

SEVEN FLAWS IN MORMONISM

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

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Table Of Contents

<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	vii
1. “The Book Of Mormon and It’s Denial Of Inspiration”	1
2. “Mormon Doctrine Contradicts The Book Of Mormon”	3
3. “The Book of Mormon Contradicts The Bible”	6
4. “Mormon’s & Ethnic Bigotry”	8
5. “Baptism For The Dead”	11
6. “Prophesies of Joseph Smith”	14
7. “Belief In Mormonism Based On Emotions Not Fact”	17

INTRODUCTION

The content of this book has gone through an interesting evolution. In the 1970s and 80s I preached for the Lockport church of Christ in Lockport, New York. Lockport was just a few miles down the road from Palmyria, New York. Palmyria is where Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon church was born and raised. It is also where he supposedly found and translated the golden tablets producing the Book of Mormon.

Every summer the Mormons have a giant outdoor play reenacting Joseph Smith's supposed discovery of the tablets and his translation of them in Palmyria.

Since Palmyria is the ancestral home of the Mormon church, the area is heavily evangelized by them. While living in Lockport I had opportunity to study with many so called "elders." As a result of these

studies, I developed a few lesson that I used with them. These lesson evolved into seven sermons.

In the 90s I moved to Apex, North Carolina. The Mormon church built one of their regional "temples" just a few miles from our building. I turned the sermons into bulletin articles for our bulletin. I later put the articles into tracks and now I have published them in this book.

This book is not meant to be a scholarly study about Mormonism. It is simply seven chapters pointing out and addressing seven flaws in Mormon doctrine. I trust that you will find the information in the book helpful.

As with all my books, all my quotes are from the *King James Version* unless otherwise indicated.

THE BOOK OF MORMON AND IT'S DENIAL OF INSPIRATION

1

The Mormon's refer to the Book of Mormon as the "second witness." They believe that the Book of Mormon records the history of some Israelites who were called Nephites and who lived in North America. It supposedly records their history from 600 BC to 421 AD¹. Presumably, the last writer was a man called Moroni, who died soon after the Book of Mormon was finished. In 1827, the story goes, he returned from the grave and led Joseph Smith to the hidden golden tablets which contained the Book of Mormon². Joseph Smith, with the aid of a "seer stone," translated the tables and produced the Book of Mormon³.

For the sake of argument, let's concede that the Nephites actually lived and that the Book of Mormon is an accurate historical record. Let's also concede that Moroni came back from the grave and lead Joseph Smith to the golden tablets. Finally, let's concede that the "seer stone" worked and that Joseph Smith's translation is an accurate one. I know that conceding these points, for some of my readers, is a stretch, but please, bear with me.

If everything conceded is true, then the Book of Mormon cannot be from God! "Wait a minute," someone might argue, "how can that be?" Let's look at what the Book of Mormon claims about itself. The Book of Mormon from beginning to end denies it's inspiration. If we are to believe the veracity of the Book of Mormon, then we have no choice but to accept the fact that it was not inspired of God and therefore is not a "second witness" sent to man by God. Listen to what the Book of Mormon claims for itself:

❶ *I Nephi 1:3 And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it*

according to my own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge. In the first book and first chapter of the Book of Mormon Nephi denies God's inspiration and claims human origin for what he wrote. As Nephi put it, he wrote "*according to [his] knowledge*" not by God's inspiration.

❷ *I Nephi 19:6 "Nevertheless, I do not write anything upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred. And now if I do err, even did they err of old; not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh I would excuse myself."* Nephi not only disclaims inspiration here by starting that he wrote what he thought to "*be sacred*," but he conceded that his record could contain errors because he was only human. He even went as far as to cast dispersions on the accuracy of the writers of the Bible.

❸ *Jacob 1:2 "And he gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates a few of the things which I considered to be most precious; that I should not touch, save it were lightly, concerning the history of this people which are called the people of Nephi."* The phrase "*he gave me*" refers back to verse one where Jacob tells us that it was Nephi who commanded him to write his book. Jacob was not called by God but by Nephi, a man who denied inspiration for what he did. Jacob said that he was suppose to write what he "*considered to be most precious*," not what God "*considered to be most precious*." Jacob claimed authorship for his book and disclaimed inspiration.

❹ *Jacob 7:26 "And it came to pass that I, Jacob, began to be old; and the record of this people being kept on the other plates of Nephi, wherefore, I concluded this record, declaring that I have written according to the*

best of my knowledge ..." Jacob closes his book denying God's inspiration and claiming human origin for his book.

