

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

A Review of Mormonism

by
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I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Need For This Series of Lessons.

1. We follow the example of Jesus (Jn. 4) and Paul (Acts 17) in having private and public religious discussions with others.
2. We follow the example of the NT church in preaching the gospel to others (Acts 8:4).
3. We follow the example of the Bereans who examined the scriptures (Acts 17:11).
4. We follow the example of Paul in defending the truth against error (Gal. 2:5, 14).
5. We test all things (1 Thess. 5:21) and test the spirits/teachers (1 Jn. 4:1-6).
6. We do not want to be carried away by strange teachings (Heb. 13:9).
7. We are ready to give an answer (1 Pet. 3:15).

B. Our Conduct Toward Religious Persons With Whom We Disagree.

1. We are seeking the truth (Prov. 23:23; 2 Thess. 2:10-12).
2. We point out both the truth and the error in a religion (Rom. 10:2).
3. We do not fight, but correct others with meekness (2 Tim. 2:24-25).
4. We use scripture, not human wisdom, to instruct and correct (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
5. We accept, in particular, the Mormon obligation to: “confound your enemies; call upon them to meet you, both in public and in private ... let them bring forth their strong reasons...” (D.&C. 71:7-8). We examine Mormonism because Orson Pratt, one of the original “Apostles” of the LDS church, called for “rigid examination ... by strong and powerful arguments – by evidences adduced from scripture and reason” (*Orson Pratt’s Works*, 1899, page 69).

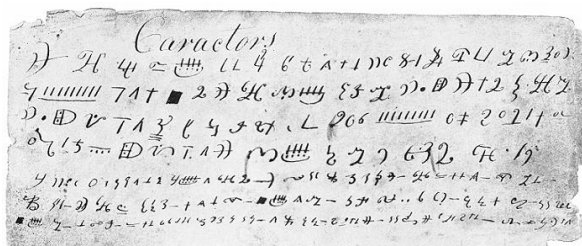
II. JOSEPH SMITH.

A. Basic History.

1. Joseph Smith, Jr., was born on December, 23, 1805 in Sharon, VT. By 1815, the Smith family had moved to Palmyra, NY., and then on to Manchester, NY. Smith’s mother was a fortune-teller and Smith was a “money digger” who looked for buried treasure. The Smith family also lived in a time and place where religious revival among Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists was very great. There were many charismatic persons, travelling preachers, revival meetings, and mass conversions in the area. Smith became cynical of all the religious rivalry and division that he witnessed.
2. In 1820, when Smith was 15 years old, he claimed that as he read James 1:5 and prayed for wisdom, two “Personages” appeared to him (called the “first vision”): God and Jesus. God said to Joseph: “This is my beloved Son, hear Him” (taken from Mt. 17:5). Jesus told Smith that the religions of Smith’s day were wrong and not to join a religion, but to restore the Lord’s church.
3. In 1823, while praying on another occasion, Smith claimed that the angel Moroni (a resurrected prophet) appeared to him three times and told him about some buried gold plates that contained “the fullness of my gospel” (D.&C. 35:17). These

plates were supposedly sealed in A.D. 421 and buried near Palmyra, N.Y. (Early Mormon followers were told about the appearance of this angel, but not the earlier appearance of God and Jesus.)

4. In 1827, Smith claimed that he was finally given these plates and the Urim and Thummin (taken from Ex. 28:30) to translate them.
5. In 1828, Smith copied the ancient characters that were on the plates and sent them by Martin Harris to a Prof. Anthon in New York who verified that they were correct. However, Anthon later denied his verification and said the story about the plates was a “hoax upon the learned”. The characters on the plates were supposed to be in “Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic” (also called “reformed Egyptian”, Mormon 9:32). See below.



Facsimile of the characters Smith allegedly took from the plates.

