

Challenging the Cults

7. History and Beliefs of Mormonism



The Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints, a.k.a The Mormons is one of the world's fastest growing religions. There are two branches main branches of Mormonism; one is the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints and the other, The Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints. The smaller Reorganized Church has about 240,000 members worldwide while the larger numbers over 9 million.¹

Mormons learn from childhood they have a duty to serve on the mission field following their high-school education. As of 1995, there were 50,000 active Mormon missionaries, serving worldwide. Prior to World War II there were only 2,000 active missionaries worldwide, this 25-fold increase demonstrates just how fast Mormonism is growing. Seventy five percent of Missionaries are males, nineteen percent females and six percent are married.²

The wealth of Mormonism is also noteworthy, according to an August, 1997 Time Magazine article titled, "Mormon Inc." The assets of the LDS church total more 30 billion dollars, with a gross income of 6 billion dollars, more then the budget of the State of Utah. Mormons are expected to tithe (give 10%) of their income to the LDS church. The Mormon Church owns America's largest producer of nuts, they also own Bonneville International Corp., the countries 14th largest radio chain, and the Beneficial Life Insurance Co., with assets of \$1.6 billion. The LDS church owns the world largest beef ranch, Deseret Cattle and Citrus Ranch outside Orlando, Florida sitting on 312,000 acres of land worth more then 850 million dollars.³

To understand the Mormons and the Mormonism, we first need examine the history and beliefs of this fast growing religion.

Short History of Mormonism



The history of Mormonism begins with Joseph Smith Jr., who is the first prophet and founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Joseph Smith parents were Joseph Sr., and Lucy Smith, Joseph Jr., was their fourth child born in Sharon Vermont in December 23rd, 1805. Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy started their marriage with a 1,000 dollar dowry at the family farm in Vermont. The thousand dollars was soon lost and Joseph Sr. tried to sell a shipment of Ginseng to China, Ginseng grew wild in Vermont, but no one in China was interested in Vermont Ginseng. Joseph Sr. was forced to move his family from Vermont to Palmyra New York.

In Palmyra while Joseph Jr. was a youth, a traveling magician and diviner came to town and offered his services. The traveler claimed he could find buried treasure and water. The diviner used "Peep" (Seer) stones, magic stones that gave him divining power. His fee was \$3.00/day. He worked for the farmers

¹ Ensign Magazine, May 1995, pg. 22

² The Kingdom of the Cults, Walter Martin, 1997, pg. 180, Bethany House Publishers.

³ Time Magazine, August 1997, Mormon Inc., article.

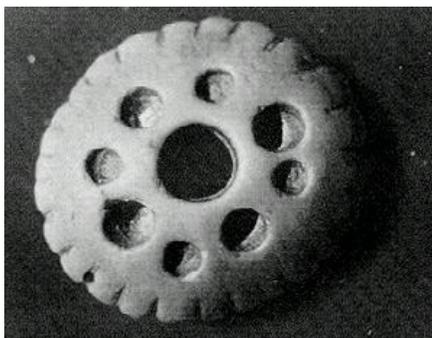
trying to find buried treasure on their property. Joseph Smith Jr., became spent time with the man as he searched for buried treasure.

During this same time in Palmyra, there was a religious stirrings. William Miller, a Baptist lay minister and farmer, born 1782, taught in the year 1818 that in 25 years would be the return of Christ in 1843. His family would later move Lower Hampton, New York, close to the Vermont State border. Both the Seventh Day Adventist and Jehovah Witnesses would be off shouts of Millerism. Joseph Jr., comments on the religious movements taking place during this time in the *Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith History 1*.

In 1820, when Joseph Smith Jr., was 15 years old he claims to have had his first vision. Where God the Father and Jesus appeared to Joseph and told him, that all the creeds of Christianity were an abomination in their site and he was to join none of them. His discussion of this vision caused him to be persecuted by those around him.

I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.....When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description,One of them spake unto me, callin me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him....I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right....and which I should join....I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt.... *Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith-History 1:17-19*

It was not until 1823, when Joseph Jr., was 18 years old did me meet, the angel Moroni⁴, the glorified son of one Mormon, the man for whom the famous book of the name is entitled. Moroni appeared to Joseph three times and told him to find Gold-Plates, on a hill in Palmyra but to wait 4 years before taking them. The angel warned Joseph to not show the tablets to anybody.



