesses never saw them and hesitated to sign that instrument for that reason, but were persuaded to do it . . . (Harris later) said that he never should have told that the testimony of the eight was false, if it had not been picked out of (him) but should have let it pass as it was.” (Letter from Stephen Burnett to Lyman E. Johnson. A copy of this letter is located in the Joseph Smith Collection in the LDS Church Archives. Quoted in David Persuitte, “Joseph Smith and the Origins of the Book of Mormon”, Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 1991, p. 96.)

Thomas Ford, Governor of Illinois, knew several of Joseph Smith’s key men. They told Governor Ford that the witnesses were “set to continual prayer, and other spiritual exercises.” Then at last “he assembled them in a room, and produced a box, which he said contained the precious treasure. The lid was opened; the witnesses peeped into it, but making no discovery, for the box was empty, they said, ‘Brother Joseph, we do not see the plates.’ The prophet answered them, ‘O ye of little faith! How long will God bear with this wicked and perverse generation? Down on your knees, brethren, every one of you, and pray God for forgiveness of your sins, and for a holy and living faith which cometh down from heaven.’ The disciples dropped to their knees, and began to pray in the fervency of their spirit, supplicating God for more than two hours with fanatical earnestness; at the end of which time, looking again into the box, they were now persuaded that they saw the plates.” (Thomas L. Ford, “History of Illinois”, Chicago, 1854, p. 257)

We have a real problem here. Not only has Joseph Smith been shown to lack credibility, but so do his witnesses. The Book of Mormon fails archaeological, linguistic and DNA tests. There have been nearly 3,913 changes made in the Book of Mormon—not just spelling and grammar, but mistakes which alter the meaning of the text (see “3913 Changes in the Book of Mormon”, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, [www.utlm.org/booklist/ordertitlelist.htm](http://www.utlm.org/booklist/ordertitlelist.htm)). Finally, the Book of Mormon does not contain a fullness of the Mormon gospel—that fullness was added later in the form of “revelations” given to Joseph Smith.

## **Chapter 8**

### ***Who was this Man?***

Although you may have an absolutely sincere testimony that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the only true church, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, the facts discount that testimony. How then, if he wasn't a prophet of God, could Joseph Smith have commanded such a huge following and have been so influential in the lives of so many people? Perhaps the best way to answer that is to explore the lives of a few other leaders who, like Joseph Smith, rose to greatness in the eyes of their people.

On January 6, 1920, a baby boy was born to the Moon family in Korea. His name was Sun Myung Moon. His family converted to Christianity when he was ten. When Moon was 16 years old, he had a vision. He claimed that Jesus Christ appeared to him and told him that only he could carry out a special mission—a mission that even Jesus had failed to do. ***Moon believes himself to be the Messiah*** for this age. He believes God sent him with the answers to questions about life and the universe. Moon's doctrines are in opposition to Christianity, and yet he continues to claim that it was Jesus who revealed those doctrines to him. Moon claims to have met Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Muhammad and Satan. Moon feels that his writings and teachings take precedence over the Bible. He stated, "God is now throwing Christianity away and is now establishing a new religion, and this new religion is the Unification Church" (Time Magazine, September 30, 1974). In his private life, Moon has had multiple marriages, practiced bigamy and had promiscuous sexual affairs with female members of his church. He is very wealthy and powerful. Moon promotes deception in fundraising tactics and recruiting, and yet maintains a positive public image. His organization raises millions of dollars each year and his following is huge. Former members claim to be victims of deception and mind control.

Marshall Herff Applewhite (Heaven's Gate Cult) was raised by a Presbyterian minister father. After he married, Applewhite had an affair with a male student. His wife and sons left him after which he admitted himself into a psychiatric hospital to cure his obsessions with sexuality. He was a charismatic man who promised a higher order for his group of followers. ***He claimed to be one of the two witnesses spoken of in the book of Revelations.*** He promoted extreme discipline and perfection as the way to salvation, which included no sexual contact and no privacy. Applewhite was fascinated with UFO's, astrology and science fiction. He believed that he was an earthly incarnation of an alien who was millions of years old. He twisted biblical scripture to support his belief that a spaceship would come for his people. On March 21, 1997, members of Applewhite's cult took Phenobarbital and vodka, lay on their beds with plastic bags over their heads until they passed out, all the while believing they were on their way to meet a spaceship and gain their salvation. Thirty-nine people were deceived into committing suicide.