6. In 1828, Smith began to translate the plates into English with “the gift and power of God”. As the story goes, Smith put a seer stone into a hat and put his face into the hat. He saw a piece of parchment with the ancient language on it and the English translation under it. He first read the translation to Harris. Later, he read to his wife Emma, and in 1829, a local school teacher, Oliver Cowdery, joined the translation team. Cowdery would repeat the message to Smith and it would disappear if it was correct. The next portion of the message would appear until the translation of all the plates was complete.
7. In 1830, the *Book of Mormon* (hereafter, BOM) was first published and in 1838, the angel allegedly came back for the plates and Smith delivered them up to him and they were taken to heaven.
8. In 1830, Smith also claimed to be the prophet and organizer of the one true church. In the beginning, they called themselves the “Church of Christ”. Smith was the “prophet, seer, and revelator” of the church and also its first president.
9. In 1831, Smith and his converts moved to Kirtland, OH. All personal property and assets were turned over to the church. In 1834, the church was officially called the “Church of the Latter-day Saints.” Smith also wrote *Doctrine and Covenants* (1835) at this time and *The Pearl of Great Price*. A temple was completed in Kirtland, OH., in 1836. In 1837, Smith opened his own bank which went under within weeks.
10. In 1837, Smith fled by night to Missouri subject to arrest and thousands of dollars in debt. In 1838-39, the Mormon wars took place among those who opposed Mormonism. In 1839, Smith escaped from jail and went to Commerce (Nauvoo), IL. More battles against Mormons erupted over the next few years.
11. In 1844, Smith was put in jail for destroying a printing press and a paper called the *Nauvoo Expositor* that printed anti-Mormon articles. On June 27, 1844, Smith died (Mormons say as a “martyr”) using a six-shooter in a gun battle with an angry mob while he was in jail at Carthage, IL. His followers would later be divided into different groups:

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- a) One group, led by Brigham Young, one of the “Twelve Apostles” of the LDS church, moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1847. This group became known as the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (see www.lds.org and www.mormon.org).
 - b) The other group, located in Independence, MO, was known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1872 to 2001. Today, they are known as the Community of Christ (see www.cofchrist.org).
 - c) Numerous splinter groups like Church of Christ Temple Lot and various “fundamentalists” groups have formed since 1844. Some groups want to still practice the polygamy that was abandoned in 1890 by the LDS church.

B. Joseph Smith.

1. He is called the “Prophet and Seer of the Lord” (D.&C. 135:3). Whoever does not confess that God has sent Joseph Smith “is of the Antichrist” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1860; *Millennial Star*, Vol. 5, page 118).
2. He made claims without any proof: an angel appearance, plates, ancient languages, etc. He was the only eye-witness to his alleged visions.
3. He is either a prophet of God or “one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 188).
4. He had a problem with the lust of the eye (sexual immorality), the lust of the flesh (consumed with finding hidden treasures, fortune-telling, wealth, influence, and power) and the pride of life (1 Jn. 2:15). Smith wrote: “I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam ... Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 6, pages 408-409).

C. Why We Do Not Follow Joseph Smith.

1. We follow Jesus (Mt. 17:5; Heb. 1:1-2; 12:2) and his apostles (Jn. 16:13-15). We teach what Paul taught and nothing else (2 Tim. 2:2).
2. Jesus (Mt. 7:15-16; 24:11), Paul (2 Cor. 11:13-15), and Peter (2 Pet. 2:2) warned of false prophets. Yes, some Christians went into apostasy (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1; 1 Jn. 2:19), but the entire church did not. The Lord’s church, once established, stands throughout all time (Dan. 2:44; Mt. 16:18; Heb. 12:28).
3. Smith does not have the eye-witness testimony (Acts 1:8) or the miraculous confirmation (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:16-21) that his found among the NT apostles. (Mormons claim miracles are performed by their leaders.) Mormonism is an entire religion, the 4th largest in the United States (involving 14-15 million members today and 80,000 missionaries) that was all started by the unsubstantiated and unsupported assertions of a 15 year old boy! There are at least six versions of Smith’s “first vision” (1832, 1835-36, etc.) and every one of them is different! The final version was published by Smith in *Times and Seasons* in 1842.
4. If a man (Joseph Smith) or angel (Moroni) teaches something different than the NT gospel, Paul says he is accursed (Gal. 1:6-9). If Smith’s supposed revelations from God deny, contradict, or oppose the plain teaching of the Bible, then Smith (or any other latter-day prophet) is a false teacher.
5. Smith made false prophecies:
 - a) We must remember the test of a prophet given in Deuteronomy 18:20-22 (see also 13:1-3).