Sandy colored seer stone apparently used by Joseph Smith. Smith's widow Emma passed it on to relatives of her second husband, Lewis Bidamon. (Wilford Wood Museum)

During this same period Joseph Jr. was also becoming proficient in “Peep” stones. This was in part thanks to the traveling Magician who was looking for buried treasure with the help of his “Peep” stones. After time no treasure was found and the magician left town, but Smith had picked up his skills. And Joseph used “Peep” stones to locate some tools. Joseph acquired a reputation and was hired by Josiah Stool of Chenango county in New York State who heard about Joseph divining abilities. Some of the details are recorded in *Pearl of Great Price- Joseph Smith History*.

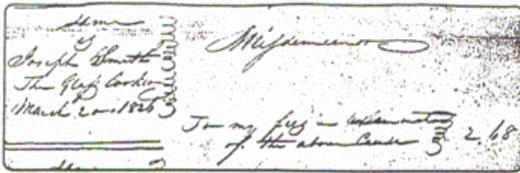
In the year 1823 my father's family met with a great affliction by the death of my eldest brother, Alvin. In the month of October, 1825, I hired with an old gentleman by the name of Josiah Stool, who lived in Chenango county, State of New York. He had heard something of a silver mine having been opened by the Spaniards in Harmony, Susquehanna county, State of Pennsylvania; and had, previous to my hiring to him, been digging, in order if possible, to discover the mine. After I went to live with him, he took me with the rest of his hands to dig for the silver mine, at which I continued to work for nearly a month, without success in our undertaking, and finally I prevailed with the gentleman to cease digging after it. Hence arose the very prevalent story of my having been a money-digger. During the time that I was thus employed, I was put to board with a Mr. Isaac Hale, of that place; it was there I first saw my wife (his daughter), Emma Hale. On the 18th of January, 1827 we were married, while I was yet employed in the service of Mr. Stool.....*Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith History 1:55-57*

Before Joseph marriage to Emma Hale, he was found guilty of “glass gazing” the original court bill of 1826 charging of him this offense. Rev. Wesley P. Walters found documentation for this suit recently, in 1971 in the basement of the courthouse. These records proved the charges against Joseph Smith and were an embarrassed the LDS. One of the witnesses testifying against him was Isaac Hale, father of Emma his future wife. Isaac refused to allow his daughter to marry Joseph Smith, so in January 1827, 21 year-old Joseph and Emma eloped with Joseph to Palmyra, New York.

⁴ This event was not recorded till years later, and the name of Angel originally recorded was Nephi, not Moroni as presently recorded in the Pearl of Great Price. See attached document.

Translating the Book of Mormon

Joseph Jr, claims the angel Moroni delivered plates to him on September 22nd, 1827 when Joseph went to the hill Cumorah, in Palmyra, New York as instructed by the angel.



same [i.e. The People]	
vs	Misdemeanor
Joseph Smith	
The Glass Looker	To my fees in examination
March 20, 1826	of the above cause 2.68

Court records from New York from a suit filed against Joseph Smith for fraud. He was found guilty was forced to pay a fine.

From 1827 till 1829 Joseph Smith was involved in translating the Gold Tablets, which were written in "Reformed Egyptian". Along with the Tablets Joseph received "Seer" stones, the Urim and the Thummim and the breastplate which would allow him to translate the "Reformed Egyptian" into the *Book of Mormon*⁵.

After Emma eloped in fall of 1827 she returned to her parents home to retrieve her possessions. Isaac Hale accused Joseph of stealing his daughter; Joseph asked for his forgiveness and promised to lead a more honest life. Isaac offered the couple a small house on his property.

Joseph rather than helping on the farm remained indoors, one day his father-in-law stopped by to investigate. He found Joseph sitting at a table with a hat over his face uttering long Biblical passages. His daughter, Emma sat behind a curtain writing down the words Joseph spoke. On the table in front of Joseph lay

a square object concealed by a cloth. When Joseph removed his hat, Isaac could see the "Seer" stones were similar to the ones used by Joseph in locating the buried "Spanish Treasure".