***David Koresh claimed to be God’s “seventh messenger” who would set off the chain of events that would bring on the Apocalypse.*** He twisted prophecies from the book of Revelations to support his own beliefs to his group of followers. He claimed to be inspired when he divorced husbands from their wives. He then took all the women as his own because God was going to use his “seed” to create a divine army. Koresh had sexual relations with at least fifteen girls and women, some as young as twelve years old. He dictated all the rules for his group of followers and would then change them. He was above the rules and did as he pleased. He taught his people—including the children—that suicide might be required of them, and showed them how to do it with cyanide and a gun. Koresh’s group had a military compound and stockpiled it with weapons and explosives. On February 28, 1993, he and many of his followers were killed in a clash with law enforcement. Men, women and children died because Koresh’s perception became their only truth.

Jeffrey Lundgren was born on May 3, 1950 in Independence, Missouri. He was active in the RLDS church. Lundgren was a physically abusive husband and father, as well as a womanizer. He started a Mormon splinter group in his home. Lundgren was very charismatic and able to attract people. ***He was a self-professed prophet who claimed new revelations from God,*** including one in which he claimed to have discovered where the Book of Mormon plates had been buried. He also claimed to know the date for the return of Christ. As he taught his group, Lundgren would make references to violence and sexual acts. He demanded unquestioning loyalty from his followers. His cult began building an arsenal, marched in uniform, and studied military strategies. They were planning a “cleansing” which would trigger an apocalypse. This cleansing involved seizing the Kirtland Temple and executing anyone who got in their way. In April of 1989, he claimed a vision in which he was to sacrifice an entire family belonging to his cult instead of going through with the “cleansing”. No one questioned him. The adult, male followers watched Lundgren kill a man, woman and three children because Lundgren claimed this family had to pay for their sins. Their sins were that the woman was headstrong, the children unruly, and the man had been questioning Lundgren’s teachings. After these murders, Lundgren ordered the married men to turn their wives over to him so that they could be cleansed with his seed. Those who opposed were threatened with their lives. A former follower finally exposed Lundgren to law enforcement authorities and he was found guilty of multiple murders and sentenced to death. Lundgren’s followers stopped thinking for themselves, and allowed him to lead them into spiritual and physical death.

Jim Jones was a student pastor at a Methodist church and later preached at Pentecostal churches. Eventually, he broke away from mainstream Christianity and began his own church. He had a dynamic and charismatic personality, and did charitable things for people in the community. His church welcomed all races, criminals, drug addicts, etc. Jones demanded great sacrifices and dedication from his followers. The amount of money given by each person was recorded, which Jones used to measure the level of commitment of each person. He set rules to satisfy his own whims, but did not feel obligated to obey these rules himself. He had extra-marital sexual encounters, sodomized a man, and used drugs. Jones had to have complete control. He viewed the government

at a threat, and would rehearse his people for mass suicide. Jones moved his followers to Guyana where they would be isolated and more completely under his control. There they built the People's Temple Compound, complete with armed guards. Severe punishments and public humiliation were the consequences of expressing any negative feelings. In November of 1978, Jones convinced 913 people—men, women and children—to commit suicide at his compound. Those who refused to kill themselves were executed. Jones' followers did not hold Jones or his teachings up to the truths of biblical Christianity, and it cost them their lives.

(Additional information on each of the above leaders can be found on the internet.)

Religious cults, such as those headed by Moon, Applewhite, Koresh, Lundgren and Jones, have common elements or “red flags” which set them apart. If the leader of a group displays the majority of the following characteristics, it is very likely that he/she is a cult leader.