- b) Jesus said you will know a false prophet by his fruits (Mt. 7:15-18). So, what did Smith prophesy?
 - c) That a temple would be built in Independence, MO, “in this generation”, starting from 1832 (D.&C. 57:1-3; 84:1-5). This temple was never built. Other Mormon leaders carried on this belief as well: Orson Pratt (1855, 1870, 1871, 1874), Herbert C. Kimball (1857), George Cannon (1864), Lorenzo Snow (1900), Hyrum Smith (1923), and Joseph Fielding Smith (1931). The Community of Christ (RCJCLDS) built a temple across the street from where Smith laid a cornerstone and said it would be built, and long after Smith’s generation.
 - d) That there would be buried treasure in Salem, MA, 1836 (D.&C. 111:1-11). No treasure was found.
 - e) That Smith would see Jesus return before 1890 (D.&C. 130:14-16) and the coming of the Lord should “wind up the scene” (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 182). This obviously did not happen!
 - f) That a guest house would be built at Nauvoo, IL, 1838 (D.&C. 124:22-24). This house was never built.
 - g) That David W. Patten, one of the 12 apostles of the church, would to take a trip and preach (D.&C. 114:1; 118:5). Patten died and did not take this trip.
 - h) That men and women were living on the moon!
6. Smith made false translations.
- a) In 1835, Smith claimed to translate an ancient papyrus and published it under the title, “the Book of Abraham” (found in the *Pearl of Great Price*). This book is accepted as scripture in the LDS church. This papyrus was lost for many years and then found in 1967. When Egyptologist translated this papyrus, they found that it was a funerary text known as the “Book of Breathings”, and had nothing to do with Abraham. The so-called “Book of Abraham” was simply a product of Smith’s imagination.
 - b) In 1843, Smith was fooled by some men with a set of fake brass plates called the Kinderhook Plates (see *History of the Church*, 5:372). He started to “translate” them, but they were later shown to be bogus after his death.

III. BOOK OF MORMON.

A. Basic Teachings.

1. The BOM contains 15 books: 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, The Words of Mormon, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, Mormon, Ether, and Moroni.
2. These books contain the story of the Jewish Nephites who migrated from Palestine and inhabited the American continent between 600 B.C. and A.D. 400. Mormon was a Nephite leader and the father of Moroni. There were fights between the Lamanites (dark-skinned) and the Nephites (white-skinned) in America. The Nephite’s records were supposedly written on golden plates and buried at Hill Cummorah by Moroni, the last living Nephite, c. A.D. 421. Moroni later appeared to Smith in 1823 and told him where to find these plates so he could be translated them into the BOM.
3. The BOM calls a person a “fool” who believes the Bible only (2 Nephi 29:1-12; see also 28:29). In 1833, Smith even wrote his own “inspired revision” or translation of the KJV Bible (D.&C. 73:3-4). It is called the “Inspired Version” (<http://www.centerplace.org/hs/iv/default.htm>). He added 19 verses to Isaiah 29!

