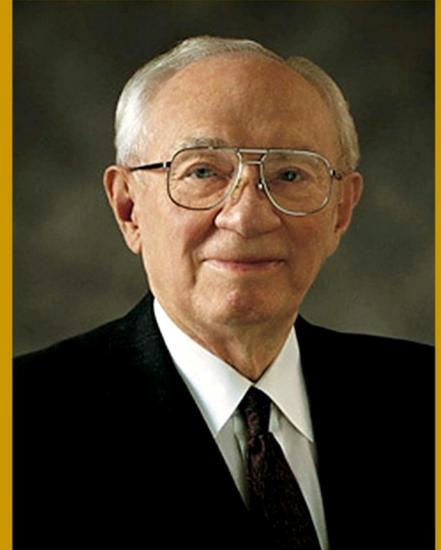




**Joseph Smith**

*(Mormon Founder)*



**George B Hinkley**

*(Mormon Prophet)*



## ***Mormon Temple***

*(Salt Lake City, Utah)*



# Mormonism Examined

PRINT

by Charlie Campbell

*The Mormon Church is officially known as: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Mormon Church is commonly referred to by Mormons, simply as "LDS," short for Latter-day Saints.*

## THE ORIGIN OF THE MORMON CHURCH

The Church was founded by Joseph Smith. Joseph Smith was born in Vermont in 1805. Somewhat confused as a young man about the disagreements between the denominational churches of his day, Joseph Smith took the verse found in James 1:5 to the Lord in prayer. James 1:5 says... "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." NKJV

As the story goes, Joseph Smith, lacking wisdom on which church to join, walked into the woods to pray about which church to join. It was there, in 1820, that Joseph Smith, at the young age of 15, says that God the Father and His Son, Jesus, appeared to him. They supposedly informed him that the churches "were all wrong," "their creeds were an abomination," and "their professors were all corrupt."

A Christian's response to the claims of the Mormon Church, *(as we will do in tonight's class)* is not a mean spirited attack on their faith *(as some Mormon missionaries will claim)* it is a response to Joseph Smith's attack on Christianity.

Three years later, in 1823, Joseph Smith alleges that "a glorified resurrected being" named Moroni appeared to him, and told him of golden plates that were buried in a nearby hillside, in Cumorah, New York. These plates, as the story goes, contained a record of ancient people who had migrated from the near east to America in 600 B.C. *[See the Book of Mormon: Introduction]*

The words on the plates, according to Joseph Smith, were written by a man named "Mormon," an ancient "prophet-historian."

In 1827 the angel Moroni supposedly again appeared to Smith. He directed him to unearth the plates and begin "translating" the "Reformed Egyptian" characters inscribed on them with the supernatural power of God. Joseph Smith says that he was forbidden by Moroni from revealing these golden plates to anybody lest he be destroyed. Before the plates were taken from the earth, three witnesses—David Whitmer, Martin Harris, and Oliver Cowdery—prayed with Smith that they might see the plates. According to the introduction in the Book of Mormon an angel of God came down from heaven, in June of 1829, and laid the plates before their eyes to see.

According to the record, some time after Joseph Smith was done translating the plates, the plates were removed by Moroni and to this day are not available for inspection. It is interesting to note that all three individuals eventually left the church. *[Martin Harris, did return to the Mormon Church late in his life, even though in the interim he had said that several other churches were true.]*

In March of 1830, three years after having supposedly received the plates, Joseph Smith published his results. The name of the book? "The Book of Mormon."

The Book of Mormon, claims right on it's cover to be: "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." The Book of Mormon is made up of 15 books or divisions and appears to be slightly bigger than our New Testament. It claims to be an abridged account of God's dealings with the original inhabitants of the American continent, between about 600 B.C. to 421 A.D. It teaches that Jesus, after his resurrection, came to America, performed miracles, and chose 12 men from a people known as the Nephites to be His American disciples.

One month after the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830, Joseph Smith founded his church in Fayette, New York. In 1844 Joseph Smith was killed at the hand of an angry mob while in prison. Brigham Young (1801-77) took over leadership as the second president of the group, and relocated the followers of Joseph Smith's teachings to Salt Lake City, Utah *(where the Church is headquartered to this day)*. The current Mormon President is Gordon B. Hinckley

With its emphasis on “family values,” 61,000 full time missionaries, hundreds of millions of dollars spent on advertising every year the church has grown to: 12 million people worldwide. That number that is expected to double in the next ten years. Brigham Young University projects that by the year 2080 there will be more than 256 million Mormons worldwide, assuming that the church grows at it’s present rate.

## FOUR FALSE TEACHINGS OF THE MORMON CHURCH

Let’s briefly consider 4 of the many false teachings of the Mormon Church, and then I want to turn my attention more thoroughly tonight to the Book of Mormon itself.

### 1. The Mormon Church’s view of God.

Mormonism is a polytheistic religion [see for instance, The Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 5:1-21]. That is, they believe in the existence of more than one god. Although Mormons believe in the existence of more than one god, they only worship one God, whom they call “Heavenly Father” or “Elohim” (*the God of the OT that is called Elohim*) This God, whom they call “Heavenly Father,” is just one of many gods in an eternal chain of gods that have been begotten by other gods. But “Elohim” is the god over this planet so the Church says we need not worship the other gods that were around before Elohim. Elohim is our creator and thus the god with whom we are accountable to. But Mormons deny the traditional, biblical doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine of the TRINITY states that there is one God that eternally exists in three separate but equal persons, Father Son, and Holy Spirit. The Mormon Church denies this. It teaches that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three separate gods. But the Bible says differently... Turn with me to Isaiah 44... **Isaiah 44:6 & 8** “*Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.*” Skip down to v.8... “*Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.*” [or the NASB says: “*I know of none*” NKJV

### 2. The Mormon’s Church’s view of man.

The Mormon Church has said that man is a god, “in embryo” and may attain exaltation to godhood as his heavenly father has. According to Mormon teaching God and man are of the same “species.” Mormons believe that before birth into this present world, all human beings preexisted in heaven as spiritual offspring of a father and mother, a god and goddess. Being born into this life here on earth is something that we agreed to in heaven. This life serves as a test and a means of obtaining exaltation one day to godhood. Brigham Young the Church’s second president said QUOTE: “***the Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods like himself...We are created to become Gods like unto our Father in heaven.***” ([Journal of Discourses, 3:93](#)) One achieves exaltation by living a life of obedience to Mormon teaching and practices. Those exalted to godhood will inhabit a planet and procreate spirit children, continuing the cycle I just mentioned. Will man become a god one day? Not a chance. Turn over to Isaiah 43. It seems as if God anticipated that the Mormon Church would be saying this!! Many verses could refute this teaching but turn with me over to Isaiah 43. **Isaiah 43:10** says “*You are My witnesses,*” says the LORD, “*And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.*” NKJV There were no gods before God, and there will never be another god after him!