1. Leaders are charismatic.
2. Leaders demand and receive unquestioning loyalty, and discourage questioning, doubting and dissention.
3. Leaders set many strict rules to which they alone are above keeping.
4. Leaders claim elite status (prophet, Messiah, etc.).
5. Leaders isolate their followers (physically, socially, or emotionally).
6. Leaders claim that they have a special mission to fulfill.
7. Leaders believe they are above the laws and rules of society.
8. Leaders mislead followers into believing that the ends justify the means.
9. Leaders use guilt and promote confession of “sins” to reinforce the insecurities of others and elevate themselves.
10. Leaders demand that their members spend excessive time devoted to meetings or activities.
11. Leaders dictate many things to their members, such as how to think, act, feel, type of clothing worn, food that may or may not be eaten, hairstyles, etc.
12. Leaders promote and are deceptive in recruiting, money-making tactics, etc. (Withholding or distorting information, and outright lying).
13. Leaders promote an “us versus them” mentality in regard to the government, and may even build their own military group and arsenal.
14. Leaders promote their group as elite or special—set apart from the rest of the world.
15. Leaders promote obedient members with positions of authority or rewards, while demoting or punishing disobedient members.
16. Leaders encourage members to report negative attitudes or actions of other members.
17. Leaders teach members to disbelieve any information which is critical of the group or leader, and to disassociate themselves with ex-members or anyone else who is critical of the group or leader.
18. Leaders tell members that their salvation is dependent upon their involvement with the group or leader.
19. Leaders are obsessed with their members' sexual purity.

20. Leaders are often involved in extramarital sexual liaisons.
21. Leaders use fear to control their members.
22. Leaders discourage individualism, and promote rigid rules and regulations.
23. Outsider vs. Insider Doctrines

If Joseph Smith wasn't a prophet, what was he? Let's take a matter-of-fact, unemotional look at the "red flags" checklist to see if we can rule out the possibility that Joseph Smith was a cult leader.

1. Leaders are charismatic.

*Joseph Smith was charismatic; he was able to attract and influence a great number of people.*

2. Leaders demand and receive unquestioning loyalty, and discourage questioning, doubting and dissention.

*"When brother Joseph Smith lived, he was our Prophet, our Seer, and Revelator; **he was our dictator** in the things of God, and it was for us to listen to him, and do just as he told us." (Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses*, v. 2, p. 106)*

*Joseph Smith once said: "God made Aaron to be the mouthpiece for the children of Israel, and He will make **me to be God to you in his stead**, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and if you don't like it, you must lump it." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, by Joseph Fielding Smith, page 363; also found in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 6, pages 319-320.)*

*Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the Mormons were told to "give heed unto all his [Joseph's] words and commandments which he shall give unto you . . . his word ye shall receive, **as if from mine own mouth**, in all patience and faith." (Doctrine & Covenants 21:4-5)*

*There was a group of men in Nauvoo called the Danites. Joseph Smith was fully aware of this group. One of its members, Reed Peck, gives the following account: "**It is not our business or place to know what is required by God, but he will inform us by means of the prophet and we must perform . . . The secret signs and purposes of the society are not to be revealed on pain of death' &c &c**" --"All the principles of the Society tended to give the presidency unlimited power over the property, persons and I might say with propriety lives of the members of the church as physical force was to be resorted to if necessary to accomplish their designs[.] The blood of my best friend must flow by my own hands if I would be a faithful Danite should the prophet command it[.] (The Reed Peck Manuscript, pages 9-12)*

3. Leaders set many strict rules to which they alone are above keeping.  
*Joseph Smith repeatedly broke the Word of Wisdom revelation he gave his followers. (History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 380; Vol. 2, p. 369; Vol. 2, p. 378; Vol. 6, p. 616)*

*Joseph Smith took plural wives without the consent of Emma, even though his revelation in D&C 132:61 stated that he must have the consent of his wife. (Historical Record, p. 240)*

*Joseph Smith privately practiced polygamy while publicly denying it. (See Chapter 6)*

*Joseph Smith asked for the wives of other men, even though his revelation in D&C 132:61 states that these additional wives were to be “virgins”. (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, pp. 13-14) (Mormon Portraits, 1886, pp. 70-72)*

4. Leaders claim elite status (prophet, Messiah, etc.).  
*Joseph Smith claimed to be a prophet of God.  
Joseph Smith claimed to be King. (History of the Church, Vol. 6, pp. 568-569)*

*Joseph Smith stated: “I combat the errors of ages; I meet the violence of mobs; I cope with illegal proceedings from executive authority; I cut the Gordian knot of powers, and I solve mathematical problems of universities, with truth-diamond truth; and God is my ‘right hand man.’” (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 78)*

5. Leaders isolate their followers (physically, socially, or emotionally).  
*Joseph Smith set up his own city, government, etc., in Nauvoo, Illinois.*

6. Leaders claim that they have a special mission to fulfill.  
*Joseph Smith stated: “I calculate to be **one of the instruments of setting up the kingdom of Daniel** by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world.” (History of the Church, Vol. 6, page 365)*