⑤ III Nephi 8:1-2 *"And now it came to pass that according to our record, and we know our record to be true, for behold, it was a just man who did keep the record - for he truly did many miracles in the name of Jesus; and there was not any man who could do a miracle in the name of Jesus save he were cleansed every whit from his iniquity - And now it came to pass, if there is not mistake made by this man in the reckoning of our time, the thirty and third year had passed away."* This is not the same Nephi who wrote I Nephi. According to the Book of Mormon, this is a descendant, two hundred years removed from the author of I Nephi. This second Nephi claims that the dating in his book is based on human knowledge and not divine revelation. He explains that it could be trusted because of the miracles done by the recorder, but still concedes that the recorder could have made a mistake in his "reckoning." This is clear denial of inspiration and a claim for human origin.

⑥ Ether 5:1 *"And now I, Moroni, have written the words which were commanded me, according to my memory."* Why would God inspire Moroni to claim that he was writing his "words ... according to [his] memory" if God was inspiring him to write the words? With this statement, Moroni also denies divine inspiration.

"According to my knowledge" (I Nephi 1:3); *"I think it be sacred ... if I do err ...*

because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh (I Nephi 19:6); *"I considered to be most precious"* (Jacob 1:2); *"I have written according to the best of my knowledge"* (Jacob 7:26); *"to our record ... our record ... if there is not mistake made by this man"* (III Nephi 8:1-2); *"according to my memory"* (Ether 5:1). No writer in the Bible either in the Old or New Testament, every made such a statement as these. They universally disclaimed human origin and claimed divine origin.

Either these people actually lived and actually wrote the Book of Mormon or they never lived and it is a fraud perpetrated by Joseph Smith. If they actually lived and wrote it, then it is not inspired because they repeatedly disclaimed inspiration. God would not inspire a writer to falsely claim human origin for what he wrote if he was actually writing by divine inspiration. Therefore, we have no choice but to reject it as a "second witness" from God. If they never lived, then it is a fraud written by Joseph Smith and we must also reject it as a "second witness" from God. You decide, fraud or truth. Either way it is not from God!

¹ *The Book Of Mormon*, Translated by Joseph Smith, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1949, Introduction.

² Ibid, Introduction.

³ Cannon, George Q., *Life of Joseph Smith*.

MORMON DOCTRINE CONTRADICTS THE BOOK OF MORMON

3

The Book of Mormon is the Mormon's "Bible." It's supposed translator, Joseph Smith, wrote that *"the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion and a man would be nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book"* (A Compendium of the Doctrine of the Gospel). However, Joseph Smith taught doctrinal concepts which contradict the Book of Mormon and the Mormon church today still teaches these contradictory doctrines. If they truly believe that the Book of Mormon is *"the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of [their] religion,"* you would think that they would teach and practice what it teaches. But they don't. The following are but a few examples where Joseph Smith taught things contrary to the Book of Mormon and which Mormon's still teach and believe.

❶ There are three Gods: Joseph Smith delivered the following words in 1844:

I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose. I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods. It has been preached by the Elders for fifteen years.

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith)

The Mormons to this day believe and teach that there are three Gods. However, the

Book of Mormon affirms that there is but one God.

And Zeezrom said unto him, thou sayest there is a true living God? And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No. Now Zeezrom said unto him again: How knowest thou these things? And he said An Angel hath made them known unto me. (Alma 11:26-29)

❷ God has a physical body: Joseph Smith taught and believed that God has flesh and bones. The Mormons do the same today. Note the following quotes:

That which is without body, parts and passions is nothing. There is no other God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones. (Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith)

When we lived in the presence of our Father, we were not like him; we were just spirits. We did not have flesh and bones, but he did. He was a glorious personage with a body of flesh and bones (Joseph Smith, Doctrines of Salvation Vol. 1)

The Father has a body of flesh, and bones as tangible as man's; the son also (Joseph Smith, Doctrines and Covenants 130:22)

The Book of Mormon teaches otherwise:

And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said: This is God. And Ammon said unto him again: Believest thou that this is a Great Spirit, who is God, created all things which are in heaven and in the

earth? (Alma 18:26-28)

And the king said: Is God, that Great Spirit that brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem? And Aaron said unto him: Yea, he is that Great Spirit and he created all things both in heaven and in earth (Alma 22:9-10)

③ God has changed over the ages: This is another doctrinal concept introduced by Joseph Smith which contradicts the Book of Mormon.

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. ... it is necessary that we understand the character and being of God and how he came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.

... [God] was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did (Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith)

However, the Book of Mormon does not support this teaching. In fact, it contradicts this idea.