### 3. The Mormon Church’s view of Jesus.

Mormons call Jesus the Son of God just as we do, but they have a whole different idea in mind of what that means. We true Christians believe that He is God the Son (**John 20:28**) the second person in the Trinity. The Bible teaches that He existed from all eternity (**Micah 5:2**) and that He is equal in nature with God the Father (**Jn. 5:18, Heb. 1:3**). Mormon teaching says that Jesus was the very first of many sons. These sons included Lucifer [*Satan*] himself. They were procreated in heaven by Elohim and one of his many unnamed wives. Mormon theology also denies the Biblical account of the virgin birth. It teaches instead that the human body Jesus was given at His birth the product of a physical sexual encounter between God the Father who visited earth and had sexual relations with Mary, (*who was previously his spirit daughter in heaven!*)

#### 4. The Mormon Church's view of salvation.

The Mormon Church teaches that Christ's death on the cross brings about a general salvation for all mankind. The result of this salvation is that all mankind will be resurrected and given eternal life. This salvation will be granted even to the worst of sinners (*including non-Mormons*). But they also teach that to experience individual exaltation in heaven one must have -- repented --been baptized --and lived a life of obedience to the laws and teachings of the Mormon Church. So to the Mormon, Christ's work is merely the beginning of salvation. Human works are needed to complete the process. Depending on your works, the Mormon Church teaches that you can achieve one of three different levels in heaven: Celestial (*the highest*); Terrestrial (*the middle*); Telestial (*the lowest*). To make it into the Celestial kingdom, the highest level, one must also be married in the Mormon temple sometime in this life.

According to the Mormon Church, Hell is only a temporary place of suffering for the wicked. After their time of punishment they will be accepted into glory. We obviously disagree with all of these things. And have considered a Biblical response to a works-based view of salvation (**Eph. 2:8-9**), in previous classes. **Titus 3:5** says... *"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."*

#### MORMON SCRIPTURES

There are four books that the Mormon Church believes contain the Word of God.

##### 1. The Bible

**2. Doctrine and Covenants:** This book claims to contain revelations given to Joseph Smith and "some additions by his successors in the Presidency of the Church."

**3. The Pearl of Great Price:** First published in 1851, is made up of some of Joseph Smith's writings, (including the Book of Abraham, which you learned about in the video we watched a couple of weeks ago).

##### 4. Book of Mormon

The Mormon Church, not wanting us to misplace any of God's inspired Scripture, has even graciously packaged them all together in one book for us! All of these books can be researched online. If you want a free copy of the Book of Mormon for research purposes.

We don't have time to discuss the problems with all of these books. So let us draw our attention to The Book of Mormon. The Mormon Church stands or falls on this book. It, being Joseph Smith's first work, is foundational to the Mormon faith. If it can be shown that this book is a fraud, and that it is not the Word of God, then the whole foundation of the Mormon faith can be shaken. The Mormon "Apostle" Orson Pratt (1811-1881) said, "Convince us of our error of doctrine if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God, and we will be ever grateful for the information" [The Seer, p.15-16]

Today I would like to take up Orson Pratt's challenge. There are 8 reasons why the Book of Mormon should be rejected.

**1. It contradicts the Bible.** Turn over to Isaiah 8 and listen to what Isaiah said... **Isaiah 8:20** *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* The Book of Mormon in many instances does not line up with what the Bible teaches. Here are a couple examples. According to **Alma 7:10** in the Book of Mormon it says Jesus would be born in the city of Jerusalem. But the Bible says differently, saying that Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in Luke 2:4 as well as in Micah 5:2. The Book of Mormon has many of these kinds of inconsistencies and contradictions. For more examples,

**2. It contains false prophecy.** **2 Nephi 10:7**, speaking of the Jews, prophesies... *"But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth, unto the lands of their inheritance."* So God here in the Book of Mormon prophesies that the Jews would be restored to their land, but only if and when they would acknowledge Jesus as God. Well, the Jews are back in their land today. But who would dare suggest that it happened as a result of their having believed that Jesus was God? That certainly was not the case was it? According to the Deuteronomy 18:22 (a verse that we'll look at in a few minutes), God's prophets had to be correct 100% of the time. The Book of Mormon has failed the test.

**3. It has undergone enormous change.** Joseph Smith himself said that the golden plates from which he supposedly got the Book of Mormon, were translated letter-by-letter, and "by the power of God." (*History of the Church*, i, p.54-55) see *Saint's Herald*, November 15, 1962, p.16. Joseph Smith said that the Book of Mormon was, "the most correct of any book on earth" (*History of the Church*, 4:461; this is also stated in the Introduction in the Book of Mormon). If that was true there shouldn't have been any need for any corrections –even spelling and grammatical errors. But, there have been changes. Lots of them. In fact, there have been over 4,000 changes made to the Book of Mormon between the time that the original was published in 1830 and current edition published in 1981. Many of the changes were corrections to Joseph Smith's -- misspellings --grammatical errors, BUT there have been many more changes that are quite substantial. This can pose a real problem to Mormons. If the BOOK OF MORMON is "the most correct of any book on earth" (as Joseph Smith said)...if the Book of Mormon were truly translated letter by letter by the power of God by Joseph Smith there would have been no need for any changes! If you'd like to see actual photographs of the original 1830 version of the Book of Mormon with your own eyes you can buy the book called: *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner (ex Mormons who run a Christian ministry (utlm.org) designed to help Mormons). You can read the introduction to the book by [clicking here](#). A website that lists some of the changes can be viewed by [clicking here](#). The Mormon Church hates this book. This book is an exact photographic reproduction of the first edition of the Book of Mormon compared side by side with a 1964 edition with all the changes marked. "Charlie, I thought you said there were over 4,000 changes?" I did. The 1981 edition introduced between 100 & 200 additional word changes. So the enormous changes in the Book of Mormon is a good third evidence that the Book is not the Word of God. A couple examples of changes in the Book of Mormon... The original version at 1 Nephi 11:21 says that Jesus is "the eternal Father." Today's version says (in the same verse) that Jesus is: "the son of the eternal Father" The original version at Mosiah 21:28 says that: "...King Benjamin had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings. Today's version says (in the same verse) that: "King Mosiah had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings." [Click here to view scanned images of the entire 1830 of the Book of Mormon.](#)

**4. It is guilty of plagiarism.** As you know, to plagiarize is to take ideas, or writings, from another and offer them as one's own. Well, the Book of Mormon does this hundreds of times. It puts forth some 27,000 words, verses and paragraphs that were taken directly from the King James Version of the Bible. In fact, there are even whole chapters lifted right out of the KJV of the Bible. In fact, even the italicized words in the King James version have been plagiarized. The italicized words, as noted in the preface of the KJV, have been added by the KJ translators to add clarity. And yet, even those words ended up in the Book of Mormon! If, as Joseph Smith says, the golden plates he supposedly translated, were originally penned between 600 B.C. and A.D. 421. how could the Book of Mormon contain such extensive quotations from the KJV Bible, that was written in Old English, and wasn't even published until 1611 (over a 1,000 years later)? That is a question that Mormons do not like to answer.