Emma father demanded an explanation from his son-in-law. Joseph explained his vision of the angel in Palmyra, which alarmed him even more about the proceedings. Isaac asked to see the Gold Plates, Joseph explained that for anybody but himself to look on the plates would mean death. Isaac felt certain there were no plates and Joseph was involved in an elaborate fraud.

One of Joseph supporters, Martin Harris mortgaged his house to support the translation effort. Harris wife who considered Joseph a fraud left her husband. Martin Harris, claimed to have taken Smith's "Reformed Egyptian" to a Professor Charles Anton in New York City and there received confirmation to the correct translation of "Reformed Egyptian". Joseph Smith Jr., quotes from Martin Harris account in the Pearl of Great Price.

I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters.
Pearl of Great Price...Joseph Smith-History 1: 64a

This claim is refuted by Professor Charles Anton (See Attachment), Anton confirmed meeting "Simple-hearted farmer" but saw the whole thing as a hoax to cheat the farmer (Martin Harris) of his money.

Emma gave birth to a son in the Summer of 1828, but his death a few hours later led her to depression. Oliver Cowdery replaced Emma as scribe and in 1830 the translation work was finally complete. Joseph Smith Jr., was now 24 years old. The Book of Mormon totaled 275,000 words. With the translation complete, the angel Moroni took the Golden-Tablets back into heaven.

The Book of Mormon was sent to the Palmyra printers, March 25th, 1830. The book was placed for sales in the Palmyra Bookstores. The Rochester Newspapers reviewed the book under the headlines: "Blashemy"!

Mormon Church Organized

⁵ The Book of Mormon, is the purported history of the tribes of Israel who came to America from the land of Israel in the 7th century BC, and how Christ after his resurrection came to visit them and deliver them the gospel.

After the publication J. Smith Jr, started his first congregation, converts baptized in Lake Seneca included his brothers and parents. Joseph and Emma traveled back to her parents' neighborhood in the Susquehanna Valley, where they made some converts. But they did not convert any of his former associates in treasure-hunting. Joseph's father-in-law, Isaac Hale, thought that Joseph was the same charlatan as before, and was merely practicing a new confidence game. With the encouragement of the local Presbyterian minister, Joseph was once more put on trial on the charge of "disorderly conduct." After the trial, Joseph and Emma left the Susquehanna Valley. Emma would never see her parents again.

By the early fall of 1830 there was only one person whom Joseph wanted to convert who had still not joined his church. That holdout was his wife, Emma. Why Emma refused to join Joseph's church for six months we do not know, just as we do not know whether she believed in the existence of the golden tablets. It was, of course, embarrassing for Joseph to be proselytizing for his new church while he was unable to win the soul of his own wife. Under considerable pressure from Joseph, the woman who had recorded the first words of the Book of Mormon finally became a Mormon herself.

The membership of the Mormon church was significantly increased in 1831, when a preacher in another denomination in Kirtland, Ohio, converted and took his entire congregation with him into the Mormons. The church in Kirtland grew so rapidly that it became the largest center of Mormons in the country. Joseph and his elders moved the headquarters of the new national church to Kirtland, from where Joseph exerted a tight control over his rapidly expanding movement. Joseph announced new policies for the church as revelations which he had received direct from God.

Mormons were hard workers and their communities prospered. The economy in Kirtland was at first communistic, like that of the early Christians. When communism proved itself impractical the Mormons returned to free enterprise, with members paying one-tenth of their incomes to the church as tithes. Eventually a temple was built in Kirtland, an architectural gem which was the grandest building in the west. The Mormons' prosperity was consistent with Joseph's theology: the Kingdom of God, he taught, was to prevail not only in heaven but on earth, too.

Despite their affluence, the Mormons were continually suffering abuse from their non-Mormon neighbors, whom the Mormons called "gentiles." The Mormon beliefs struck many gentiles as being strange, distant from the mainstream of American life. The Mormons' serene assurance of the correctness of their beliefs impressed the gentiles as being smug. Joseph once said, "Truth is Mormonism. God is the author of it." A whispering campaign against the Mormons was concerned largely with what gentiles considered the bizarre sexual practices of the Mormons.