For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing? And now if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doeth vary, and in whom there is shadow of changing, then have you imagined up unto yourselves a god who is not a god of miracles. But

behold I will show you a God of miracles, even the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Mormon 9:9-11)

For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity. (Morni 8:18)

④ Jesus and God are not one, Jesus is not part of God and was, in fact, created by God: Mormon doctrine today, following the teaching of Joseph Smith, separates God the Son and God the Father into two distinct personages. They teach that God the Father and God the Son's unity is the same as the unity of any earthly father and son.

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods. (Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith)

It is in this sense that I understand this language, and not as it is construed by some people, that Christ and his Father are one person. I declare to you that they are not one person but that they are two persons, two bodies, separate and apart and as distinct as any father and son with in the sound of my voice. (Joseph Smith, Gospel Doctrine)

This view of Jesus and God, however, contradicts what the Book of Mormon teaches:

Now Zeezrom saith again unto him: Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father? An Amulek said unto him: Yea, he is the very Eternal Father of heaven and earth, and all things which in them are; he is the

beginning and the end, the first and the last. (Alma 11:38-39)

... God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God (Mosiah 15:1-2)

Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world. (II Nephi 11:14)

⑤ Polygamy is OK: The Mormon church does not officially endorse nor condone the practice of polygamy today. They publicly discourage their members from engaging in it because of federal laws, not because they believe it is immoral. In the Doctrine and Covenants 132:1, 38, 62 we find Joseph Smith endorsing polygamy.

132:1 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines.

132:38 David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many other of my servants from

the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they did not receive of me.

132:62 And if he hath ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him

This, however, is not what the Book of Mormon teaches: "*Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord*" (Jacob 2:24). An interesting side note is that the 1835 edition of Doctrine and Covenants 101:4 reads "*Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman but one husband, except in the case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again.*" This verse was eliminated in the 1876 edition and all following editions.

The Mormons claim that they have been given an inspired book from God and that it is "*the most correct of any book on earth.*" They also claim that this book is "*the keystone of [their] religion.*" They go on and claim that "*a man would be nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book*" Yet their founder, Joseph Smith, taught and practiced things that are contrary to the precepts of this book and they do so themselves to this day. How can anyone take them seriously? But, I guess we shouldn't be surprised the denominational world does the same with the Bible!

MORMON DOCTRINE CONTRADICTS THE BIBLE

The Mormons claim inspiration for the supposed original authors of the Book of Mormon. However, this claim is difficult to accept in the light of the fact that the Book of Mormon contains statements that are contradictory to what the Bible teaches. Let's briefly examine five of these.

❶ The period of darkness at the death of Christ: *I Nephi 19:10* and *Helaman 14:20* state that it was for "three days." Whereas, **Matt. 27:45**, **Mk. 15:33** and **Lu. 23:44** all state that it lasted for only three hours. Mormons, however, will point out that *I Nephi 19:10* and *Helaman 14:20* teach that the three days of darkness was a sign for the people living in North America only. Therefore, it was dark for three hours in Palestine and for three days in North America. It is true Matthew records "**over all the land**" and Mark records "**over the whole land**" and this could be understood to simply refer to Palestine. But, Luke records that the three hours of darkness was "**over all the earth.**" When this is pointed out, Mormons will generally go on and explain that if it was dark for three days in North America then Luke was right because three days does include three hours. However, in *Helaman 14:27* the Book of Mormon adds this additional fact "*and darkness shall cover the face of the whole earth for the space of three days.*" This cannot be reconciled with the Biblical account. This is a contradiction.

❷ The place of Jesus' birth: Any student of the Bible knows that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea (**Mic. 5:2**; **Matt. 2:1**; **Lu. 2:4-7**). However, the Book of Mormon states "*Behold he shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem*" (*Alma 7:10*). When this is pointed out to a Mormon, he will usually show you a map of Palestine and point out

that Bethlehem is only a few miles from Jerusalem. He will also explain that Bethlehem was a small city, whereas Jerusalem was a large city. He will then claim that Bethlehem was in essence a suburb of Jerusalem. He will use an example, such as, "Today we might say a person is from Washington, DC, when in fact he might live in Arlington, Virginia which is a suburb of Washington." This explanation, however, doesn't work for Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Jews in Jesus' day generally traveled by foot. It is over ten miles, through the mountains, from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. How long would it take to walk ten miles through the mountains? Two to three hours, maybe, if you are in good shape. A small city that is a two to three hour journey from a larger city is not a suburb of the larger city. No amount of linguistic explanation can account for the fact that the Book of Mormon contradicts the Bible as to where Jesus was born.