**5. Archaeological verification is absolutely lacking.** The Book of Mormon tells us of two different nations that supposedly once existed in North America: the Nephite and Lamanite nations. We're told in the Book of Mormon that these nations had huge populations that lived in large, fortified cities. They allegedly waged large-scale wars with each other for hundreds of years in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed. The final battle was in A.D. 385 near Hill Cumorah in present-day New York State (see *Mormon* 6:9-15). Yet despite these huge populations and cities, and wars, archaeologists have not been able to discover a single thing that would indicate that these people groups ever existed, or that these events actually ever occurred. "Not one piece of evidence has ever been found to support the Book of Mormon-not a trace of the large cities it names, no ruins, no coins, no letters or documents or monuments, nothing in writing. Not even one of the rivers or mountains or any of the topography it mentions has ever been identified." [Dave Hunt, *In Defense of the Faith*, p.156] This has been verified by both the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. which stated: "The Smithsonian Institution has never used The Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archaeologists see no direct connection between the archaeology of the New World and the subject matter of the book." [Click here to see a photocopy of this document.](#) *National Geographic* magazine stated in 1990 that, "There is no archaeological evidence to verify the history of early peoples of the Western Hemisphere as presented in the Book of Mormon." Has anything changed in the ten years that followed? No. On January 22, 1999, National Geographic Society stated: "Archaeologists and other scholars have long probed the hemisphere's past, and the Society does not know of anything found so far that has substantiated the Book of Mormon." [Click here to see a photocopy of this document.](#) If a Mormon tells you that archaeological evidence does exist, put the burden of proof back on them. Ask for hard documentation from non-Mormon sources that you can examine.

**6. It has been disproved by recent DNA research.** The Book of Mormon claims that about 2,600 years ago there was a migration of Hebrew people to the Americas. The introduction to the Book of Mormon says these Lamanites: “are the principal ancestors of the American Indians.” That is to say, the Book of Mormon teaches that the Native American Indians actually trace their roots back to the Hebrew people. That foundational claim in the Book of Mormon has been disproved by exciting new scientific DNA research. Research done on thousands of individuals from scores of Native American tribes from Alaska down to the tip of South America show that the overwhelming majority [96.4% in post Colombian individuals] of DNA in these tribes originated in northeastern and north-central Asia. [Research done on the remains of Pre-Colombian Indians reveals this even more so (100% in pre Colombian individuals).] Archaeologists, anthropologists, and now DNA experts have reached a consensus: The Native American Indians were not, and are not related to the Hebrew people as the Book of Mormon claims. Had there been a Hebrew migration to the new world in ancient times as the Book of Mormon claims, there would be at least some evidence of this in the DNA of modern-day Native Americans; however, that is not the case. Because there was never a Hebrew migration to the Americas in ancient times, there could not have been a Lamanite race. This new research, that is beginning to making it’s way into the mainstream, is causing many Mormons to reevaluate their beliefs in the Book of Mormon. You can obtain a copy of a great DVD on this topic, called “DNA vs. the Book of Mormon” in our [online store](#) (click this link and then scroll down).

**7. It is permeated with scientific problems.** Dr. Thomas Key ([tdkey.com](http://tdkey.com)), the author of the book *The Book of Mormon in the Light of Science* documents numerous problems that exist in the Book of Mormon. This book can be downloaded for free on Dr. Key’s website. Among the problems he documents are the Book of Mormon’s: Geographical problems, Botanical problems, Zoological problems, Language problems, Microbiological problems, Physiological problems, Physical and Chemical Problems, Technological problem, Anthropological problems, Historical problems, Grammatical and Spelling Problems (in the first edition 1830)

**8. Joseph Smith was a false prophet.** Joseph Smith has made numerous false prophecies. In September of 1832 Joseph Smith claimed that the Lord told him that the latter-day Saints would build the New Jerusalem and its temple in Zion, Missouri during his generation. He said in... Doctrine & Covenants 84:5, 31 5 “For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house...which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed” Joseph Smith was in Kirtland, Ohio at the time that he made this prophecy. Little did he know that as he spoke his followers (in Zion) was being run out of town. Their printing presses were destroyed, and some of their leaders were tarred and feathered! Well, it has been 170 years since this prophecy was made. Generations have come and gone since 1832 and the New Jerusalem has not been built in Zion, Missouri. A proven false prophecy!! There are many.

On May 6, 1843. Joseph Smith made this prophecy He said “I prophesy in the name of the Lord God of Israel, unless the United States redress the wrongs committed upon the Saints in the state of Missouri and punish the crimes committed by her officers that in a few years the government will be utterly overthrown and wasted, and there will not be so much as a potsherd left” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 394). Well, the United States Government did not redress, (or rectify) any of the wrongs committed against the Mormons in Missouri, and now over 150 years later, the U.S. Government is still standing. Here we have another example of a false prophecy. Deuteronomy 18 tells us what we should think about false prophets. **Deuteronomy 18:22** says, “*When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.*” That word “afraid” in the Hebrew is the word “guwr” (goor). Besides meaning “afraid” it can also mean to turn aside from the road (*as in a place for a lodging or any other purpose*). In other words, we are to have nothing to do with false prophets.

There is to be no turning aside to follow after them. In fact, listen to what God commanded the Israelites to do with false prophets in **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**: “*If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' — which you have not known — 'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.*” False prophets were to be put to death. God takes deception very seriously. (*It is interesting to note that Joseph Smith was put to death*).

## So what are we to think about the Book of Mormon?

1. It contradicts the Bible.
2. It contains false prophecy.
3. It has undergone enormous change
4. It is guilty of plagiarism.
5. Archaeological verification is absolutely lacking.
6. Recent DNA Research has disproved a Major claim in the Book of Mormon.
7. It is permeated with scientific problems.
8. Joseph Smith was a false prophet.

## What should we think about the Book of Mormon?

Orson Pratt, that Mormon apostle of old, the one who said "Convince us of our error" was so confident in the Book of Mormon, he said the following in 1851. "The Book of Mormon claims to be a divinely inspired record...If false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions [burdens] ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions. . . if false, no one can possibly be saved and receive it." [Orson Pratt's Works, "Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," Liverpool, 1851, pp.1-2) See: <http://www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/changech5a.htm#The Book of Mormon>]

Seeing that the Book of Mormon is false, we'll allow his own statement to summarize for us what the Book of Mormon is... "....it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions [burdens] ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions..."

## WITNESSING TO MORMON MISSIONARIES

**1. Lovingly Invite Missionaries Into Your Home.** [What about 1 John 2:10? Doesn't the Bible forbid this? [Click here](#) for an answer to this question.] Keep in mind that Mormon missionaries are human beings with families just like you. They are not intentionally going door to door trying to deceive people. They have been deceived. Satan has blinded their minds (2 Cor. 4:4) and taken them captive to do his will (2 Tim. 2:26). So, when Mormon missionaries knock on your door, greet them in love and invite them in to sit down. If the time is bad for a discussion (maybe you're in the middle of something) that's okay! Tell them that, and let them know a good time to come back. (You're going to need about an hour for the first meeting). Of course ladies, for your safety you never want to invite anybody into your home unless your husband or another man is present.

**2. Ask Them How Their Mission is Going.** Simple enough? Right. So invite them in, and once you invite them in ask them how their mission is going (that's what they call what they are doing). Tell them that you admire their willingness to share what they believe with others. Especially in this hot (or cold) weather! Offer them a glass of water, milk. (Not tea, coke, coffee. They are not to have any caffeine. And they'll appreciate your sensitivity to that). Offer them a seat on your couch. While they are getting seated and you are getting them drinks, pray for them. Now, this is not how they are used to being treated. This kind of love, this kind of hospitality will help soften them up to the things you are going to share with them later.