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4. Smith called the BOM “the most correct of any book on earth ... and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book” (*A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel*, page 273).
 5. Mormons follow the teachings found in the KJV Bible (some of it), the BOM, *Doctrines and Covenants* (originally called the *Book of Commandments*) and *The Pearl of Great Price*. Only the Bible is considered to have corruptions. Mormons are also instructed to accept the teachings of their living apostles and prophets.
 6. According to the First Presidency, the “most reliable way to measure the accuracy of any biblical passages is not by comparing different texts, but by comparison with the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelations (*First Presidency Letter*, May 22, 1992).
- B. Why We Do Not Follow the Book of Mormon (BOM).
1. The BOM lacks true, eye-witness testimony.
 - a) The so-called three “witnesses” (Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris) were not present when Smith had his alleged visions and they eventually left the LDS Church.
 - b) The so-called eight “witnesses” (Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith) were not present either and they did not testify as to what was on the plates. Three of the eight witnesses renounced Mormonism and three of the remaining five were of the Smith family.
 - c) All we have is the word of these men, nothing more. The witnesses were not eye-witness and they themselves need witnesses!
 2. The BOM (like Mohammed’s *Koran*, Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health*, and Ellen G. White’s *Great Controversy*, etc.) is dependent upon the author’s claim of latter-day (continuous) revelation (2 Nephi 29:9-10; D.&C. 124:129). Mormons even believe that the H.S. gives daily revelations to the President of Church and personal revelations to all Mormons who seek it.
 - a) We have all truth (Jn. 16:13).
 - b) We have all wisdom in Christ (Col. 2:3).
 - c) We have scripture to make us complete (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - d) We have the word of God that abides forever (1 Pet. 1:23-25).
 - e) We have all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3).
 - f) We have the faith once for all delivered (Jude 3).
 - g) We are not to add to or take from God’s word (Rev. 22:18-19).
 - h) Note: Mormons claim that the Bible predicts the coming of the BOM with Isaiah 29:11-14 (the spiritual blindness of the people) and Ezekiel 37:15-20 (the two sticks are Israel and Judah who are joined into “one nation,” 37:22). If the two sticks in Ezekiel represent the BOM and the Bible, as Mormons claim, what about *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *Pearl of Great Price*? Shouldn’t there be four sticks?
 3. The BOM contains statements that contradict the Bible.
 - a) Firstlings of the flock offered for a burnt offering (Mosiah 2:3) vs. not offered (Ex. 13:2, 12; 22:29, 30; Num. 3:13).
 - b) Three days of darkness (Helaman 14:20; 3 Nephi 8:19-23) vs. three hours of darkness (Lk. 23:44).
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- c) Jesus born in Jerusalem (Alma 7:10; 1 Nephi 11:13-20) vs. Bethlehem (Mt. 2:1-5).
 - d) Elijah personally came to America (D.C. 110:16) vs. Elijah representatively in the work of John the Baptist (Mt. 17:11-12; Lk. 1:17).
 - e) The church and baptism were present in 147 B.C. (Mosiah 18:17) vs. A.D. 33 on Pentecost (Mt. 16:18; Acts 2:47).
 - f) “Christians” are living in 73 B.C. before Christ lived (Alma 46:15) vs. Christians “first” in Antioch, c. A.D. 43 (Acts 11:26).
 - g) The BOM is the “new and everlasting covenant” (D.&C. 1:17-23; 22:1-3; 84:57) vs. the NT is the new covenant (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:5; 13:25).
 - h) The wicked do not suffer eternal punishment (Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, page 63) vs. the wicked suffer eternal punishment (Mt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:8-9).
 - i) See more contradictions below under “IV. LDS Doctrines.”
4. The BOM contains statements that contradict other statements in the BOM.
- a) In Jacob 2:24, David’s polygamy is described as “abominable,” but in D.&C. 132:38-39, is it described as “given unto him” by God.
 - b) In 2 Nephi 9:38 (Alma 34:32-35; 40:14), those who die in their sins “remain in their sins,” but in D.&C. 124, baptism for those who die in their sins is encouraged.
 - c) In Moses 2-3, creation is attributed to “God”, but in Abraham 3-5, creation is attributed to “gods”.
 - d) In 2 Nephi 28:22-23 , D.&C. 76:44, and Alma 41:1-15, punishment with the Devil is endless, but in D.&C. 19:6 it is not endless.
5. The BOM claims to cover a period from 600 B.C. to A.D. 421. However...
- a) More than 10% of the BOM contains repetitions of chapters in the Bible. It contains many words and verses taken directly from the 1611 KJV (see the Lord’s Sermon on the Mount in 3 Nephi 12-14 taken from Mt. 5-7, eighteen chapters of the book of Isaiah (compare 1 Nephi 20-21; 2 Nephi 7-8; 12-24; 27 with Isaiah 48-51; 2-14; and 29), the 10 Commandments and Exodus 20 (Mosiah 13); Isaiah 53 (Mosiah 14); Isaiah 52 and 54 (3 Nephi 20 and 22), Malachi 3-4 (3 Nephi 24-25); etc.). In Moroni 7:45 we read “is not easily provoked” (taken from 1 Cor. 13:5; “easily” is peculiar to the KJV). In 2 Nephi 14:5, there is the word “defense”, and in 2 Nephi 15:25 there is word “torn”, both KJV-specific words.
 - b) It contains the name “Mormon”, meaning “more good”, which according to Smith, came from the English word “more” and the Egyptian word “mon” (good). How does an English word (and an Egyptian word that has never been found) show up in 600 B.C.!
 - c) It contains the French word “adieu” (of Latin origin) in Jacob 7:27.
 - d) No evidence for the cities and peoples mentioned in the BOM (related to the New World, America) has ever been found by modern historians or archaeologists. The Smithsonian Institute, the Institution’s Bureau of American Ethnology, and the National Geographic Society, all deny that any archaeology confirms the BOM. Even the prominent Mormon archaeologist Thomas Stewart Ferguson quit the Mormon Church and repudiated Smith as a prophet.
6. The BOM contains absurdities.