Joseph began to plan for an earthly paradise for Mormons that would be far removed from people of other faiths. In 1832 Joseph was tarred and feathered by a gentile mob near Kirtland. The fury of the mob was ignited by rumors that Joseph had made sexual advances to a seventeen-year-old girl. The attack on his person intensified Joseph's determination to establish a Mormon utopia far away from the gentiles. The Mormon's new home, with its ideal society, would be called Zion.

At first Joseph placed his hope for Zion in Missouri. Although Joseph himself remained in Ohio during the middle 1830's, other Mormons settled in Independence, Missouri, then a frontier town. As soon as the Mormons were settled and had begun to thrive in Independence, however, gentiles began to harass them and drove them out of town. A new Mormon settlement outside of Independence was also harried, forcing a flight to a completely new settlement in Missouri, which the Mormons named Far West. Joseph, still maintaining his headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, began referring to Far West as Zion.

War with the Gentiles

When Far West was attacked by the gentiles, Joseph decided that the Mormons had taken enough punishment. He organized a company of armed Mormons in Ohio and marched at their head to defend their beleaguered brethren in Missouri.

By the time the small Mormon fighting force arrived in Missouri, however, the gentiles had called out the Missouri state militia and were waiting to do battle. Joseph was outnumbered ten-to-one and saw at once that a shoot-out with the Missourians would be suicidal for him and his men. He capitulated. Despite Joseph's surrender, he was charged with treason for appearing in Missouri in command of an armed force, and was also charged with plotting the murder of a Missouri gentile killed in a skirmish with Mormons. While Joseph was in jail awaiting trial, gentiles attacked Far West and drove the Mormons east toward the Mississippi River.

Fifteen thousand Mormons crossed the Mississippi into Illinois in 1839. There they were most unexpectedly welcomed by politicians of both the Whig and Democratic persuasions, who hoped the Mormons would vote their way in the next elections. Joseph got out of his Missouri jail by bribing the sheriff with a jug of whiskey and eight hundred dollars, then joined the last straggling Mormon refugees from Missouri in their retreat to Illinois. He was thirty-three years old.

In Illinois, Joseph became mayor of a new Mormon town called Nauvoo. Thanks to the eagerness of Illinois politicians to win the Mormon vote, he was commissioned as a lieutenant general in command of the Nauvoo militia. He delighted in wearing his general's uniform and reviewing his troops. In 1844, at age thirty-eight, he announced his candidacy for the office of the President of the United States. Outwardly, Joseph's troubles seemed to be over, but appearances were deceiving. Despite his titles, gaudy uniforms, and vaulting political ambitions, Joseph was standing on a very shaky foundation. His position was weakest within his own church.

All his life, Joseph had a tendency to quarrel with his closest friends, who then became his bitter enemies. As a young treasure-hunter, he had made lifelong foes of the men who had helped him dig for treasure. After translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph had a series of close friends and colleagues who worked with him in building the Mormon church. After a limited time of cooperation, however, Joseph quarreled with each friend. The former friend either left the church or was excommunicated from it by Joseph. Outside the church, these former friends circulated malicious rumors about Joseph among the gentiles.

Along with breaks in his relationships with ecclesiastical colleagues, a rift grew between Joseph and his wife, Emma. Although Emma continued to live with Joseph and bear him children, a problem arose between them in the 1830's which was never resolved.

That problem was Joseph's pursuit of other women. Ever since Joseph had founded the Mormon church, his status as a prophet had brought him the adoration of his followers, including many attractive women. Seducing Mormon women was easy for him, and was apparently irresistible to him. As much as she was able, Emma tried to ignore Joseph's infidelities and pretended they had not happened. But once when she caught Joseph embracing a woman whom Emma considered her good friend, Emma lost control of herself and attacked the woman with a broomstick.

There is evidence that Joseph started to think about making plural marriage a moral practice within his church as early as 1831, one year after the church was founded. He knew, however, how shocking such a practice would be not only to many Mormons, but to the gentiles also. He intended to postpone the announcement of the new practice until people were more ready to accept it. Meanwhile, he let a few trusted colleagues know that plural marriage had been sanctioned by God in a special revelation to Joseph. God, said Joseph, was no more opposed to polygamy in 1831 than He had been in the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who all had large harems.

