

## THE MORMONS

or

### THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINT

#### I. WHERE THIS CULT ORIGINATED

- A. This cult can be traced back to a man by the name of Joseph Smith Jr. and how he departed from the teachings of the Scriptures.
1. Joseph Smith Jr. was born Dec. 23, 1805 in Sharon, Vermont.
  2. His father was a mystic who spent much of his life hunting for imaginary buried treasure and was one time implicated in a case of counterfeiting money.
  3. His mother was given to extreme religious views and all kinds of superstitions.
  4. In 1820 Joseph Smith Jr. supposedly had a vision in which God the Father and Christ materialized and spoke to him. They told him a restoration of real Christianity was needful and that he was the one appointed to bring in a new dispensation. This vision is recorded in Pearl of Great Price page 2.
  5. In the same year Smith had a second vision in which the Lord singled him out as the Lord's anointed prophet for this age. At this time an angel named Moroni appeared at his bedside and repeated this commission to him three times (Ibid, chapter 2, pp 29-54).
  6. In 1827 Smith was supposedly directed by the angel Moroni to unearth a set of gold plates from a hill named "Cumorah" near Palmyra, New York. These plates were supposedly written in Egyptian hieroglyphics and Moroni provided some special spectacles called "Urim and Thummin" for Smith to translate what became the book of Mormon.
  7. During the years 1827-29 Smith worked with Oliver Cowdery and these supposedly translated the golden plates and on May 15, 1829 John the Baptist supposedly appeared and bestowed the Aaronic Priesthood on these two men (Pearl of Great Price, chapter 2, pp 68-73).
  8. In 1829 the book of Mormon was published and on April 6, 1830 Smith, Cowdery and a few followers founded a new religion called "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter

Day Saints".

9. What did the book of Mormon contain? It was a history of two civilizations which came about on the American Continent. Notice some particulars:

- a. The first civilization came from some who left the Tower of Babel in 2250 BC by Mormon reckoning. These settled in central America. These were called Jaredites and because of their corruption their civilization was destroyed.
- b. A second group of people supposedly left Jerusalem around 600 BC before the Babylonian captivity and settled in Peru. The leader was a Jew by the name of Nephi. This civilization was divided into two groups called the Nephites and the Lamanites which became the American Indians. These two groups warred and the Lamanites completely annihilated the Nephites near the hill Cumorah in Palmyra, N. Y. around AD 428.
- c. This history written supposedly by a prophet named Mormon was then discovered some fourteen hundred years later at this site by Joseph Smith Jr.

10. Smith allegedly received three other sets of plates. The plates of Nephi, the plates of Ether, and the brass plates of Laban.

11. Around 1833 Smith and his followers moved to Kirtland, Ohio and within 6 years had made some 1600 converts. From there to Jackson County, Missouri Smith bought 63 acres which he called holy ground and marked a spot for the temple of Zion and headquarters for his new religion.

12. Between the years 1831 and 1844 the "prophet" Smith supposedly received some 135 revelations from God, and one was to make Nauvoo, Ill. the new headquarters, to lead his followers in unprecedented polygamy as a part of this new religion. Smith reportedly had 49 wives.

13. In 1842 when the "Nauvoo Expositor" exposed the polygamous and immoral practices of Smith, they retaliated by wrecking the print shop and Smith and his brother Hyrum were jailed in Cathage, Ill.

14. On June 27, 1844 while Smith and his brother were

awaiting trial, a mob of around 200 stormed the jail and killed them.

- B. This cult has a background of questionable areas and a poor basis for belief.
1. First of all the whole bulk of revelations which Joseph Smith and his followers have received are extra-biblical revelations and have been proven to be inaccurate and contrary to what the Bible teaches.
  2. Secondly the character of Joseph Smith Jr. is enough to dismiss anything he would claim was revealed to him from God. At one time 62 residents of Palmyra, N Y. signed a statement in 1834 denouncing their immoral character and practices.
  3. Thirdly one of Smith's own followers by the name of Sidney Rigdon denounced Smith's character in a "salt sermon" dealing with salt losing its savor and applying it to Smith's conduct and character.
    4. It can also be proven by documented evidence that Smith lied on a number of occasions of which one time involved stating that professor Anthon of Columbia University helped with his translation of the hieroglyphics.
    5. On one occasion after the Mormons were settled in Utah, Brigham Young ordered Mormon bishop John Lee in 1857 to annihilate a wagon train of 150 non-mormon immigrants. This incident became known as the "Mountain Meadows Massacre" and 20 years later Lee was tried, convicted and executed by the government for his crime. Before his death in a book entitled "The Confessions of John D. Lee", he confessed that he acted upon orders from Brigham Young.
    6. All these things coupled with all of their immoral and polygamous practices offer a very poor basis upon which to establish one's belief.