*Joseph Smith stated: “. . . I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am **the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam.** A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him, but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet.” (History of the Church, Vol. 6, pp. 408-409)*

7. Leaders believe they are above the laws and rules of society.  
*Joseph Smith broke the Illinois State law against bigamy.*

*Joseph Smith ordered the illegal destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor, a newspaper critical of him. (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 432)*

*If anyone came into Nauvoo to arrest Joseph Smith, they would be arrested “with or without process”, and tried by the Nauvoo court. If they were found guilty, they would be sentenced to imprisonment for life and could only be pardoned by the Governor—if the Governor had the consent of the Mayor of Nauvoo (Joseph Smith). (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 105)*

*Faithful members claimed that they were ordered to burn homes and plunder the property of their enemies. (Benjamin F. Johnson, “My Life’s Review”, Independence, Mo., 1947, pp. 38-39; “Oliver Boardman Huntington Journal,” pages 31-32, typed copy, Utah State Historical Society; “Albert P. Rockwood Papers,” letter dated Oct. 29, 1838, Coe Collection, Yale University Library)*

8. Leaders mislead followers into believing that the ends justify the means.  
*“The duty of all noble and loyal Danites was to waste away the Gentiles by stealing their goods and consecrating them to the Kingdom of God. If any questioned this procedure, the reply was given that the earth is the Lord’s, not man’s, and that the laws of the land do not apply when one commits himself to God alone.” (A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, pp. 362-364)*

9. Leaders use guilt and promote confession of “sins” to reinforce the insecurities of others and elevate themselves.  
*“By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them.” (D&C 58:43)*

*“It follows that it is the order of the Church for confession to be made to the bishop, . . .” (Mormon Doctrine, p. 293)*

10. Leaders demand that their members spend excessive time devoted to meetings or activities.  
*All men in Nauvoo were expected to spend each tenth day working on building the Nauvoo temple. If they did not work, they were expected to give the equivalent in goods or money.*

*Members attended church services, meetings, and temple sessions.*

*All able-bodied men were required to join the Nauvoo Legion.*

*Members were encouraged to join organizations such as the **Ladies' Relief Society, the Danites, and the Council of Fifty.***

11. Leaders dictate many things to their members, such as how to think, act, feel, type of clothing worn, food that may or may not be eaten, hairstyles, etc.  
*"**Word of Wisdom**" revelation given; foods that can and cannot be eaten.*

*The Mormon people were able to dominate politics in their region because they **voted for the same candidates.** (Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Brigham Young University Studies, Winter 1968, page 211)*

*"And however much we might wish to sustain the Democratic nomination, we cannot—we will **not vote for Van Buren.**" (History of the Church, v. 6, p. 216)*

***Garments and temple clothing requirements.***

12. Leaders promote and are deceptive in recruiting, money-making tactics, etc. (Withholding or distorting information, and outright lying.)  
*Joseph Smith established the Kirtland Safety Society (bank) upon the premise of revelation. (History of the Church, Vol. 2, pp. 509-510) **The bank began operating illegally, not waiting to get a charter from the state. After the bank failed, thirteen lawsuits were filed against Joseph Smith to collect nearly \$25,000. He was arrested seven times in four months, and his followers had to raise \$38,428 in bail money.***

*Joseph Smith had a "**revelation**" commanding the people to **tithe** in order to pay for the Kirtland Temple. (D&C 97:11-12)*

*Joseph Smith **had total control of all land sales** to his people in Nauvoo. He was voted treasurer of the church, and given the title of "Trustee-in-Trust". He could then receive, acquire, manage or convey property for the benefit of his church. (History of the Church, Vol. IV, pp. 286-7, 543) **Rumors circulated throughout the church that Joseph Smith was getting rich off of his own people.** (History of the Church, Vol. IV, pp. 391, 437)*

*Missionaries sent out by Joseph Smith, **did not teach potential converts concerning the doctrines of polygamy and temple work.***

*Joseph Smith **privately practiced polygamy while publicly denying it.** (See chapter 6)*

*Joseph Smith **admitted that the Danite band existed; later he denied it.** (History of the Church, Vol. 3, pages 178-182; Vol. 6, page 165)*

13. Leaders promote an “us versus them” mentality in regard to the government, and may even build their own military group and arsenal.