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- a) God commanded the Jaredites to build a disk-like boat to come to America. This boat was to have a hole in the top and a hole in the bottom (Ether 2:17-20). Who would build such a boat with a hole in the bottom?
 - b) Smith is a descendent of Joseph the son of Jacob making him of Jewish origin (2 Nephi 3). But, we know that Smith is of English origin.
 - c) The Lord promised three of his disciples that they would live on the earth until he comes again (Ether 5:17). Where are these men today?
7. The BOM (early editions) contains grammatical errors.
- a) Martin Harris, one of the so-called “three witnesses” wrote: “By aid of the seer stone, sentences would appear and were read by the prophet ... and if correctly written, that sentence would disappear and another would appear in its place, but if not written correctly if remained until corrected, so that the translation was just as it was engraven on the plates” (*Myth of the Manuscript Found*, 1883, page 91). They are claiming an inspired translation!
 - b) “In them days”, “which was our first parents”, “here is our weapons”, “as I was a going”, “Moroni was a coming”, “which was wrote”, “it all were in vain”, “them days”, “they had arriven”, “he had wrote,” etc.
 - c) The BOM has been corrected 3,913 times since the 1830 edition proving that the *translation* of Smith was not done by “the gift and power of God”.
 - (1) In Mosiah 21:28, King Benjamin (1830) is changed to King Mosiah (1864).
 - (2) In 1 Nephi 20:1, “out of the waters of Judah” (1830) is changed to “out of the waters of baptism” (1964).
 - (3) The 3,913 changes are not just “typographical” (printer) errors as modern Mormons allege. They are changes that cannot be attributed as typographical. These changes have been documented by Jerald and Sandra Tanner (www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/3913intro.htm).
 - (4) Smith also gave 116 pages of the original manuscript to Martin Harris who lost them (the so-called lost book of Lehi). The 1830 version of the BOM gives Smith’s explanation of this, but later versions have deleted this explanation (see also D.&C. 10).
 - d) There are also thousands of changes (words added and taken away) between the original *Book of Commandments* (1833) and the *Doctrine and Covenants* (1835). There are thousands of changes (words added and taken away) between the original version of the *Pearl of Great Price* (1851) and later versions.
8. The BOM writers admit to possible error and imperfections (1 Nephi 1:2-3; 19:6; Mormon 9:31-33; Ether 12:23-24). The Bible writers never make this admission (Jn. 14:26; 15:26-27; 21:24; Gal. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:21).
9. The BOM claims that the Bible is not complete.
- a) It claims that “many plain and precious” things have been taken away from the Bible by “a great and abominable church” (1 Nephi 13:26-28) and the BOM is what restores those parts that have been taken away (1 Nephi 13:40).
 - b) It claims that the Bible is not accurately translated.
 - c) Mormons need to answer some questions: What exactly are the lost things? Where are the lost books? What parts have not been accurately translated? We want answers to these questions, not just assertions by Mormons.
10. The BOM claims to be “Another Testament of Jesus Christ” (see the front cover of the BOM and D.&C. 84:57).
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- a) For there to be a “testament” there must be the death of the testator (Heb. 9:15-17). Who died for the BOM to be a testament? Did Jesus die again?
- b) We know there is a “first” and a “second” testament or will (Heb. 10:9), but where is the promise of a “third”? The OT promises a new covenant (Jer. 31:31), but where does the NT promise the BOM?
- c) Also, two testaments cannot be in force at the same time. The OT passed away so the NT could be in force. Has the NT passed away so that the BOM can be in force?