Meanwhile, although Joseph had not announced God's sanction of plural marriage to the entire church, Joseph himself was practicing it. He proposed what he called "celestial" marriage to a number of women, some of whom were already legally married to other men. Joseph considered celestial marriages to be on a higher plane than earthly marriages, lasting forever, and taking precedence over mundane marriages.

Only polygamy - the custom of one man taking multiple wives was sanctioned. Women were not allowed to have more than one husband. Joseph taught that a woman's possibility of entering heaven depended largely on the worthiness of her husband, rather than on her own worthiness.

When Joseph mentioned his revelation about plural marriages to Emma, she was beside herself with rage. She had helped him translate the Book of Mormon and had never asked to see his gold plates. She had borne him children. She had scraped tar and feathers from his naked and bruised body. But she was not going to bless her husband's practice of polygamy. He might have God's permission to sleep with other women, but he would never get her permission. She begged him to renounce the new doctrine. More than one former colleague with whom Joseph fell out was the husband, brother, or father of a woman to whom Joseph had proposed celestial marriage. In 1844 a major schism occurred among the Mormons of Nauvoo which resulted directly from Joseph's proposals of marriage to the wives of several leaders of the church. The husbands who felt wronged by their prophet challenged Joseph's leadership of the church, bought a printing press, and issued a dissident Mormon newspaper with editorials attacking Joseph's policies.

Joseph Jr., Imprisonment and Death

Joseph ordered his followers to destroy the printing press of his opponents. After the press was wrecked, the governor of Illinois charged Joseph with violating the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, and ordered his arrest. The state militia marched to Nauvoo and took Joseph into custody.

The governor did not send the militia because, he expected mass resistance by the Mormons to Joseph's own protection. The governor feared that, if peace officers tried to conduct Joseph to jail, gentle mobs would overwhelm the lawmen in order to lynch Joseph.

The militia conducted Joseph to the jail in Carthage, Illinois, and locked him up with other loyal Mormon leaders in a cell on the second floor. The militia was stationed outside the jail to guard it. On the second day of Joseph's imprisonment, other militiamen who had been dismissed by the governor, marched into Carthage. Their faces were painted to conceal their identities. They were obviously about to commit some mayhem.

When the disguised militiamen approached the jail, the guards on duty did nothing to impede their progress. As they mounted the steps of the jail, the vigilantes fired several shots. Joseph, who had a six-shooter, opened fire on the first vigilantes to reach the second floor. He wounded several of the attackers: then his pistol was emptied.

As the vigilantes came on unopposed, Joseph ran for a window. As he straddled the window sill he was shot from behind by vigilantes inside the jail. At the same time, he was shot by their comrades on the ground below. Calling out, "Oh, my God!" Joseph fell to the ground. He was still alive when he hit the earth. Vigilantes standing over him put several more shots into him, ending his life at age thirty-eight. When his body was brought home to Nauvoo, Emma flung herself across it and moaned, "Oh Joseph, Joseph, they have killed you at last."

Brigham Young

Following the death of Joseph Smith Jr., Brigham Young announced the saints would abandon Nauvoo, Illinois, they traveled through the Rocky Mountains to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Young would lead the Mormons for the next 30 years. He inherited the mantle of "Prophet" from Joseph Smith. Each succeeding prophet was also claim, the same authority as Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. At the time of Young death, in 1877 the church numbered 150,000, today there are well over 9,000,000. Young like Joe Smith Jr., testified to his authority,

I have tried many years to live according to the law which the Lord reveals unto me. I know just as well what to teach this people and just what to say to them and what to do in order to bring them into the celestial kingdom, as I know the road to my office. It is just as plain and easy. The Lord is in our midst. He teaches the people continually. I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call Scripture. Let me have the privilege of correcting a sermon, and it is as good Scripture as they deserve. The people have the oracles of God continually. In the days of Joseph, revelation was given and written, and the people were driven from city to city and place to place, until we were led into these mountains. Let this go to the people with "Thus saith the Lord," and if they do not obey it, you will see the chastening hand of the Lord upon them. – *Journal of Discourses 13:95 (January 2, 1870)*

Young also testified all that he prophesied was true.