**3. Listen to Their Presentation.** The tendency of many Christians (and myself included at one time) is to employ what I call "the flamethrower approach" to cult evangelism. As soon as the Mormon or the Jehovah's Witness shows up on your doorstep or sits down there in your house you blast them! You lay out before them all that you know about their group. All the things that you disagree with. All the things you've ever heard. All the differences that you can think of between orthodox Christianity and their beliefs. This is rarely effective. Don't do that! I've done that. Others have done it. It doesn't work.

In most cases Mormon missionaries have a memorized presentation. The two of them will take turns. This guy will speak, then the other will speak, back and forth. Let them go through it, and with no interruptions! You're listening intently. You're praying for them and against the evil spirits that are at work.

***THEIR TESTIMONY:*** *When their presentation is over the one that is talking will share with you his testimony. It's memorized and it will sound something like this: "I testify to you that --Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, -- the Mormon church is true, --Jesus is the Christ, -- the president of the Mormon church is a prophet on the earth today, --and I say this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**THEIR CHALLENGE TO YOU:** Then one of them will say something like this (it is right out of the introduction to the Book of Mormon and it reads): "We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost." That is typically how their presentation will end; with an invitation to you to read the Book of Mormon for yourself and pray about whether or not it's true.

**4. Tell Them You Have Read the Book of Mormon.** You've read some of it right here on this webpage. Say something like this (*very humbly, even scratching your head*), "*I have read the Book of Mormon. I've sincerely prayed the prayer just like the Book of Mormon suggests, and I didn't receive the same confirmation as you.*" You are going to have two shocked missionaries sitting there. Why are they going to be shocked? Well, first off, the average Mormon has NEVER met somebody outside of the Church that has read the Book of Mormon. Secondly, because you have just taken the steam out of their entire presentation!! Their whole presentation is designed to get you interested in reading the Book of Mormon, and then to leave one behind and leave.

**5. Say something like, "In fact, I ran into a few problems and maybe you can help me out."** They'll look puzzled, but will be glad to see themselves as those who can help a person out who has honest questions. So they'll say "Sure!?"

**6. Excuse yourself for a moment.** There are two things you want to go do. A. Go and get your Book of Mormon, your King James Version of the Bible (*this is only version officially accepted and used by the Mormon Church*), and your notes. B. Pray.

**7. Ask the questions you've prepared ahead of time.** What kind of questions? Questions that specifically address problems with the Book of Mormon and the teachings of their prophets. If you preach at them most Mormons will tune you out. Asking questions gives them hope that you are genuinely interested in learning more about their religion. Asking questions is a great way to get the Mormon to think about things they may have never thought about. researching into the false teachings of their church. Jesus Himself often times asked His critics questions. To the chief priests and the elders who were challenging his authority, Jesus asked... Matthew 21:25 (also v. 28) "The Baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?" Let's look at some sample questions that you can ask? I'd suggest going through these on your own and writing them out in your own handwriting and in your own words. One student even suggested in class that we give it to them on a piece of paper, and encourage them to get back to us with an answer. That is a good idea. Don't print out the whole page. Just ask about three during the first meeting.

a) Can you find me archeological and historical proof from non-Mormon sources that prove that the peoples and places named in the Book of Mormon are true?

b) Why does the Book of Mormon state that Jesus was born in Jerusalem ([Alma 7:10](#)) when history and the Bible state that he was born in Bethlehem ([Matthew 2:1](#))?

c) I've read where Joseph Smith said that he translated the golden plates (*from which he got the Book of Mormon*) letter-by-letter, "by the power of God" and that it was "the most correct of any book on earth." If that's true why has the Mormon Church had to make more than 4,000 changes to the Book of Mormon that was originally published in 1830?

d) Why do the Bible verses quoted in the Book of Mormon contain the italicized words from the King James Version that were added into the KJV text by the translators in the 16th and 17th centuries?

**Here's an example:** [3 Nephi 24:10](#) says: "...that there shall not be room enough to receive it..." This is an exact quote from [Malachi 3:10](#) from the King James Version. What's amazing is that seven of these words were not part of the original text. They were added by the KJV translators for clarity. How did those words end up in the Book of Mormon that was supposedly written over a thousand years before the King James Version of the Bible?

e) [Isaiah 43:10](#) says, "*Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me.*" In [Isaiah 44:6](#), God says, "*There is no God besides Me.*" In light of what is said here, how can worthy Mormon males become Gods in the afterlife when God already said that before him no God was formed, nor will there be any Gods formed after Him?

- f) Why do Mormons say that Jesus and Lucifer are spirit brothers when both the first chapter of John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16 teach that Jesus is the creator of all things, including Lucifer?
- g) I read where Brigham Young, the second president of the LDS Church, taught that both the moon and the sun were inhabited by people (*Journal of Discourses, 1870, v.13, p.271*). Has the Mormon Church ever found scientific evidence of that to be true?
- h) I read in *Doctrine and Covenants* 84:1-5 where Joseph Smith prophesied that the New Jerusalem and a temple would be built in Zion, Missouri in his generation. Does the Mormon Church still teach that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God after he made a false prophecy?
- i) I read where Brigham Young taught that Adam is "our Father and our God" (*Journal of Discourses, Apr. 9, 1852, vol.1, p.50*). How can that be true when both the Bible and the Book of Mormon (*Mormon 9:12*) say that Adam was a creation of God?
- j) If Brigham Young was a true prophet, why would one of your later prophets overturn his declaration which stated that the black man could never hold the priesthood in the LDS Church until after the resurrection of all other races (*Journal of Discourses, Dec. 12, 1854, 2:142-143*)?
- k) Read Deuteronomy 18:20-22. Since the Bible's test to determine whether someone is a true prophet of God is 100% accuracy in all his prophecies has the LDS Church ever reconsidered its teaching that Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were true prophets?
- l) In the last couple of years, Mormon scholars, and scientists have discovered powerful DNA evidence that has proven that the American Indians are not descendants of the Jewish race (*as the Book of Mormon claims in its introduction*), but the Asian race. How does your church respond to this scientific evidence?
- m) Why did Joseph Smith condone polygamy as an ordinance from God (*Doctrine and Covenants 132 [see v. 38-39]*) when the Book of Mormon had already condemned the practice in the book **Jacob 1:15** and **2:24**?

These are questions that can slowly chip away at the Mormons very foundation, their faith in their the Book of Mormon, and their supposed prophets.

**8. Suggest to them the idea of getting together again.** Why? To continue discussing these matters and your questions. Will they come back? Most likely, yes. Why? You were friendly. You were humble. You were kind. You remained joyful and unargumentative. You posed honest questions to them (*that you need answers to*) and they will feel as if they owe it to you to provide answers to the questions that you asked that they were not able to answer. Your goal is to eventually and lovingly share with them three things.

1. Your discovery that the Bible is trustworthy and reliable.
2. The real Gospel. Demonstrate to them the total sufficiency of Christ's death on the cross to secure for us salvation and forgiveness of sins.
3. Your testimony (*what God has done in your life*).