*Four years after publishing the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith **organized an army and marched to Zion** to “redeem Zion”. He also **organized an army at Far West in 1838**. Smith **organized and led the Nauvoo Legion**, which at one time, number 4,000 men. While in Nauvoo, Smith was **planning an arsenal and powder manufactory**. (History of the Church, Vol. V, p. 430; Vol. VI, p. 233)*

*Sidney Rigdon, counselor to Joseph Smith, gave a speech in which he **threatened persecutors of the church with “a war of extermination”**. (Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 441) Joseph Smith spoke approvingly of his speech and recommended it to the saints. (Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 443)*

*Joseph Smith gave made the following prediction: “I prophesied by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, **if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up** as a government and God shall damn them, and there shall be nothing left of them—not even a grease spot!” (Millennial Star, Vol. XXII, 1860, p. 455)*

14. Leaders promote their group as elite or special—set apart from the rest of the world.

*Joseph Smith claimed that the church he established, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was **the only “true” church** on the face of the earth.*

15. Leaders promote obedient members with positions of authority or rewards, while demoting or punishing disobedient members.

***Members who helped Joseph Smith solemnize his polygamous marriages were rewarded. The promise of salvation was also linked with obedience to plural marriage.** (In Sacred Loneliness, The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith, p.33)*

*Joseph Smith’s **revelation on polygamy threatened Emma** with destruction if she didn’t obey. (D&C 132)*

*Joseph Smith’s revelation on polygamy **threatened all married women** in Nauvoo with destruction if they didn’t allow their husbands to participate in polygamy. (D&C 132:64)*

*Joseph Smith would **not allow members to participate in temple work unless they paid tithing.***

16. Leaders encourage members to report negative attitudes or actions of other members.  
*Orson Hyde stated: “Elder Rigdon has been associated with Joseph and Hyrum Smith as a counselor to the Church, and he told me in Far West that it was the imperative of the Church to obey the word of Joseph Smith, or the presidency, without question or inquiry, and that if there were any that would not, they should have their throats cut from ear to ear.” (The Nauvoo Neighbor, Dec. 4, 1844)*
- The **Danites** were sent to drive out all Mormon dissenters from Caldwell County. (Comprehensive History of the Church, Vol. 1, pages 500-501)*
17. Leaders teach members to disbelieve any information which is critical of the group or leader, and to disassociate themselves with ex-members or anyone else who is critical of the group or leader.  
*A newspaper, the **Nauvoo Expositor**, was printed in Nauvoo by people who opposed Joseph Smith’s political ambitions and his practice of polygamy. Joseph Smith order it **destroyed**. (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 432)*
- The following **Mormon publications were encouraged**: Times & Seasons, The Millennial Star, and The Nauvoo Neighbor.*
18. Leaders tell members that their salvation is dependent upon their involvement with the group or leader.  
*“If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation outside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (Mormon Doctrine, p. 670)*
19. Leaders are obsessed with their members’ sexual purity.  
*“In Nauvoo it was the orders from Joseph Smith and his apostles to **beat, wound and castrate all Gentiles that the police could take in the act of entering or leaving a Mormon household under circumstances that led to the belief that they had been there for immoral purposes.**” (Confessions of John D. Lee, photo-reprint of 1880 edition, pp. 284-286)*
20. Leaders are often involved in extramarital sexual liaisons.  
*Joseph Smith was **involved in many polygamous relationships**. (See Chapter 6)*
21. Leaders use fear to control their members.  
*Joseph Smith’s **revelation on polygamy threatened Emma with destruction if she didn’t obey.** (D&C 132)*
- Joseph Smith’s **revelation on polygamy threatened all married women in Nauvoo with destruction if they didn’t allow their husbands to participate in polygamy.** (D&C 132:64)*

*Joseph Smith's brother William gave this testimony in court: "I left Nauvoo in 1845 because my life was in danger if I remained there, because of my objections and protests against the doctrine of blood atonement and other new doctrines that were brought into the church." (Temple Lot Case, page 98)*

*A statement by Orson Hyde in the Mormon newspaper, the Nauvoo Neighbor said: "Elder Rigdon has been associated with Joseph and Hyrum Smith as a counselor to the church, and he told me in Far West that **it was the imperative of the Church to obey the word of Joseph Smith, or the presidency, without question or inquiry, and that if there were any that would not, they should have their throats cut from ear to ear.**" (The Nauvoo Neighbor, Dec. 4, 1844)*