Brother Heber has been prophesying. You know that I call him my Prophet, and he prophesies for me. And now I prophesy that, if this people will live their religion, the God of heaven will fight their battles, bring them off victorious over all their enemies, and give to them the kingdom. That is my prophecy. I said amen to all that brother Heber prophesied, for it is true; and he may say amen to all that I prophesy, for it is also true. – *Journal of Discourses 5:167 (August 30, 1857)*

Scripture of Mormonism

Bible

- The Mormon articles of faith read, "We believe the Bible to be the Word of God in so far as it is translated correctly..." *Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Article 8*
- The Book of Mormon claims the correct translation of the Bible is impossible since the Catholic Church has taken away the word of God "...many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. And all his have they taken away. And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord." (*1 Nephi 13:26b,27*)
- Who knows that even one verse of the Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original? (*Orson Pratt's Works, 1891 Pg. 218*)
Book of Mormon
- We believe the the Book of Mormon to be the Word of God....(*Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Article 8*)

Doctrine and Covenants

Doctrine and Covenants is a record of 138 revelations revealing some of Mormonism's distinctive doctrines such as baptism for the dead and celestial marriage.

Pearl of Great Price

The Pearl of Great Price contains *the Book of Moses*, which is roughly equivalent to the first six chapters of Genesis, and the *Book of Abraham*, a translation of an Egyptian papyrus that later proved to be fraudulent. It also contains an extract from Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible; extracts from the *History of Joseph Smith*, which is his autobiography and the *Articles of Faith*

Beliefs of Mormonism

The God (s) of Mormonism

1. "In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 349)
2. "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man..." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 345)
3. "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Spirit has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit..." (Doctrine and Covenants, 130:22)
4. "God exists and we had better strive to be prepared to be one with them" (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 7:238)
5. "As man is, God once was: as God is, man may become" (Prophet Lorenzo Snow, quoted in Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, 105-106)
6. Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a child, and mortal like we ourselves, and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is" (Apostle Orson Hyde, Journal of Discourses, 1:123)
7. "Mormon prophets have continuously taught the sublime truth that God the Eternal Father was once a mortal man who passed through a school of earth life similar to that through which we are now passing. He became God—an exalted being—through obedience to the same eternal Gospel truths that we are given opportunity today to obey" (Hunter, op.cit., 104)
8. When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one his wives, with him. He helped to make and organized this world. He is Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of Days! About whom holy men have written and spoken—He is our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom we have to do" (Brigham Young,

Journal of Discourses, 1:50)⁶

Jesus Christ

Jesus is the brother of Satan this is revealed in the Pearl of Great Price, Book of Moses 4:1-4 and affirmed by Brigham Young in the Journal of Discourses, 13:282)

Jesus also married Mary and Martha and the other Mary at Cana of Galilee, "Whereby he could see his seed, before he was crucified" (Apostle Orson Hyde, Journal of Discourses, 4:259; 2:82)

Holy Spirit

God is everywhere present; but this does not mean the the actual person of any one member of the Godhead can be physically present in more than one place at one time....Admitting the personality of God, we are compelled to accept the fact of his materiality; indeed an immaterial being, under which meaningless name some have sought to designate the condition of God, cannot exist, for the very expression is a contradiction in terms. If God possesses a form, that form is of necessity of definite proportions and therefore of limited extension in space. It is impossible for Him to occupy at one time more than one space of such limits (Articles of Faith, 42-43)

This contradicts the doctrine of the Holy Ghost in Articles of faith 115 which states the Holy Spirit is an immaterial Spirit and yet God.

Salvation

"We believe that men shall be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression" (Article 2, Articles of Faith)

"We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel" (Article 3, Articles of Faith)

The extent of the Atonement is universal, applying alike to all descendants of Adam. Even the unbeliever, the heathen and the child who dies before reaching the years of discretion all are redeemed by the Saviour's self-sacrifice from the individual consequences of the fall...of the saved not all will be exalted to the higher glories. No one can be admitted to any order of glory, in short, no soul can be saved until Justice has been satisfied for violated law...In the kingdom of God there are numerous levels of gradations provided for those who are worthy of them (James Talmage, Articles of Faith, pp. 85,91)

I want you to tell them and tell all the great men of the earth, that the Latter-day Saints are to their redeemer...Believe in God, believe in Jesus and believe in Joseph his prophet, and Brigham his successor, and I add, If you will believe in your hearts and confess with your mouth Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was a prophet, and the Brigham is his successor, you shall be saved in the kingdom of God.....