This is the same approach I would use with co-workers, friends, and family members that are Mormons as well. It may play out a little differently. They won't come to your door, but you can have a talk over a lunch or two with that uncle of yours or that friend that you work with and ask them, "So what exactly is it that you believe?" They will tell you. Response: Debate? Arguing? I wouldn't. My response? Say, "Hmmm." Then tell them that you'd be interested in reading the Book of Mormon, and any of their other inspired literature. A couple of weeks after they give you that material let them know that you have a few questions you'd like to ask them.

# Bible and Book of Mormon Contradictions

By Sandra Tanner

**Bible states that the inclusion of Gentiles, was not fully revealed until after Christ's death.**

1. **Eph. 3:3-7** Paul writes "by revelation he made known unto me **the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ) **which in other ages was not made known** unto the sons of men **as it is now revealed** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister ..... (See also Col. 1:26; 1 Peter 1: 1-12; Romans 16:25-26)

**However, the Book of Mormon maintains that this knowledge was had in 545 B.C.**

*2 Nephi 25:19 "For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh... his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ... (v.23) For we labor... to persuade... our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do."*

*2 Nephi 26:12 "And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews, that Jesus in the very Christ, it must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God;"*

*2 Nephi 30:2 "For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off,"*

*2 Nephi 31:17 "For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and the Holy Ghost."*

2. **During Jesus' ministry He spoke of His church as something in the future.**

**Matthew 16:18** "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

**Acts 2:47** says that After Christ's resurrection and the day of Pentecost we read "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

**However, the Book of Mormon claims the Christian church was established as early as 147 B.C.**

*Mosiah 18:17 "And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ, from that time forward."*

3. **Bible says believers were 1st called Christians after Paul's ministry in 50 – 70 AD.**

**Acts 11:26** "And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were **called Christians first** in Antioch."

**However, the Book of Mormon claims people were known by this title as early as 73 B.C.**

*Alma 46:15 "...yea, all those who were true believes 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."*

#### 4. The Holy Ghost was bestowed on the Christians at the time of Pentecost.

**Luke 24:49** "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father unto you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

**Acts 2:1-4** "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,..."

**Yet the Book of Mormon claims that people received the gift of the Holy Ghost as early as 545 B.C.**

*2 Nephi 31:12-13 "...the voice of the Son came unto me, saying: He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me... Wherefore, my beloved brethren,... by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost;..."*

#### 5. Old Testament states that the only ones who could be priests were descendants of Levi.

**Numbers 3:9-10** "And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death" (See also Numbers 8:6-26).

**However, the Book of Mormon story claims that descendants of the tribe of Manasseh (Alma 10:3) were made priests.**

*2 Nephi 5:26 "And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people."*

#### 6. Old Testament teaches that the 1st born of the flocks were to be given automatically to the Lord. Sacrifices were to be made from remaining animals.

**Exodus 13:12** "That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's" (See also Ex. 13:2; 22:29-30; Numbers 3:13; 18:15-18; 2 Sam. 24:24).

Deuteronomy 12:6 "And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks."

**The Book of Mormon claims that the Nephites were keeping the law of Moses. However, the Nephites broke the law of Moses by using the first of the flocks for burnt offerings. These should have already been given to the Lord as tithing.**

*Mosiah 2:3 "And they also took of the firstlings of their flocks, that they might offer sacrifice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses."*

#### 7. The Bible states that all of King Zedekiah's sons were killed.

**Jeremiah 39:6** "Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes."

**Contrary to the Bible, the Book of Mormon claims that one son of King Zedekiah escaped destruction and came to the Americas.**

**Heleman 6:10** "the land north was called Mulek, which was after the son of Zedekiah; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north" (See also Heleman 8:21).

## 8. The Bible prophesied that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

**Micah 5:2** "But thou, **Bethlehem** Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

**However, the Book of Mormon said he would be born at Jerusalem.**

**Alma 7: 10** "And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin..."



Home

# Mormons In Transition

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What's New

## Changes to Latter-day Scripture LDS Leaders Have Made Thousands of Changes to Mormon Scriptures — Why?

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*"LDS leaders have added and deleted words and tampered with previously published revelations by writing in new material and falsely attributing it to an earlier date."*

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Many people are unaware that over the years the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon Church) has made thousands of changes to its scriptures. LDS leaders have added and deleted words and tampered with previously published revelations by writing in new material and falsely attributing it to an earlier date. What follows are examples of some of the most significant revisions made to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. Within this article are links to scanned images of these historical documents from the 1830s.

### Changes to the Book of Mormon

According to the Mormon Church's teaching manual, *Gospel Principles*, page 53,

Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon into English through the gift and power of God. He said that it is "the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book" (*History of the Church*, 4:461).

Yet, the book which Joseph Smith declared was "the most correct of any book on earth" (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 461) has been revised in over 3900 places. Most of these changes were made to correct embarrassing spelling and grammatical errors (this will be examined in more detail later in this article). However, there are numerous other changes which affect the doctrinal teachings of the Book of Mormon.

**Changes in Doctrine.** Key Passages on Deity in the original 1830 text of the Book of Mormon were changed in the 1837 edition to reflect [Joseph Smith's changing doctrine of Deity](#). Joseph originally taught that Jesus and the Father were the same person and that God had always been God, but later developed the idea that the Father and Son were separate Gods, each with a tangible body. Smith taught that both God the Father and Jesus had been mortal men. What follows are specific examples from the original 1830 first edition Book of Mormon (which did not have verse divisions) compared with the altered text of recent versions.

| Original 1830 Text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Current, Altered Text                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>1 Nephi 3, p. 25*</b> And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is <i>the mother of God</i>, after the manner of the flesh</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p> <p><small>*The 1830 text did not have verse divisions.</small></p> | <p><b>1 Nephi 11:18</b> And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is <i>the mother of the Son</i> of God.</p>                                                       |
| <p><b>1 Nephi 3, p. 25</b> And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, even <i>the Eternal Father!</i></p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                    | <p><b>1 Nephi 11:21</b> And the angel said unto me, behold the Lamb of God, even <i>the Son</i> of the <i>Eternal Father!</i></p>                                                 |
| <p><b>1 Nephi 3, p. 26</b> And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, <i>the Everlasting God</i>, was judged of the world.</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                    | <p><b>1 Nephi 11:32</b> And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, <i>the Son</i> of the <i>Everlasting God</i>, was judged of the world.</p> |

**Other Changes to the Book of Mormon.** A variety of other changes have been made that also alter the meaning of the text.