IV. LDS DOCTRINES.

A. Basic Doctrines.

1. God.

- a) Mormonism: God (Elohim of the Bible) is one of an infinite number of Gods. The Bible: There is one God (Deut. 6:4; 32:39; Isa. 43:10-11; 44:6-8; 45:5-6, 18-22; Eph. 4:6; Jas. 2:19) and created all things (Isa. 42:5; 45:12). All other “gods” are false (2 Chron. 6:18; Psa. 139:4-8; Jer. 23:24).
- b) Mormonism: God is a man, Adam (and Michael the angel) and he came from another planet to populate this earth with Eve one of his wives (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:50-51 and 5:331). Adam (God) sinned in order to bring forth children (2 Nephi 2:19-20). The Bible: God made Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:18-25) and they were told to have children before they sinned (Gen. 1:28). God is not a man (Num. 23:19; Hos. 11:9).
- c) Mormonism: God has a body of flesh and bones as man (D.& C. 130:22). He can only be at one place at one time. The Bible: God is a spirit and a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Jn. 4:24; see Lk. 24:39).
- d) Mormonism: The Law of Eternal Progression. “As man is, God once was, and as God is, man may become” (Prophet Lorenzo Snow). The theory goes something like this: The universe is governed by a head God (not the God of the Bible) and his council. There are millions of Gods and Goddesses (who were once humans) who have sexual unions and produce billions of spirit-children. They live on trillions of planets scattered throughout the universe. God (Elohim of the Bible) is a spirit-child of one of these Gods and Goddesses. He was sent to an “earth” like ours to attain godhood by following the so-called “eternal laws”. Later, God (Elohim of the Bible) moved to a planet near the mysterious star Kolob. He and his Goddess wives produced many spirit-children, two of whom are the oldest, Jesus and Lucifer. When the council approved our planet Earth as the home of God’s (Elohim of the Bible) spirit-children, there was a revolt and a war. Lucifer wanted to be the savior of the spirit-children sent to Earth, but Jesus was chosen. Lucifer (the Devil) revolted and convinced one third of the spirit-children to follow him (demons). The spirit-children who remained neutral in the revolt were cursed with black skin when they came to Earth. The spirit-children who joined Jesus and fought against Lucifer were born into Mormon families when they got to Earth. They are “white and delightsome” people. Through obedience to the teachings of Joseph Smith, the spirit-children who come to Earth attain to one of three kingdoms: Telestial, Terrestrial and Celestial. The Mormons who attain to the Celestial kingdom become Gods and Goddesses and produce spirit-children who are sent to their own “earth” somewhere in the universe and the progression starts all over again. (See Smith’s Inspired Version of Genesis 2:5-6.)

2. Jesus.

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- a) Mormonism: Mary was the lawful wife of God and they conceived the son Jesus. Jesus and Satan are actually spirit-brothers (D.&C. 93:21-23). Jesus had to work out his own salvation and become a God. According to Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde, Jesus was also married to Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene. He had many children and Joseph Smith is supposedly one of his descendents. The Bible: Jesus as God is from eternity (Jn. 1:1-3) and Jesus the God/Man came from Mary and the power of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 1:18-23; Lk. 1:35).
 - b) Mormonism: Jesus went to America after his resurrection to preach to the Indians (who Mormons believe are descendents of the Israelites). The Bible: Jesus ascended into heaven after his resurrection and remains at the right hand of God until the end of time (Acts 1:9-11; 2:22ff; 3:19-21).
3. Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost).
 - a) Mormonism: They are uncertain whether or not the Holy Ghost is a person. The Bible: "He", the Holy Spirit is a person (Jn. 14-16).
 4. Man.
 - a) Mormonism: Man pre-existed in heaven before becoming human on this earth (the "pre-earth" life that no one is able to remember). All humans have a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother who gave birth to the humans. Man can achieve godhood and become a God. Man begins as a spirit-born to Gods and Goddesses on another planet and then is sent to an "earth" to become a man with flesh, to gain experiences, and to learn to make correct choices. He achieves godhood after he dies and is resurrected. The Bible: Man is not pre-existent, but created (Gen. 1:26-28). Man does not become a God.
 5. Sin.
 - a) Mormonism: The sin of Adam and Eve was a good thing. It allowed them to leave the garden and progress through learning and it allowed them to have children (2 Nephi 2:22-25). Angels and the H.S. taught Adam and Eve the plan of salvation. Men are lost because of their parents' sin (2 Nephi 2:21). Jesus did not die for man's sin, but he died so that man could be raised from the dead. The Bible: Men are responsible for their own sin (Ezek. 18:20) and Jesus died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24).
 6. Salvation.
 - a) Mormonism: Man earns a particular eternal destination based upon his good deeds. According to Mormons, "General salvation" is salvation by grace and is offered to all (resurrection from the dead and immortality). "Individual salvation" is salvation by works and determines which of the three "heavens" (kingdoms of glory) one goes to (see next point). The Bible: Salvation is by grace through faith for all mankind (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:3-5).
 7. Eternal Rewards.
 - a) Mormonism: When you die, your spirit goes to the spirit world, a place of learning and preparation. If you rejected Jesus in this life, you can learn about Jesus and choose to obey him in the spirit world and be saved. In the judgment, everyone stands before Joseph Smith, Jesus, and God (Elohim of the Bible). There are three kingdoms of glory (misusing 1 Cor. 15:40): 1) Telestial (the glory of the stars, the lowest kingdom for all the wicked, non-Mormon religious people, and worldly people), 2) Terrestrial (the glory of the moon, the middle kingdom for nominal Mormons, good non-Mormons, and those who accept Mormonism after death), and 3) Celestial (the glory of the sun, the highest kingdom, which itself has three parts [1st degree, 2nd degree, 3rd degree] for all faithful Mormons and Mormons who have been sealed in a temple service, God

and Jesus reside here). See D.&C. 76 and 137. The Bible: One heaven of eternal life and one hell of eternal damnation (Mt. 25:46).