No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the Celestial Kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith...every man and woman must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, Junior as a passport to their entrance into the mansions where God and Christ are---I can not there without his consent....He reigns there as supreme, a being in his sphere, capacity, calling, as God does in Heaven ...(Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, 6:229, 7:289)

Satan

Satan and Jesus are brothers and both offered competing plans of Salvation to the father on the great star Kolob, Jesus plan was accepted and Lucifer's rejected this can be found in the Journal

⁶ Brigham's teaching that Adam is our heavenly Father is now officially denied by Mormon authorities, but they hold firm to the belief that their God is a resurrected, glorified man)

of Discourses 13:282.

And the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying; That Satan, whom thou has commanded...came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.

But, behold, my Beloved Son which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4:1-2

Eternity

In Mormon theology, there are three heavens; the *Telestial*, the *Terrestrial*, and the *Celestial*. McConkie states that “Most adults” will go to the *Telestial* kingdom and that it is composed of the “the endless hosts of people sensual, and devilish; who have chosen the vain philosophies of the world rather than accept the testimony of Jesus; who have been liars and thieves, sorcerers and adulterers, blasphemers and murderers” (Mormon Doctrine, 1966, 778)

The Second kingdom (the *Terrestrial*) will be inhabited by Christians who did not accept the Mormon message, Mormons who did not live up to their church’s requirements, and men of good will of other religions who rejected the revelations of the Latter-day Saints (Mormon Doctrine, 1966, 784)

The highest or *Celestial* heaven is itself divided into three levels. Only this highest level is godhood or the possession of a kingdom for one’s self and one’s family to be gained. This particular estate has as its prerequisite the candidate’s having been sealed by celestial marriage in a Mormon temple while upon the earth. Even in the celestial kingdom, godhood is a by slow progression, and in the end each who beomes a god will, with his family rule and populate a separate planet of his own.

Mankind

Man is a spirit clothed with a tabernacle. The intelligent part of which was never created or made, but existed eternally—man was also in the beginning with God (Joseph Fielding Smith, Progress of Man)

Eschatology

Mormons believe in a literal second coming of Christ, the Mormons teach that at his return the Jews will have been gathered to Palestine, the Mormons will be miraculously gathered together in Missouri, and the judgment of the Lord will be poured out upon the earth everywhere except on old and new Jerusalem. (Doctrine and Covenants 29:9-11) and Article 10, Articles of Faith

Virgin Birth

When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle (Body), it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father and son in succession.....Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven” (Journal of Discourses, 1:50-51)

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints proclaims that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in the most literal sense. The body in which He performed His mission in the flesh was sired by the same Holy Being we worship as God, our Eternal Father” (Teaching of Ezra Taft Benson, 7)

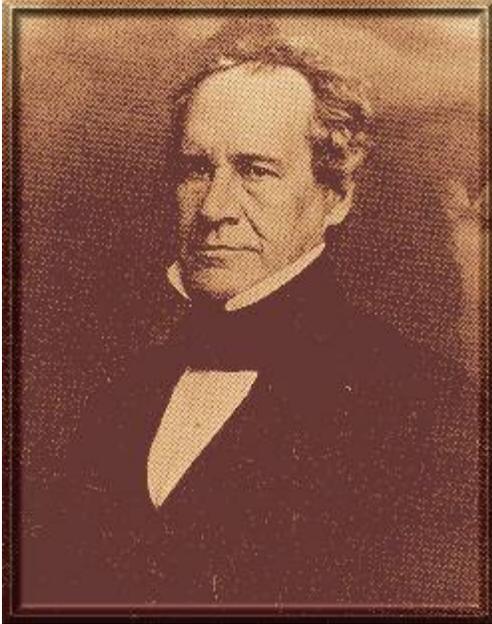
Living Prophets

Any Latter-day Saint who denounces or opposes, whether actively or otherwise, any plan or doctrine advocated by the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Church is cultivation the spirit of apostasy...Lucifer...wins a great victory when he can get members of the Church to speak against their leaders and to do their own thinking...