❸ When and where the disciples were first called Christians: The book of *Alma* was suppose to have been written around 73 BC. In *Alma 46:15* we read, "*Yea, all those who were true believers in Christ took upon them, gladly, the name of Christ, or Christians as they were called, because of their belief in Christ who should come.*" This contradicts **Acts 11:26** where Luke records that "**the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.**" There is a double discrepancy of time, well over 100 years, and place.

❹ When Christ's church was built: *Mosiah 18:17* records the founding of "*the church of God or the church of Christ*" and that "*whosoever was baptized ... was added to his church.*" The Mormons date this at about 150 BC. Over a 180 years later

Matthew records Jesus saying **"I will build my church"** (Matt. 16:18). Either Jesus did not know that His church had already been in existence for over 180 years or this is a contradiction.

⑤ Which is greater a seer or a prophet?

In I Sam. 9:9 Samuel explains that a seer is a prophet **"he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer."** Since they are the same they are equal, but the Book of Mormon teaches otherwise. In Mosiah 8:15 we can read *"A seer is greater than a prophet."* In the following verses Mosiah explains why *"a seer is greater than a prophet."* This clearly contradicts II Sam. 9:9.

There are numerous other contradiction that could be sighted but we shall only use these. How do the Mormons handle these contradictions? First of all, as pointed out above, they try to explain some of them away but when their feet are put to the fire they will paraphrase article number eight of The Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints which states; *"We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."* When a contradiction between the Bible and the Book of Mormon cannot be reconciled, they explain that the Bible was not *"translated correctly."* They believe that the original writings were inspired, but they also believe that the Bible has been altered by man down through the ages and cannot be explicitly trusted today. The following is taken from my book Basic Building Blocks of the Church.

... people who believe that the original writings were totally inspired but that they have become corrupted down through the ages also have a

flawed view of God. If they are right, then God either allowed His word to be corrupted by man or He could not stop man from corrupting His word. Surely the Almighty Creator of this world, the one who has all power could stop man from polluting His inspired message. If He couldn't, then what type of god is He? Surely the loving God who gave man His inspired message would not allow man to corrupt it. ... What type of cruel God would allow that which is holy and pure to be intermingle with that which is profane? Why would He give us the words of life and then allow man to hide them in their own words?

Mormons claim to believe the Bible, but when push comes to shove, they reject the Bible and believe their books. Joseph Smith in A Compendium of the Doctrine of the Gospel wrote; *"I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion and a man would be nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book."* In the Book of Mormon, II Nephi 29:3 and 6 we find the following: *'And because my words shall hiss forth - many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible a Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.'* *"Thou fool that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were for the Jews."*

The Book of Mormon contradicts the Bible. Believers in God can't have it both ways. Either the Book of Mormon is right and they need to reject the Bible or the Bible is right and they need to reject the Book of Mormon. There is no middle ground.

MORMONS AND ETHNIC BIGOTRY

The following quotes are taken from the Second Official Declaration of the Doctrines and Covenants. This declaration was issued on September 30, 1978. The first paragraph in the following quote is part of the introduction to the declaration. The second is from President Spencer W. Kimball's Declaration.

In early June of this year, the First Presidency announced that a revelation had been received by President Spencer W. Kimball extending priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the Church.

He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows there from, including the blessings of the temple. Accordingly, all worthy male members of the Church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color.

In 1978 the Mormons declared to the world that God is no longer a respecter of persons, that He would no longer judge the spiritual fitness of a person by the color of his skin. Of course, God had already reveled this almost two thousand years earlier.

Acts 10:34-35 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

The Mormons needed this special

revelation to get around the ethnic bigotry which was written into their doctrine by their founder Joseph Smith and supported by the leadership of the Mormon church down though the years. Joseph Smith taught that "*the negro ... came into the world slaves, mentally and physically*" (Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith). Joseph Fielding Smith (not to be confused with the founder Joseph Smith), a former President of the Mormon church, wrote "*the only souls coming into this world who are under restriction are the Negroes, and they cannot hold the priesthood; but Negroes may be baptized, and we have many Negroes in the church*" (Doctrines of Salvation Vol. II).

Brigham Young succeeded Joseph Smith as the leader of the Mormon church after Joseph died. Brigham Young briefly explained why those with black skin were slaves and held out the hope that God would someday remove this curse.

The Negro - The seed of Ham, which is the seed of Cain descending through Ham, will accordingly to the curse put upon him, serve his brethren, and be "servant of servants" to his fellow-creatures, until God removes the curse; and no power can hinder it. (Discourses of Brigham Young).