8. Polygamy.

- a) The first period (1831-1839): Smith alone practiced polygamy. He took over 30 wives (including two sisters, age 14 and 16) and ten of the wives were actually married to other men at the time he married them! Emma, his first wife, was not convinced of the practice of polygamy, so Smith claimed a revelation from God to try and convince her (D.&C. 132).
- b) The second period (1840-1844): Smith introduced the practice to his closest followers and then to the church as a whole.
- c) The third phase (1844-1890): Brigham Young continued the practice with 26 wives and Mormons practiced polygamy officially between 1844 and 1890 even though the BOM condemned plural marriages (Jacob 2:24-27; 3:5; Ether 10:5; 11:2). The U.S. Supreme Court declared polygamy unconstitutional in 1879 and Mormons banned polygamy in 1890. However, some 30,000 Mormons still practice polygamy today.
- d) The Bible: Monogamy was always the rule and polygamy (David, Solomon, etc.) the exception. Marriage has always been for one man and one woman – the “two” become one (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:6). Kings were not to have multiple wives (Deut. 17:17).

9. Racism.

- a) Smith and early Mormon leaders were racist and prejudiced against Negroes. They said that the dark skin of Negroes was a curse of God passed on through the lineage of Cain (*Journal of Discourses*, 2 Nephi 5:21-25; Alma 3:6-9; Moses 7:8, 21-22). Whites were not allowed to marry blacks and blacks were not allowed in the Mormon priesthood. Mormons changed their policy of racism and discrimination against blacks in 1978. The Bible: God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:35) and all people come from God (Acts 17:26).

10. Temple Rituals.

- a) Temples.
 - (1) Mormonism: Literal temples are built for special ceremonies. (In the temple “endowment ceremony,” there are special handshakes, arm gestures, and phrases used in the temple that are not to be spoken of to others, including Mormons.) The Bible: All Christians are the Lord’s temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; Eph. 2:20-22).
- b) Baptism for the dead.
 - (1) Mormonism: Baptism is for remission of sin (1 Nephi 10:7-10; D.&C. 68:27). But, they also have Adam (God) being baptized for the remission of his sins (Moses 6:51-65).
 - (2) Mormonism: A Mormon can be baptized for (“proxy”) a deceased person (D.&C. 110 and 128) so the dead can be saved (based upon a misunderstanding of 1 Cor. 15:29). They also believe in contacting the spirits of the dead for counsel, comfort, information, and to be guardian angels. Mormonism contains occult practices and theology! The Bible: Each person is baptized for his own sins (Acts 22:16) and contacting the dead is condemned in Deuteronomy 18:10-12 and Galatians 5:19-20.
- c) Celestial marriage and sealing.

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- (1) Mormonism: A married couple can be sealed for all “time and eternity” in heaven (D.&C. 132). Children can also be sealed with the parents for all eternity. The Bible: No marriage after death (Mt. 22:29-30).

11. LDS Church.

- a) They have 13 Articles of Faith.
- b) They only have authority to baptize (see Acts 9:10).
- c) They use instruments of music in worship (see Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
- d) They use water in the Lord’s supper (D.&C. 27:1-4; see Mt. 26:26-28).
- e) They have the following church organization:
 - (1) In the beginning, the church had elders, deacons, priests, and teachers. Later, under the influence of Sidney Rigdon, the other offices of Presidency, High Priest, etc., were added.
 - (2) President of the Church (the Quorum of the First Presidency).
 - (3) Quorum of the 12 Apostles (see D.&C. 107). These men did not see Jesus and cannot work miracles (see Acts 1:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Rev. 2:2).
 - (4) Quorum of the 70.
 - (5) High Priest.
 - (6) Bishops. These men oversee more than one church (see Acts 20:17, 28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:2-4).
 - (7) Priests of the Aaronic Priesthood (D.&C. 13; 84:17-18) and Melchizedek priesthood (D.&C. 107). (Black males were denied the Mormon priesthood up to 1978 when they had a change in policy.) The Aaronic Priesthood was conferred by John the Baptist on Smith and Cowdery on May 15, 1829 (D.&C. 13). The Bible: A change in priesthood by Jesus (see Heb. 7:24-27).
 - (8) Elders are young, unmarried men (see 1 Tim. 3:2-5; Tit. 1:6).
 - (9) Deacons are young boys of age 12 (see 1 Tim. 3:12).
 - (10) Evangelists, teachers, and missionaries.
 - (11) Mormon congregations are divided into areas, then stakes, then wards, then branches.
- f) Church membership.
 - (1) A person receives the Holy Ghost after baptism in an ordinance called “confirmation”, when one or more authorized priesthood holders lay their hands on the head. After baptism and confirmation, a person becomes a member of the LDS Church. The Bible: Only the NT apostles laid their hands on individuals (Acts 8:17; 19:6).
 - (2) Church members partake of the “sacrament” of the Lord’s supper each Sunday: bread and water. The Bible: The Lord’s supper contains unleavened bread and fruit of the vine (Mt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:14-22).