## **II. HOW THIS CULT WAS FURTHER PROPAGATED AND PASSED ON**

- A. This cult was further propagated by the leadership of Brigham Young
1. After Smith was assassinated in Nauvoo, Ill. Young led the Mormons to leave Illinois and

they settled in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, Utah in 1847.

2. Young claimed infallible prophetic succession and his words became law in the whole state of Utah.
3. Young married 70 wives and fathered some 56 children. He was prophet and president of the Mormon Church until his death in 1877.

B. This cult grew rapidly no doubt out of its beliefs and practices of polygamy.

1. In 1831 God supposedly revealed to Joseph Smith that God wanted him to revive and reinstitute plural marriages.
2. Polygamy was called by Smith, celestial marriage. And since the family unit would exist forever a man's glory would depend upon how many wives he took and the number of children they bore.
3. This practice continued under the leadership of Brigham Young, John Taylor, and into Widford Woodruff's leadership before it was revealed to him that God no longer required it. The truth is the U. S. Government threatened to confiscate all Mormon properties unless they abandoned this practice.

C. This cult has been spread in great measure by its zealous missionary endeavors.

1. The Mormon Church encourages its young people to dedicate two years of their lives to missionary work on a self-supporting basis.
2. In 1964 the Mormons had more than 15,000 missionaries, were seeing 25,000 conversions each year, and claimed a membership of more than two million.

D. This cult has been greatly enlarged by its family and social appeals.

1. Mormons have an organization known as the Mutual Improvement Association which sponsors over 16,000 dances in their churches annually. In addition they hold dance festivals and thousands of dramatic performances.

2. Mormons do everything possible to make their churches a home away from home for its young people and offer everything from sports, hobbies, music, and homemaking courses.

3. Notice also the emphasis on T V in its ads is on the family and its unity and happiness. This appeal is the open door to its spiritual teachings and the snare by which multitudes are entrapped especially in our day in which the family unit is so torn apart.

### **III. WHAT'S WRONG WITH WHAT THEY BELIEVE AND TEACH**

#### A. About the Bible

##### 1. What they teach

a. The mormons accept the King James version of the Bible as the Word of God when it is correctly translated according to them.

b. They do not believe it in itself is the complete revelation of God. They believe other revelations were needed to complete God's revelation to man.

c. They accept three other books besides the Bible as inspired revelations from God. These are as follows:

( 1 ) The Book of Mormon supposedly covers history from 2200 BC to 421 AD and this is the book Joseph Smith claimed to have received on gold plates on Sept. 22,1827.

( 2 ) Doctrine and Covenants which was published in 1876 contains a collection of revelations which God supposedly gave through Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

( 3 ) Pearl of Great Price is an autobiography of sorts which relates Joseph Smith's ancestry, his visions, the visits of Moroni to him, how he discovered the gold plates or the book of Mormon, and the articles of faith.

## 2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. First of all this is a clear case of adding to and subtracting from the Word of God which is strictly forbidden in Rev. 22:18,19.
- b. Secondly the Scriptures claim to be all sufficient to furnish the man of God without any further revelations (II Tim. 3:16,17; Matt. 24:35? Psa. 119:89).
- c. Thirdly it can be seen that these "additional revelations" are in error both doctrinally as well as historically. Notice some of these gross inconsistencies.
  - (1) First of all, while the book of Mormon portrays the rise and fall of two great civilizations, the Jaredites and the Nephites, there is no archeological evidence to support their existence at all. This seems awful strange in light of the fact that the book of Mormon refers to some thirty eight different cities and relates how the culture of these races spread to others.
  - (2) Secondly the book of Mormon not only mentions cities that can't be found but also elephants on this continent and certain metals which science and archeology can come up with no proof.
  - (3) Notice also according to the book of Mormon the American indians are descendants of the Lamanites who descended from Nephi who was a Jew. But according to anthropologists the American indians have a mongoloid factor which bears no resemblance and no connection to Semitic or Jewish ancestry.
  - (4) A comparison of the book of Mormon with the King James version of the Bible will also show that Joseph Smith inserted quotations to supplement his supposed revelations which were on gold plates. It is also very strange as to how these revelations could come out in perfect harmony with the King James English when they were supposedly written a thousand years before. But notice they even follow some of the translations of the King James translations where they rendered certain words in certain ways. III Nephi 11:27,36 is the same as I JN.5:7 which is missing from the original

manuscripts. II Nephi 14:5 translates Isa.4:5 the same way the King James translators did as defense when the word is actually canopy.

( 5 ) Although Mormons emphatically deny this fact, the overwhelming amount of evidence suggests that the book of Mormon is an expansion upon a manuscript written by Solomon Spaulding who wrote a number of romances with Biblical backgrounds. No less than 75 similarities can be pointed out between one of Spaulding's manuscripts and the book of Mormons.