Time and space does not allow me to address the absurdity of applying the curse of Cain to those of African decent. Let it suffice that this false prejudice view has been discredited and rejected by all clear thinking people who profess to be Christians.

The Mormon church is overseen by the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This quorum meets regularly and discusses church policy. In the notes of their meeting on

August 18, 1900, they discussed the ordination of descendants of African Americans into the priesthood. The minutes read that they "held to the doctrine that no man tainted with negro blood was eligible to the priesthood." Why such a strict interpretation of their doctrine to exclude Africans and their descendants from the priesthood? In the minutes for January 2, 1902, we find an explanation. "... while the children of a man in whose blood may exist a single drop of negro blood, might turn out to be entirely white, yet one of his descendants might turn out to be a pronounced negro."

This ethnic bias against those of dark skin is rooted in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon tells of a people who were cursed with black skin.

... wherefore, as they were white and exceedingly fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them" (II Nephi 5:21).

And the skins of the Lamanites were dark according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression ... (Alma 3:6).

This bigotry against dark skinned people was not limited to those of African descent. It includes all people who are not of white Western European descent. Referring to native Americans, i.e. Indians, we find this quotation from the Book of Mormon. "... for this people shall be scattered, and shall become a dark, a filthy, and a loathsome people, beyond all description of that which ever hath been among us" (Mormon 5:15). However, the Book of Mormon predicts that the Indians would someday repent of their sins and become white. "and many

generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people" (II Nephi 30:6). (According to the Mormons, this was written about 2,600 years ago. Native Americans have yet to turn white. Surely 2,600 years covers "many generations!")

Why do Mormons believe that to be dark skinned, i.e. red, yellow, black or brown, any color other than white Western European, is to be cursed? Joseph Smith taught that everyone "had a previous existence, thousand of years ago, in the heavens, in the presence of God" (Journal of Discourses). The color of a person's skin depends on the life he lived in that "previous existence." "There is a reason why one is born black and with other disadvantages, while another is born white with great advantages. The reason is that we once had an estate before we came here, and were obedient; more or less, to the laws given us there" (Doctrines of Salvation)

In 1963 Joseph Fielding Smith wrote in a letter;

"According to the doctrine of the church. The negro, because of some condition of unfaithfulness in the spirit - or pre-existence, was not valiant and hence forth was not denied mortal probation but was denied the priesthood."

One last quote on this topic (I could include many more). This one was by Bruce R. McConkie. Mr. McConkie was a member of the Mormons First Council of the Seventy. He stated:

Those who were less valiant in pre-existence and who thereby had certain spiritual restrictions imposed upon them during mortality are known as the Negroes. Such spirits are sent to earth through the lineage of Cain,

the mark put upon him for his rebellion against God and his murder of Abel being a black skin" (Mormon Doctrine).

The Mormon church openly endorsed and encouraged slavery. In 1850, Utah was the only Western Territory which allowed slavery. In 1859, Utah was admitted to the Union as a slave state. The official paper for the Mormon church, the Times and Seasons in an editorial printed April 1, 1845 stated in part:

The descents of Ham, besides a black skin which has ever been a curse that followed an apostate of holy priesthood, as well a black heart, have been servants to both Shem and Japheth, and the abolitionist are trying to make void the curse of God. But it will require more power than man possesses to counteract the decrees of eternal wisdom.

Not with standing their magnanimous declaration in 1978, the Mormon church has

a history of bigotry, hatred and bias against everyone who skin is not as white as those of Western European descent.

Sadly, but true, even in the Lord's church there were slave owners and bigots who tried to rationalize their exploitation of their fellow man. There are, even today, those who are prejudice and lack true love for their brethren, simply because of the color of their skin. However, there is a major difference. In the Lord's church, these people tried to read into the Bible their prejudices. Whereas, the Mormon leadership claimed personal divine revelation from God to support theirs. Anyone who claims and teaches that the color of our skin is based upon the purity of a life we supposedly lived in a preexistence is wrong. Anyone who tries to claims that God personally told them this is a liar. Even more so, he is a blasphemer. The Mormon church was founded by blasphemers and is still being run by people who extol these blasphemers as men of God.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

11

The Mormon church practices baptizing living individuals for those who have already died. They believe that if a person rejects Jesus in this life they can accept Him after death and thus, be saved. They try to Biblically support this practice by citing **I Corinthians 15:29** **"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized?"** They use this passage to confuse people and to create doubt about what they have been taught. Sadly, this sometimes even works with members of the Lord's church who should know better.