When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God’s

plan. When they point the way, there is no other which is safe. When they give directions, it should mark the end of the controversy. (Improvement Era, June 1945, p. 354)

Professor Charles Anthon Letter



New York, Feb. 17, 1834

Dear Sir –

I received this morning your favor of the 9th instant, and lose no time in making a reply. The whole story about my having pronounced the Mormonite inscription to be "reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics" is *perfectly false*. Some years ago, a plain, and apparently simple-hearted farmer, called upon me with a note from Dr. Mitchell of our city, now deceased, requesting me to decypher, if possible, a paper, which the farmer would hand me, and which Dr. M. confessed he had been unable to understand. Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick, perhaps a *hoax*. When I asked the person, who brought it, how he obtained the writing, he gave me, as far as I can

now recollect, the following account: A "gold book," consisting of a number of plates of gold, fastened together in the shape of a book by wires of the same metal, had been dug up in the northern part of the state of New York, and along with the book an enormous pair of "gold spectacles"! These spectacles were so large, that, if a person attempted to look through them, his two eyes would have to be turned towards *one* of the glasses merely, the spectacles in question being altogether too large for the breadth of the human face. Whoever examined the plates through the spectacles, was enabled not only to *read* them, but fully to *understand* their meaning. All this knowledge, however, was confined at that time to a young man, who had the trunk containing the book and spectacles in his sole possession. This young man was placed behind a curtain, in the garret of a farm house, and, being thus concealed from view, put on the spectacles occasionally, or rather, looked through one of the glasses, decyphered the characters in the book, and, having committed some of them to paper, handed copies from behind the curtain, to those who stood on the outside. Not a word, however, was said about the plates having been decyphered "by the gift of God." Every thing, in this way, was effected by the large pair of spectacles. The farmer added, that he had been requested to contribute a sum of money towards the publication of the "golden book," the contents of which would, as he had been assured, produce an entire change in the world and save it from ruin. So urgent had been these solicitations, that he intended selling his farm and handing over the amount received to those who wished to publish the plates. As a last precautionary step, however, he had resolved to come to New York, and obtain the opinion of the learned about the meaning of the paper which he brought with him, and which had been given him as

a part of the contents of the book, although no translation had been furnished at the time by the young man with the spectacles. On hearing this odd story, I changed my opinion about the paper, and, instead of viewing it any longer as a hoax upon the learned, I began to regard it as part of a scheme to cheat the farmer of his money, and I communicated my suspicions to him, warning him to beware of rogues. He requested an opinion from me in writing, which of course I declined giving, and he then took his leave carrying the paper with him. This paper was in fact a singular scrawl. It consisted of all kinds of crooked characters disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets. Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sideways, were arranged in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican Calender given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived. I am thus particular as to the contents of the paper, inasmuch as I have frequently conversed with my friends on the subject, since the Mormonite excitement began, and well remember that the paper contained any thing else but "*Egyptian Hieroglyphics*." Some time after, the same farmer paid me a second visit. He brought with him the golden book in print, and offered it to me for sale. I declined purchasing. He then asked permission to leave the book with me for examination. I declined receiving it, although his manner was strangely urgent. I adverted once more to the roguery which had been in my opinion practised upon him, and asked him what had become of the gold plates. He informed me that they were in a trunk with the large pair of spectacles. I advised him to go to a magistrate and have the trunk examined. He said the "curse of God" would come upon him should he do this. On my pressing him, however, to pursue the course which I had recommended, he told me that he would open the trunk, if I would take the "curse of God" upon myself. I replied that I would do so with the greatest willingness, and would incur every risk of that nature, provided I could only extricate him from the grasp of rogues. He then left me.

I have thus given you a full statement of all that I know respecting the origin of Mormonism, and must beg you, as a personal favor, to publish this letter immediately, should you find my name mentioned again by these wretched fanatics.

Yours respectfully, CHAS. ANTHON.