| Original 1830 Text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Altered Text                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Alma 15, p. 303</b> yea, I know that he alloteth unto men, <i>yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable,</i>, according to their wills</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>Alma 29:4</b> yea, I know that he alloteth unto men, <del>yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable,</del> according to their wills</p> |
| <p>NOTE: Later editions from at least 1840 to 1980 deleted without explanation these eight words. LDS leaders re-inserted the omitted words into all editions since 1981.</p> <p>It is possible Joseph Smith deleted this portion of the verse because it conflicted with a revelation he claimed to receive in 1831 found in Doctrine &amp; Covenants 56:4,5 "Wherefore I, the Lord, command and revoke, as it seemeth me good; and all of this upon the heads of the rebellious, saith the Lord. Wherefore, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants ..."</p> |                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p><b>Mosiah 9, p. 200</b> ... <i>King Benjamin</i> had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings ...</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p><b>Mosiah 21:28</b> ... <i>King Mosiah</i> had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings ...</p>                                     |
| <p><b>Ether 1, p. 546</b> ... and for this cause did <i>King Benjamin</i> keep them ...</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>Ether 4:1</b> ... and for this cause did <i>King Mosiah</i> keep them ...</p>                                                                       |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>NOTE: According to Book of Mormon chronology, King Benjamin was already dead when these events took place. Apparently LDS leaders changed the name to Mosiah to eliminate the mistake.</p>                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>2 Nephi 8, p. 87</b> ... and the mean man <i>boweth down</i>, and the great man humbleth himself not</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p><b>2 Nephi 12:9</b> ... and the mean man <i>boweth not down</i>, and the great man humbleth himself not ...</p>                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><b>1 Nephi 5, p. 52</b> ... O house of Jacob, which are called out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord ...</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p><b>1 Nephi 20:1</b> ... O house of Jacob, which are called out of the waters of Judah, <i>or out of the waters of baptism</i>, which swear by the name of the Lord ...</p>                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>2 Nephi 12, p. 117</b> ... and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a <i>white</i> and a delightsome people.</p> <p><a href="#">[View the 1830 Book of Mormon text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p><b>2 Nephi 30:6</b> (1840 edition) ... and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a <i>white pure</i> and a delightsome people.</p> <p>(Later editions until 1981) ... <i>white</i> and delightsome</p> <p>(1981 to current edition) <i>pure</i> and delightsome</p> |
| <p>NOTE: Before 1978 dark-skinned males were not allowed to hold positions of priesthood authority within the Mormon church. Today Mormon scriptures continue to teach that dark skin is a curse from God and a sign of His displeasure (See 1 Nephi 12:23; 2 Nephi 5:21; Alma 3:6). Brigham Young, second president and prophet of the LDS church referred to those with dark skin as being "<i>cursed with a s[k]in of blackness</i>" (<i>Journal of Discourses</i>, vol. 11, p. 272).</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

**Grammatical, Spelling and Syntactical Changes.** As stated earlier, the Mormon church has made many changes to the Book of Mormon in order to correct Joseph's poor grammar and spelling. This should not have been necessary, however, given the manner in which Joseph is supposed to have produced this book. According to eyewitness testimony, Joseph Smith gave his scribe a word-for-word dictation of what he read off a magical stone that he had placed in his hat. (This seer stone would later be referred to by the Old Testament name of Urim and Thummim.) The fact that Joseph simply dictated the words he read on the stone was supposed to prove that the Book of Mormon came from God and not Joseph. This view was taught by Joseph F. Smith, 6<sup>th</sup> President of the Mormon church. On Saturday, February 25, 1881, Oliver B. Huntington recorded in his journal:

I went to Provo to a quarterly Stake Conference. Heard Joseph F. Smith describe the manner of translating the Book of Mormon by Joseph Smith the Prophet and Seer, which was as follows as near as I can recollect the substance of his description. Joseph did not render the writing on the gold plates into the English language in his own style of language as many people believe. But every word and every letter was given him by the gift and power of God. So it is the work of God and not of Joseph Smith, and it was done in this way ... The Lord caused each word spelled as it is in the book to appear on the stones in short sentences or words, and when Joseph had uttered the sentence or word before him and the scribe had written it properly, that sentence would disappear and another appear. And if there was a word wrongly written or even a letter incorrect the writing on the stone would remain there. (*Journal of Oliver B. Huntington*, p. 168 of typed copy at the Utah State Historical Society)

For more details on this subject and quotes from the eyewitnesses, see the article, [Translation or](#)

## Clairvoyance.<sup>1</sup>

While the following short sampling of changes do not affect the meaning of the text, they do reveal the human origin of the book.

### *Improper use of "was" in 1830 edition later changed to "were"*

"... Adam and Eve, which *was* our first parents ..." [p. 15]  
"... the bands which *was* upon my wrists ..." [p. 49]  
"... the priests *was* not to depend ..." [p. 193]  
"... they *was* angry with me ..." [p. 248]  
"... there *was* no wild beasts ..." [p. 460]

### *Improper use of "is" in the 1830 edition later changed to "are"*

"... the words which *is* expedient ..." [p. 67]  
"... But great *is* the promises of the Lord ..." [p. 85]  
"... And whoredoms *is* an abomination ..." [p. 127]  
"... here *is* our weapons of war ..." [p. 346]

### *Improper use of "a" in the 1830 edition later deleted from text*

"... As I *was* a journeying ..." [p. 249]  
"... he found Muloki *a* preaching ..." [p. 284]  
"... had been *a* preparing the minds ..." [p. 358]  
"... Moroni *was* *a* coming against them [p. 403]

### *Improper or slang word usage in 1830 edition deleted, correct words inserted in later editions*

"Behold the Scriptures are before you; if ye will *arrest* them, it shall be to your own destruction." [p. 260] The word "**arrest**" is now changed to "**wrest**" [Alma 13:20].

"... they were *exceeding afraid* ..." [pp. 354, 392, 415]. The phrase "**exceeding afraid**" is now changed to "**exceedingly afraid**" [Alma 47:2; 58:24; Helaman 4:3].

"... my soul was *wrecked* with eternal torment ..." [p. 214]. The word "**wrecked**" is now changed to "**racked**" [Mosiah 27:29].

## **Changes to the Doctrine & Covenants**

The Mormon scripture called the Doctrine and Covenants is a series of revelations which Joseph Smith and other LDS prophets claimed to receive directly from God. The first of these revelations were printed in *The Book of Commandments* in the year 1833. Since that time many of these revelations have been radically altered, with words and even whole sentences deleted. In other places later doctrinal innovations were written back into earlier revelations to hide the glaring contradictions that would otherwise result. In this way, events that were previously unheard of suddenly become part of the historical record as a revelation from God.