LeGrand Richard, a former president of the Mormon church, wrote about baptism for the dead in his book *A Marvelous Work And A Wonder*.

When Elijah had committed into the hands of Joseph Smith and Olive Cowdery the keys of this dispensation for turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, they proceeded to explain the new and strange doctrine of baptism for the dead to the associates and the membership of the Church. They made it plain that persons upon the earth can be baptized for their loved ones who have passed away ...

Baptism of the living for the dead is performed in temples of the Lord erected to his name and at his command in this dispensation. Temples will continue to be erected as needed, as the kingdom grows, until baptisms shall have been performed by the living for all the worthy dead who accept the gospel in the spiritual world.

After the Mormons built their temple here

in Apex, N.C., one of the things they started doing is baptizing members of their church for the dead.

Book of Mormon Teaches Otherwise

Interestingly, as with a number of the doctrinal believes and practices of the modern Mormons, the Book of Mormon does not teach such a practice. In fact, it teaches just the opposite.

Alma 34:32-35 For behold, this life is the time, for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labours. And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labour performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for that same spirit which doeth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doeth seal you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final

state of the wicked.

Bible Teaches Otherwise

The Bible contradicts the Mormon's understanding of **I Corinthians 15:29**. The Bible teaches that we will be judged by our works and not someone else's (**II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:6**), which is what baptism for the dead is all about. The Bible teaches that once a person has died, they cannot cross over from one side to another, from torment to Abraham's bosom as the rich man found out (**Lk. 16:19-26**). The Bible also teaches that belief (**Mk. 16:16**) and repentance (**Acts 2:38**) must precede a person's baptism. They do not come after a person's death and proxy baptism.

What I Cor. 15:29 Does Teach

In **I Corinthians 15** Paul is writing about the resurrection of the dead, both Christ's and mankind's. Paul uses the words "rose," "risen," and "resurrection" twenty-two times in this chapter. He opens and closes with the theme of Christ's victory over death (**vrs. 3-4, 55-57**). Paul addresses the fact that there are some who are denying that there will be a resurrection of the dead (**vrs. 12-19**). The following is an outline of this chapter:

- ① **vrs 1-4** - Paul reminds them that the gospel he preached unto them concerned Christ's death, burial and resurrection.
- ② **vrs 5-11** - Paul proves the fact that Jesus rose from the dead by sighting eyewitnesses.
- ③ **vrs 12** - Paul challenges the false teachers.
- ④ **vrs 13-19** - Paul demonstrates the consequences of denying the resurrection.
 - a. **vrs 13** - No resurrection then Christ

is not risen.

- b. **vrs 14** - No resurrection then his preaching and their faith is vain (useless).
- c. **vrs 15** - No resurrection then the apostles are false witnesses.
- d. **vrs 16** - Re-emphasizes main argument, no resurrection = no resurrected Christ.
- e. **vrs 17** - No resurrection then they are still in their sins.
- f. **vrs 18** - No resurrection then those who accepted Christ and died have simply perish as would animals who die.
- g. **vrs 19** - No resurrection then Christians are the victims of a cruel hoax and are to be pitied.
- ⑤ **vrs 20-24** - Paul affirms his belief in the resurrected Christ.
- ⑥ **vrs 25-32** - Paul's final clinching arguments for our resurrection.
- ⑦ **vrs. 33-34** - Paul warns again about the false teachers.
- ⑧ **vrs. 35-54** - Paul explains the manner of the promised resurrection.
- ⑨ **vrs. 55-57** - Paul closes with the theme of Christ's victory over death.

To understand our text (**vrs. 29**), we must not only understand the context it is found in, but we must also pay careful attention to the use of pronouns. In **verse 1** Paul speaks of himself, "I." In **verses 1-2** Paul speaks of the Corinthians, "you" and "ye." In **verse 15** Paul speaks of the apostles "we." But, in **verse 29** Paul uses the pronoun "they." "They" not "I," Paul. "They" not "you," the Corinthians. "They" not "we," the apostles. The "they" of **verse 29** are the false teachers who deny the resurrection. Paul is pointing out that the very fact that these false teachers practiced baptism disproves their own teaching.

They denied any resurrection, but they taught and practiced baptism. If there is no future life, as they taught, then why did they practice baptism? Paul points out the inconsistency of their doctrine. If there is no resurrection, then the dead are dead, including Jesus, and by practicing baptism they are baptizing for the dead! If there is no resurrection, then why be baptized to conquer death? If there is no resurrection, there can be no conquering of death. So why be baptized?