22. Leaders discourage individualism, and promote rigid rules and regulations. *All men in Nauvoo were **expected to spend each tenth day working on building the Nauvoo temple.** If they did not work, they were expected to give the equivalent in goods or money.*

*Five hundred dollar fines were imposed on anyone in Nauvoo who was a vagrant, idle, or those who could not "give a good account for themselves". A penalty of six months in jail was imposed for using profanity or indecent language. (Times & Seasons, Vol. III, Dec. 1, 1841, p. 622)*

*Every able-bodied man was required to join the Nauvoo Legion. Heavy fines were given to those who failed to appear at military parades.*

23. Outsider vs. Insider Doctrines  
*The following doctrines or organizations were not public knowledge to those outside the church, or to new converts:*

*Danites*

*Council of the Fifty*

*Polygamy*

*Blood Atonement*

*Temple Ceremony*

If we look at the facts in an objective, unemotional way, it becomes very clear that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God, but a cult leader.

## *Chapter 9*

### *Hell is a Choice*

The Mormon church looks great on the outside. It is part of the Religious Alliance Against Pornography, is affiliated with Religion in American Life, has entered into interreligious relief work, has sent millions of dollars to famine-ravaged Africa, has sent disaster relief money worldwide, is the largest sponsor of the Boy Scouts in the U.S., promotes family life, high moral conduct, health consciousness, hard work, service to others, and provides social and welfare programs for its own members. The Mormon church promotes Jesus as the cornerstone of its religion, sends over 60,000 missionaries worldwide, and has approximately 11 million members. The Mormon church has a great deal of money and power, and its influence is spreading rapidly throughout the world. If Satan can get very good people to put their faith and trust in this “church” which teaches a false gospel and a false Jesus, then He has won millions to Hell. How better to deceive good people than to set up a very nice looking, Christian look-a-like organization which does so many good things—and yet cannot save its people. An organization which keeps its people so busy, they don’t have time to study or even consider that there might be something wrong with the internal structure.

For all the good things the Mormon church promotes, its people are in crises. Let’s look at some statistics, keeping in mind that 63-70% of Utah’s population is Mormon.

- In the year 2000, the State of Utah ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for crimes against property. (Rothstein Catalog On Disaster Recovery)
- In the year 2000, the State of Utah ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the nation for forced rapes. (Rothstein Catalog On Disaster Recovery)
- In the year 2000, the State of Utah ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for thefts. (Rothstein Catalog On Disaster Recovery)
- In July, 1990, General Authority of the Mormon Church, Glen Pace, sent a memo to the “Strengthening Church Members Committee”, and maintained that a satanic cult had taken root in the Mormon Church. Many children had been ritually abused. Pace charges that “. . . Young Women leaders, Young Men leaders, bishops, a patriarch, a stake president, temple workers, and members of the Tabernacle Choir may be involved.” Also, that “sometimes the abuse has taken place in our own meetinghouses.” (Salt Lake City Messenger, Nov. 1991, pp. 3-8)
- “Antidepressant drugs are prescribed in Utah more often than in any other state, at a rate nearly twice the national average . . . Utah also leads the nation in the use of narcotic painkillers.” (February 20, 2002—by Julie Cart, Times Staff Writer)

- A 2001 report from The Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, shows that Utah has higher child abuse rates than all but eleven states.
- During the first quarter of 2003, crime in Utah jumped up 21%. Violent crimes increased 17%. (Deseret News, 7/11/03)
- White supremacists are infiltrating northern Utah. The Fourth Reich, National Alliance, Arizona Hammerheads, National Socialist White People's Party, and Silent Aryan Warriors are all active groups in Utah. (New York Times, 4/4/03)
- More bankruptcies are filed in Utah than in any other state. (Salt Lake Tribune, 1/11/03)
- Utah has one of the highest suicide rates in the United States. (Deseret News, 4/16/02)

Please don't look at the facts and refuse to deal with them. There is a reason that the Mormon people are falling apart, and eternity in Heaven or Hell is hanging in the balance. The facts, the research, and more importantly, the word of God, all speak out against Mormonism. Now you must choose how you will react in this, your monumental moment:

1) You get mad, throw this book away, accuse me of persecution and thereby justify your refusal to deal with anything that makes you uncomfortable;

2) You decide to find out for yourself by studying and researching. Let's say you've chosen to study and research; that leaves you with two additional choices:

1) You find out that I've told you the truth, but decide not to create waves by making any changes;

2) You find out that I've told you the truth and make the necessary changes—no matter what the outcome. This choice takes courage. This is the **only** choice that will lead you to an eternity in Heaven with a loving God.