Here are some specific examples representative of thousands of changes:

| Original 1833 Book of Commandments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Current, Altered Doctrine & Covenants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>BC 4:2, p. 10 — and he has a gift to translate the book [of Mormon], and I have commanded him that he shall pretend to no other gift, for I will grant him no other gift.</p> <p>[Harmony, Pennsylvania March 1829]</p> <p><a href="#">View Book of Commandments text.</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>D&amp;C 5:4 — And you have a gift to translate the <b>plates; [and this is the first gift that I bestowed upon you;]</b> and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift <b>[until my purpose is fulfilled in this;]</b> for I will grant unto you no other gift <b>[until it is finished].</b></p> <p>Note: The changes to this revelation were necessary for Joseph had already claimed the divine ability to do his own translation of the Bible. Later he would claim the gift to translate ancient Egyptian papyri. However, the evidence does not support these as authentic translations.<sup>2</sup></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>BC 28:6-7, p. 60 Behold this is wisdom in me, wherefore marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you, on the earth, and with all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world:</p> <p>Wherefore lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins and be faithful until I come: even so. Amen.</p> <p>[Harmony, Pennsylvania September 4, 1830]</p> <p><a href="#">View Book of Commandments text.</a></p> | <p>D&amp;C 27:5ff Behold this is wisdom in me, wherefore marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you, on the earth, and with <b>[Moroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon, containing the fulness of the everlasting gospel...]</b></p> <p>[Harmony, Pennsylvania first part <i>August</i> 1830, remainder September 1830]</p> <p>NOTE: At this point in the revelation over 300 words are added regarding the restoration of the Mormon priesthood by means of divine ordination. By making the account part of a revelation that is dated to 1830, it appears the story has been known since then. However, it is not a part of any revelation until the 1835 edition of the Doctrine &amp; Covenants. Apparently Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, who were in charge of editing the 1835 D&amp;C, inserted this material so that the concept of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods being restored and the office of high priest would appear to have been in place from the start and would appear to have been given directly by God. The revelation concludes with over 130 additional words, taken from the Bible copied almost verbatim from Ephesian 6:13-17. No explanation is given for the dating discrepancy.</p> <p><a href="#">click here to see document</a></p> |
| <p>BC 44:26, p. 92 If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments; and behold, thou shalt consecrate all thy properties, that which thou hast unto me, with a covenant and a deed which can not be broken; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church, and two of the elders, such as he shall appoint and set apart for that purpose.</p>                                                                                         | <p>D&amp;C 42:29-30 If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments; and behold, <b>[thou wilt remember the poor, and] thou shalt consecrate [of] all thy properties [for their support] that which thou hast [to impart] unto me [them] with a covenant and a deed which can not be broken. [And inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor, ye will do it</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[Kirtland, Ohio February 1831]</p> <p><a href="#">View Book of Commandments text.</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>unto me] and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church [and his counselors], two of the elders [or high priests], such as he shall appoint [or has appointed] and set apart for that purpose. (February 1831)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>NOTE: By 1835 when the D&amp;C was printed Joseph Smith had given up on the idea of communalism. Therefore this revelation was changed so that Mormons were no longer told by God to consecrate all their properties, but instead the emphasis is shifted to a command to remember the poor and give "of your property". Also, at the time the revelation was originally given there was no office of "counselor" or "high priest" in the Mormon church, so these also had to be added to the revelation retroactively, once again giving the appearance these offices were there from the beginning.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p><b>BC 9:1, p. 22</b> Now, behold I say unto you, that because you delivered up so many writings, which you had power to translate, into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them, and you also lost your gift at the same time ...</p> <p>[Harmony, Pennsylvania May 1829]</p> <p><a href="#">View Book of Commandments text.</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>D&amp;C 10:1 9:1</b> Now, behold I say unto you, that because you delivered up <del>so many</del> [those] writings, which you had power [given unto you] to translate [by the means of the Urim and Thummim], into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them.</p> <p>(v.2) And you also lost your gift at the same time, [and your mind became darkened].</p> <p>NOTE: There is no mention of the Old Testament Urim and Thummim in the Book of Mormon nor is there any connection of the Urim and Thummim to the translation of the Book of Mormon until 1833, which is four years after this revelation was supposedly given.</p> |
| <p>Another example of a revelation that has undergone hundreds of changes was first published in <i>The Evening &amp; Morning Star</i> in October 1832. The revelation was said to have been received in November of 1831.</p> <p><a href="#">View document</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>This revelation is now D&amp;C 68 and contains multiple references to the Melchizedek priesthood, high priests and the First Presidency. Once again the attempt is made to write later developments into previously given revelations to make them fit Joseph's evolving church structure.</p> <p><a href="#">View document</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

**Changes in the Pearl of Great Price:** As with the Doctrine and Covenants, LDS leaders have altered the revelations contained in the Pearl of Great Price.

| Original 1851 Pearl of Great Price                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Current, Altered Pearl of Great Price                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>PGP Moses, p. 14</b> — And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And again, the Lord said unto the woman, I will greatly multiply your sorrow, and your conception.</p> <p><a href="#">View Pearl of Great Price text.</a></p> | <p><b>PGP Moses 4:19-22</b> — And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And <del>again,</del> [!] the Lord [God] said unto the [serpent: Because thou has done this thou shalt be cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon they belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed; and he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the] woman, [! the Lord God</p> |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | said], I will greatly multiply [thy] <del>your</del> sorrow, and [thy] <del>your</del> conception.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>PGP Moses, p. 16 — And the Lord said unto Cain, why are you angry? Why is your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lies at the door, and Satan desires to have you; and except you shall hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver you up, and it shall be unto you according to his desire.</p> <p><a href="#">[View Pearl of Great Price text.]</a></p> | <p>PGP Moses 5:22-31 — And the Lord said unto Cain, why <del>are you angry</del> [art thou wroth]? Why is <del>your</del> [thy] countenance fallen? If <del>you do</del> [thou doest] well, <del>will you not be</del> [thou shalt be] accepted?. And if <del>you</del> [thou] do[est] not well, sin lie[th] at the door, and Satan desire[th] to have <del>you</del> [thee]; and except <del>you</del> [thou] shall hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver <del>you</del> [thee] up, and it shall be unto <del>you</del> [thee] according to his desire. [And thou shalt rule over him; For from this time forth thou shalt be the father of his lies; thou shalt be called Perdition; for thou wast also before the world. For from this time forth thou shalt be ...]</p> <p>Note: At this point there are an additional 200 words added to this passage including Cain making a pact directly with Satan to be able to kill his brother Abel.</p> |
| <p>PGP JS History, p. 41 — He called me by name and said unto me, that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Nephi.</p> <p><a href="#">[View Pearl of Great Price text.]</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>PGP JS History, 1:33 — He called me by name and said unto me, that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p>Note: All evidence indicates this change was made after the death of Joseph Smith, and cannot be considered a clerical error. Both the handwritten manuscripts for the History of the Church, and the printed history in the Church newspaper Times and Seasons (of which Joseph Smith was editor) give the visiting personage's name as "Nephi."</p>                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Conclusion:** The historical record is clear. The Mormon Church has made thousands of changes to its scriptures changes which raise the following questions.

- If, as the Mormon Church claims, the original revelations came directly from God, what justifies the tampering documented above?
- Does this evidence warrant further investigation of the historical and spiritual roots of the LDS Church?

### Free Book Offer

For a limited time the publisher is offering, to members of the LDS Church, a free copy of the research tool titled *Where Does It Say That?* It provides photographic duplications of key LDS sources that are often difficult to obtain. These sources document the LDS church's teaching on various issues including: Adam-God, polygamy, the First Vision, and blood atonement. Please include \$2 for postage and handling to US addresses. For addresses outside the US, include \$3. Those who are not members of the LDS Church may order the book from the Institute for Religious Research for the price of \$5.95, plus \$2 for postage and handling. Send your request to:



Institute for Religious Research - Dept. MIT  
1340 Monroe Ave. N.W.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Later Mormon leaders including General Authority Brigham H. Roberts, expressed a strong desire to abandon the idea that Joseph received the text of the Book of Mormon directly from God. Elder Roberts reasoned that such a view made God responsible for the grammatical and spelling errors and would hinder people from accepting Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon as divinely inspired. Roberts wrote:

That old theory cannot be successfully maintained; that is the Urim and Thummim did the translating, the Prophet, nothing beyond repeating what he saw reflected in that instrument; that God directly or indirectly is responsible for the verbal and grammatical errors of translation. To advance such a theory before intelligent and educated people is to unnecessarily invite ridicule, and make of those who advocate it candidates for contempt. . . .