Paul was not teaching that we should baptize for the dead. No, quite the contrary! He was mocking the false teachers who denied a future resurrection. He was making fun of them. If there is no resurrection, then there is no need for baptism.

Baptism is our way of preparing to conquer death through Jesus' conquering of death (**Rom. 6:3-5**.) As John Ramsey put it:

Since Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again we will gladly obey Him in baptism which portrays

these matters. If we did not believe He was raised from the dead, there would be no purpose in such actions. Why should we prepare for death by doing God's will if Christ be not raised and why do we endure persecution daily for a lost cause?

Contrary to Mormon doctrine, I cannot obey God for you and you cannot obey Him for me. Contrary to Mormon doctrine, we will all be judged by our deeds in this life. Everyone stands condemned to eternal punishment because of their sins (**Rom. 3:23; 6:23**). But, Jesus died to save mankind. God raised Jesus from the grave and He will do the same of us if we obey him in this life. Part of this obedience is personal submission to baptism in the here and now.

Interestingly, if the Mormons would only listen to their own book, the Book of Mormon, they could find the truth that baptism is for the living and no one can be baptized for anyone else living or dead.

PROPHECIES OF JOSEPH SMITH

The cornerstone of Mormonism is the acceptance of Joseph Smith as a prophet of God. If he wasn't, then his writings have no validity and Mormonism is nothing but a fraud and a hoax. Mormons strongly argue that Joseph Smith was, in fact, a prophet of God. I have in my library a book entitled Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (emphasis mine) published by the Mormons. On the title page there is this statement, "Taken from his sermons and writings as they are found in the Documentary history and other publications of the Church and written or published in the days of the **Prophet's** ministry" (emphasis mine).

How can a person determine if Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet of God? God, through Moses, answered this question when he had Moses write;

Deut. 18:20-22 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 Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet, then the things which he foretold would have come to pass. If he foretold anything that didn't happen, then he was not a prophet of God. At least, that's what God says! Well, let's examine some of Joseph Smith's prophecies and see what we can find.

❶ Civil War: Mormons like to point out that Joseph Smith predicted the Civil War and correctly predicted that the war would begin in South Carolina. On December 25, 1832 Joseph Smith wrote: "*Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina*" (Doctrine and Covenants 87:1). At first glance this might be impressive. However, Larry Jonas explained that "on July 14, 1832, Congress passed a tariff act which South Carolina thought was so bad, she declared the tariff null and void. President Andrew Jackson alerted the nation's troops. At the time Smith made his prophecy, the nation expected a war between North and South to begin at the rebellion of South Carolina" (Larry Jonas, Mormon Claims Examined). Newspaper editorial at that time were making the same prediction. All Joseph Smith did was agree with the prevailing thought.

Joseph Smith, however, did go beyond popular thought when he prophesied that America's Civil War would "*be poured out upon all nations*" (Doctrine & Covenants 87:2 & 3). Any student of American history will know that our Civil War was limited to our nation and was not poured out upon other nations, much less "*upon all nations.*" Joseph Smith was wrong.

❷ The Book of Mormon's copy right: David Whitmer, one of the so called seven witness, in an address made in Richmond, Missouri, 1887 stated: "*Joseph looked into the hat in which he had placed the stone, and received a revelation that some of the brethren should go to Toronto, Canada, and that they would sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon. Haram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but they failed entirely to sell the copy-*

right.” He went on and told about their return and their report about their failed mission in Toronto. He then recorded what Joseph Smith said about this failed prophecy. *“Some revelations are of God: some revelations are of man: and some revelations are of the devil. So we see that the revelation to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right was not of God, but was of the devil or the heart of man”* (An Address To All Believers in Christ, Richmond, Missouri). Joseph Smith admitted that what he prophesied in this incident was not from God but was either from man or the devil. He, however, didn’t know it until after it didn’t come to pass. How can such a self-proclaimed prophet be trusted in anything he might claim was from God?

③ Return of Christ: From the Journal of Olive Boardman Hunington, Vol. 2 we find this recorded prediction: *“On the 14th of Feb. 1835, Joseph Smith said that God had revealed to him that the coming of Christ would be within 56 years, which being added to 1835 shows that before 1891 and the 14th of February the Savior of the world would make His appearance again upon the earth.”* We know, of course, that Jesus did not return in 1835. Joseph Smith was wrong again.

④ Mormon’s to build a city and a temple in western Missouri: In the Doctrines & Covenants section 84 we can find Joseph Smith’s prophecy that the *“city of New Jerusalem”* (verse 2) and *“a temple”* (verse 4) would be built *“in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri”* (verse 3). Joseph Smith prophesied that the *“temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not 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” (verse 4-5).