B. Why We Do Not Follow the LDS Doctrine.

1. Mormonism is built upon lies, deceit, and false doctrine.
 - a) It is a doctrine that comes from the sleight and craftiness of men (Eph. 4:14).
 - b) It is a seducing doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1).
2. Much of the doctrine of the LDS is not the doctrine of Christ.

- a) It is a doctrine of men who are not inspired of God (Mt. 15:9; Mk. 7:7; Col. 2:22).
- b) It is contrary to the doctrine that Paul taught (Rom. 16:17).
- c) It is a different doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3; 6:1, 3).
- 3. We follow the doctrine of Christ found in the NT.
 - a) We follow “sound doctrine” given by Paul (1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Tit. 1:9; 2:1, 7).
 - b) We follow the “good doctrine” that Paul taught (1 Tim. 4:6).
 - c) We follow the “doctrine of God” (Tit. 2:10) and the “doctrine of Christ” in the NT (Heb. 6:1; 2 Jn. 9).

V. WHEN THE MORMONS KNOCK.

- A. Mormon Elders Present Themselves as a Traditional Christian Denomination.
 - 1. The above material should make it clear they are nothing like a traditional Christian sect. They are not the “one flock” of John 10 that they claim to be.
 - 2. They use many words from the Bible (God, Jesus, H.S., salvation, sin, atonement, church, heaven, hell, etc.), but they mean different things by them.
- B. Mormon Elders Want to Witness About Joseph Smith and the BOM.
 - 1. Be courteous. Lead a prayer for truth before beginning the study.
 - 2. Let them speak first and tell their story. They will present a short lesson about how the Lord’s church gradually slipped into a “Great Apostasy” after the 1st century. According to them, the Bible was soon corrupted and many doctrines and ordinances were lost. The restoration of the true church began when God and Jesus appeared to Joseph Smith in 1820 (the “First Vision”). God used Smith to organize his true church in 1830. The Mormon elders will then ask you to read the Book of Mormon and pray to accept its truth.
 - 3. Have a planned strategy for them.
 - a) Have specific questions and points you want to make. You can start with a discussion about the complete nature of the NT or with questions surrounding Joseph Smith’s alleged visions, his own immoral character, his failed prophecies, etc.
 - b) When they respond, “I bear you my testimony that I know this is the true church...”, ask them for the proof or evidence of their testimony. They have been brainwashed to recite this memorized statement.
 - c) Stick to the subject and don’t let them run to another topic. Cover one topic at a time and try to set up further studies to cover additional topics. Make them define their terms, especially those borrowed from the Bible. When they make assertions about the Bible, Joseph Smith, etc., ask them for their proof. They are bad about making all kinds of assertions without proof.
- C. Resources For Further Study.
 - 1. Websites: Utah Lighthouse Ministry (utlm.org), formed by Jerald and Sandra Tanner (two former Mormons), is one of the best online sites containing resources to answer Mormonism. Other good websites include irr.org and mormoninfo.org.
 - 2. Books: “When Opportunity Knocks” by Matthew Allen. “Mormonism – Shadow or Reality?” by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, is one of best exposés of Mormonism in print.

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3. Tracts: “Is the Book of Mormon the Word of God?” by Jimmy Thomas.
“Mormonism: From God or Man?” by Robert West. “When the Mormons Call” by Johnnie Edwards.

VI. CONCLUSION.

- A. Remember, You Have the Truth of God’s Word!
- B. Speak the Truth in Love (Eph. 4:15).
- C. Contend Earnestly For the Faith (Jude 3).

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