It is no use resisting the matter. The old theory must be abandoned. It could only come into existence and remain so long and now be clung to by some so tenaciously because our fathers and our people in the past and now were and are uncritical" (B.H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith*, pp. 307, 308 – cited in *Mormonism Shadow or Reality*, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, p. 90).

The new theory proposed by Roberts, and still popular today, is that God only gave Joseph the ideas and concepts for the Book of Mormon. These Joseph recorded in his own grammatically poor language and style. With this new theory, LDS leaders justified themselves in making thousands of word changes designed to enhance the quality and credibility of the Book of Mormon.

A serious problem with the theory of Joseph receiving only inspired ideas and concepts and then rendering them into his own words after much study and contemplation, is that there is no historical evidence to support it. It is a theory born of necessity in the minds of LDS leaders decades after the fact. Compare this with the word-for-word dictation method which has extensive testimony from those who were closest to Joseph personally and present during the act of dictating the Book of Mormon.

Today the Mormon Church gives potential converts a copy of a corrected and grammatically sanitized Book of Mormon but still points to Joseph Smith's lack of education as evidence for its divine origin. What is implied is that Joseph could not have produced such a book without divine aid. What they do not say is that Joseph's poor grammar, so evident in the first edition, is now masked by thousands of changes and corrections made by later LDS leaders. As a result, today we do not have the Book of Mormon as it came from the hand of Joseph Smith, but rather a heavily edited version as it has come through the hands of LDS church leaders.

# National Geographic Society Statement on the Book of Mormon



August 12, 1998

Luke Wilson  
Institute for Religious Research  
1340 Monroe Avenue NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Dear Mr. Wilson:

We appreciate the interest that prompted your letter.

The *Book of Mormon* is clearly a work of great spiritual power; millions have read and revered its words, first published by Joseph Smith in 1830. Yet Smith's narration is not generally taken as a scientific source for the history of the Americas. Archaeologists and other scholars have long probed the hemisphere's past, and the Society does not know of anything found so far that has substantiated the *Book of Mormon*.

In fact, students of prehistoric America by and large conclude that the New World's earliest inhabitants arrived from Asia via the Bering "land bridge." (Lower sea levels during ice ages exposed the continental shelf beneath Bering Strait, allowing generations of ancient Siberians to migrate east.) NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC carried "The First Americans" in its September 1979 issue, perhaps on your library's shelf.

I have enclosed a statement issued by the Smithsonian Institution in 1982. You may wish to approach the National Museum of Natural History and ask if they offer additional information on the topic. You can write the museum in Washington, D.C., 20560. No street address is needed.

I hope this information proves helpful.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Crain".

Julie Crain  
Research Correspondence

# ***Smithsonian Institution Statement on Book of Mormon***

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## **Public Inquiry Mail Service**

Visitor Information and Associates' Reception Center

RECEIVED OCT 2 1997

Jake P. Wilson  
Institute for Religious Research  
1340 Monroe Avenue, NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

September 28, 1997

Your recent inquiry has been received in this office for response.

Enclosed please find material which we trust will prove helpful.

Thank you for your interest in the Smithsonian Institution.

PIMS/PP019/3-95

Smithsonian Institution • SI Bldg., Room 153, MRC 010 • Washington, DC 20560

## STATEMENT REGARDING THE BOOK OF MORMON

1. The Smithsonian Institution has never used the Book of Mormon in any way as a scientific guide. Smithsonian archeologists see no direct connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the book.
2. The physical type of the American Indian is basically Mongoloid, being most closely related to that of the peoples of eastern, central, and northeastern Asia. Archeological evidence indicates that the ancestors of the present Indians came into the New World--probably over a land bridge known to have existed in the Bering Strait region during the last Ice Age--in a continuing series of small migrations beginning from about 25,000 to 30,000 years ago.
3. Present evidence indicates that the first people to reach this continent from the East were the Norsemen who briefly visited the northeastern part of North America around A.D. 1000 and then settled in Greenland. There is nothing to show that they reached Mexico or Central America.
4. One of the main lines of evidence supporting the scientific finding that contacts with Old World civilizations, if indeed they occurred at all, were of very little significance for the development of American Indian civilizations, is the fact that none of the principal Old World domesticated food plants or animals (except the dog) occurred in the New World in pre-Columbian times. American Indians had no wheat, barley, oats, millet, rice, cattle, pigs, chickens, horses, donkeys, camels before 1492. (Camels and horses were in the Americas, along with the bison, mammoth, and mastodon, but all these animals became extinct around 10,000 B.C. at the time when the early big game hunters spread across the Americas.)
5. Iron, steel, glass, and silk were not used in the New World before 1492 (except for occasional use of unsmelted meteoric iron). Native copper was worked in various locations in pre-Columbian times, but true metallurgy was limited to southern Mexico and the Andean region, where its occurrence in late prehistoric times involved gold, silver, copper, and their alloys, but not iron.
6. There is a possibility that the spread of cultural traits across the Pacific to Mesoamerica and the northwestern coast of South America began several hundred years before the Christian era. However, any such inter-hemispheric contacts appear to have been the results of accidental voyages originating in eastern and southern Asia. It is by no means certain that even such contacts occurred; certainly there were no contacts with the ancient Egyptians, Hebrews, or other peoples of Western Asian and the Near East.
7. No reputable Egyptologist or other specialist on Old World archeology, and no expert on New World prehistory, has discovered or confirmed any relationship between archeological remains in Mexico and archeological remains in Egypt.
8. Reports of findings of ancient Egyptian, Hebrew, and other Old World writings in the New World in pre-Columbian contexts have frequently appeared in newspapers, magazines, and sensational books. None of these claims has stood up to examination by reputable scholars. No inscriptions using Old World forms of writing have been shown to have occurred in any part of the Americas before 1492 except for a few Norse rune stones which have been found in Greenland.



Information from the

# National Museum of Natural History

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20560

Your recent inquiry concerning the Smithsonian Institution's alleged use of the Book of Mormon as a scientific guide has been received in the Smithsonian's Department of Anthropology.

The Book of Mormon is a religious document and not a scientific guide. The Smithsonian Institution has never used it in archeological research and any information that you have received to the contrary is incorrect. Accurate information about the Smithsonian's position is contained in the enclosed "Statement Regarding the Book of Mormon," which was prepared to respond to the numerous inquiries that the Smithsonian receives on this topic.

Because the Smithsonian regards the unauthorized use of its name to disseminate inaccurate information as unlawful, we would appreciate your assistance in providing us with the names of any individuals who are misusing the Smithsonian's name. Please address any correspondence to:

Anthropology Outreach Office  
Department of Anthropology  
National Museum of Natural History MRC 112  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, DC 20560

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THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
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