How can we be sure that this was a prophecy and not simply a wish or desire? Because verse 1 opens with these words *“A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith”* and in verse 2 he went on and wrote *“Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church.”* There is no doubt that in 1832, one hundred and sixty seven years ago, Joseph Smith claimed divine revelation and predicted that during the days of the people living then God’s temple would be built in western Missouri. Well, it wasn’t and so far, it hasn’t been. Either there are people living today that are over a hundred and sixty years old or Joseph Smith was wrong. Joseph Smith was wrong.

It doesn’t take four-hundred, forty, or as sighted, even four false prophecies; all it takes is one false prophecy to prove that a man is not a prophet of God (**Deut. 18:20-22**). Joseph Smith, contrary to the claims of the Mormons, was not a prophet of God. The Mormon church, however, does not stop with Joseph Smith. They claim a succession of prophets. These so called prophets all claim by inspiration to know that Joseph Smith was truly a prophet of God. Since Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God, (his false prophecies prove thus,) then these succeeding prophets are also false teachers because they falsely teach that this failed prophet was a true prophet.

If you remove the revelations of Joseph Smith and his successors in the Mormon church, which any right thinking person must do because of his failed prophecies, then you are left with nothing to support or substantiate Mormonism and, like any house built on sand, it comes falling down (**Matt. 7:24-27**). Mormonism is a tare which has been sown by the enemies of God and on the

judgment day it will be torn up with all the other tares and burned (**Matt. 13:24-30**).

BELIEF IN MORMONISM BASED ON EMOTIONS NOT FACT

17

In six previous articles we have examined how the Book of Mormon denies its own inspiration, how the Book of Mormon contradicts the Bible; how modern Mormon doctrine contradicts the Book of Mormon; how Mormon doctrine is ethnically bigoted; the Mormon's false doctrine and practice of baptizing for the dead; and how Mormon prophecies failed. We literally could spend a year looking at the ludicrousness of Mormon doctrine. But we shall stop with this final article.

One would think that when a Mormon is confronted with the facts and information presented in these six articles that they would have answers for these things, would get answers or would recognize that Mormonism can't be right. However, that is not generally the case. When I have pushed these issues with Mormons, I have ultimately received the same answer. They go to the Book of Mormon and quote the following.

Moroni 10:4-5 And when ye shall receive these things I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.

They reject logic, reason and thought and accept emotions and feelings. God said that **"faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"** (Rom. 10:17) Not so, say Mormons, it comes by prayer and feelings. When I ask them how do they know that what they felt was a positive answer from

God, their answer is they just know because they felt it.

I have had a member of the Reorganized Mormons, a splinter group that accuses the Utah Mormons of being apostate and visa versa, give me similar testimony to prove that the Reorganized Mormons are right. When I tell Mormons about this, they tell me that he was mistaken. I ask them how do you know he was mistaken, they respond because God told them that they are right. I ask them how I can know that he was mistaken and that they are right. They quote *Moroni* and ask me to pray about it. I ask them what criteria would I use to determine if my answer came from God as they claimed theirs was or if it didn't come from God as they claim was the case with the member of the Reorganized Mormons. Their answer is "You just will."

In last weeks article I quoted Joseph Smith's explanation about his failed prophecies, concerning the sale of the Book of Mormon's copy-right. *"Some revelations are of God: some revelations are of man: and some revelations are of the devil. So we see that the revelation to go to Toronto and sell the copy-right was not of God, but was of the devil or the heart of man."* If a person actually got a revelation after they obeyed *Moroni* how are they to know if it was from God, from man or from the Devil? Even their so-called prophet Joseph Smith couldn't always tell the difference! When this is asked of Mormons their answer is, "You just will!"

How do you reason with someone whose proof is an emotion or feeling that cannot be documented, demonstrated or confirmed? YOU CAN'T! Reason and logic rolls off of them like water off of a duck's back. Generally, Mormons, like Pentecostals, have

to experience something that shocks them so much that they start to question their previous experience. They have to end up like the prodigal son in their own personal pig sty. Until that happens, it is pretty much a lost cause.

You might be asking yourself now, "Why then print six articles showing what is wrong with Mormonism and how to demonstrate it if Mormons generally can't be reached?" That is a valid question. This information is

better used with friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. who might be looking at Mormonism as a religious choice. We need to be ready to step into the trenches and protect people from this bundle of lies and the pack of wolves who spread them. Just maybe, helping someone see through the lies of Mormonism will cause them to question the lies of denominational that already has them ensnared and help them open up to the real gospel of Christ.