You might be thinking that a loving God would never send anyone to Hell. Hell is a choice; our choice. We don't get there by accident or mistake. We make it our destination when we decide that having a relationship with Jesus Christ—the one true Jesus Christ—is not important; when we refuse to look at or trust in anything different than what we have been taught all of our lives—regardless of the facts or the word of God. Many people have shown the courage it takes to look at the facts, to look at the word of God, admit they've been wrong, and step away from Mormonism. Accepting the one true Jesus as your Savior is the only way to salvation.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”  
(1 Timothy 2:3, 4)

Suppose you have two grown children that you love more than your own life. You would do anything for them, including laying down your life if need be. You value their lives more than your own, and you want a relationship with each one of them. However, you have one child who doesn't visit, she doesn't call you, and she doesn't make time for you to share in her life. You keep inviting her, you keep calling her, you keep telling her how much you love her; it doesn't seem to matter. She values the attention of her friends, her popularity, and her abilities far more than she values a relationship with you. It breaks your heart, but you can't force her to have a relationship with you. Your daughter has chosen not to have a relationship with you. That's how it is with Christ. He loves us so much he laid down his life for us. Through His word He calls for us, He invites us, and He tells us how much He loves us. And yet, some of us are too busy, too content, too focused on other things or people to feel like a relationship with Christ needs to be a priority. He won't force us to have a relationship with Him. Have we taken the time to accept Christ as Lord and Savior of our lives? If not, we have chosen to have no relationship with Him, which means we have chosen Hell as our final destination. Hell is a choice; our choice.

### *White-Washed Sepulchers*

*Glistening, beautiful, masterful illusion of peace.  
Pleasing to the eye, it lures me within.  
I cannot see clearly for it is dimly lit,  
But all who dwell inside assure me that it is more glorious than I can imagine.*

*I forge a life within surrounded by the stony, cold walls built from secrets and sins of my embraced heroes.  
I am surrounded by a death I cannot see;  
Enslaved within a white-washed tomb.*

*I am taught how to act  
But the dead cannot teach me how to act out of love because they know nothing of love.  
I am taught what to believe  
But the dead cannot make me believe that I am valuable or loved.  
I am taught to disregard myself and my needs,  
But the dead refuse to see that I have needs that must be met.*

*Day after day, years go by as the dead teach me a life in which I am preparing myself for burial with them.  
I cry out for love, for something, anything, to fill the empty, painful pit in my soul, but no one hears.*

*I am surrounded by the security of a lifetime of insecurities.  
Mine is a legacy of death left to me as an inheritance from the dead.  
I see no escape and I despair of life.*

*A light breaks through and I see that the one who has always loved me is beckoning for  
me to leave the white-washed caverns of Hell.*

*“I will be your family. I will love you and care for you. There is life in me,” He gently  
whispers. “Trust me.”*

*His hand reaches down and I clutch it desperately—knowing that I will surely die if I stay  
in this place.*

*Suddenly, warmth and sunlight explode around and inside me. The weight of death lifts  
from me and I am free!*

*I stumble in my walk with you, for these are new legs I am traveling with. You never  
leave me—you never cast me off.*

*You are all I have ever needed. Thank you for teaching me to love. Thank you for letting  
me experience what it means to be loved.*

*I owe you everything. Without you there is no life.*

I know what it's like to have lived and promoted a lie. I was an active Mormon for 38 years. When I left the church, my husband was bishop of our ward. The poem you just read expresses the difference in how it felt to live a life without Christ versus a life with Him. I don't expect you to believe everything I've said, but your eternity depends upon knowing whether I'm right. Your house **is** on fire. Don't be like the neighbor who refuses to look. Don't be like my grandpa whose pride would never allow him to believe he could be wrong. Don't be like the 6<sup>th</sup> grader's mother and pretend the problems don't exist. Be courageous enough to search, study and pray. God's word can stand up to any test you might give it; it is the standard for all truth. God bless and be with you in your journey. It takes courage to step out; to look for the fire. God will give you the ability to see the flames and the courage to escape them. He will never leave you alone. This is your monumental moment!