## B. About God

### 1. What they teach

a The Mormons teach that God the Father was once a mortal man who passed through an earthly life of existence similar to ours and now as a result of obedience to the Gospel truths has become an exalted being or God. (The Journal of Discourses Vol.VI P. 3; Vol.I P.123).

b. They hold that Adam was the Father who came into the Garden of Eden. He came with a celestial body bringing one of his wives named Eve with him(Ibid. p.50).

c. The mormons look upon the Trinity as three gods and proof for polytheism and therefore believe there are many gods in heaven each with his own wife or wives which were given to him while in this mortal life.

d. They hold that Michael the Archangel is the same as God the Father.

e. The Mormons believe "as man is, God once was; as God is, man may become".

### 2. What's wrong with this teaching

a. First of all the Bible teaches that there is only one God (I Tim. 2:25) and He is Spirit (Jn.4:24). If God had lived at one time upon this earth as the mortal man Adam then Jn.1:18 would not be true. Note also Isa. 43:10,11.

b. Secondly to identify Michael an angel with God or say that there are many gods in heaven has

no Scriptural grounds and won't stand up. No heavenly being, angel or otherwise, would dare receive worship or exaltation which belongs to God (Rev. 22:8,9).

- c. As far as marriage in heaven is concerned, the Lord Jesus pointed out that its purpose is appropriation of mortals and that it does not extend to heaven (Matt. 22:29,30.)

d. It is no strange title given to the recent film on Mormons for they in every sense of the words believe that they are "the God makers" This makes them polytheists or believers in many gods.

### C. About Jesus Christ

#### 1. What they teach

- a. Mormons teach that Christ in His pre-incarnate state was Lucifer or the devil's brother (Pearl of Great Price, book of Moses chapter 4:1-4).
- b. When they speak of the miraculous conception of Christ they deny that He was begotten by the Holy Spirit but rather they believe that Adam-god in his exalted state had sexual relations with Mary (Journal of Discourses, Vol. I p 50,51).
- c. They even go so far as to teach that Christ was married to Mary, Mary Magdalene and also Martha.
- d. Mormons deny that the blood of Christ atones for sin. They contend that one's own blood is the only thing which will do this (Ibid.Vol.III, P. 247, Vol. IV.PP.219-220).
- e. They believe Christ was appointed by the gods to be the redeemer of the human race but His sacrifice on the cross did not cleanse some sins.

#### 2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. There is no evidence anywhere in the Bible which would suggest that the devil could be the brother of the sinless Son of God. Before His incarnation He existed as God (Jn 1:1, Heb. 1:2).

- b. As far as the virgin birth is concerned the Bible says that Mary was found with child by the Holy Spirit (Matt.1:18) and that the Holy Spirit came upon her (Lk.1:35) so that "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"(Matt. 1:20).
- c. The Bible teaches us that Adam sinned against God which resulted in both spiritual and physical death (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12). By no stretch of the imagination then could Adam be God.
- c. Notice also the idea of Adam having more than one wife is contradicted by what the Lord Jesus said in Matt.19:4-6. God's design, He said, was one man for one woman.
- d. The Bible teaches us also that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin (I Jn. 1:7), that His sacrifice upon the cross was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (I Jn 2:2), and that this alone was all sufficient for man's redemption.

#### D. About man

##### 1. What they teach

- a. Mormons believe that all people existed as spirits before they were born into this world. These spirits are the offspring of a divine Father and Mother who begot them so that they are sons and daughters of deity.
- b. Mormons believe Eve was predestined to sin so that the human race might come into being and then eventually reach godhood. The fall of man in the garden of Eden then was the means by which Adam and Eve became mortals and as a result begot mortal children.
- c. Mormons hold there's a reason why some are born black or with certain disadvantages and why others are born white or with certain advantages. Those spirits who were faithful in their spiritual existence before this life are born white or with certain advantages above others (Smith, Doctrines of Salvation Vol. I. P. 61).
- d. To the Mormons the Negro race came from Cain whose skin was blackened because he sinned and was cursed by the gods. Being born black then is the evidence of evil done by some pre-

existent spirit.

- e. Mormons believe men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression (Articles of Faith, Arti.2)

2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. First of all there is no Biblical evidence which will support man's pre-existence in a spirit world which determines how he would be born into this world.
- b. Secondly to say that God predestined Eve to sin is to make God the author of sin and unjust in His dealing with men (James 1:13-15).
- c. The Bible teaches that Adam's sin resulted in the curse upon all men which is death. It further reveals, as a result of Adam's sin, all men are born with a sin nature and choose to sin (Rom. 3:9,10; 5:12).

E. About salvation

1. What they teach

- a. Mormons believe in universal salvation or that all men will be saved but each one in his own order - they look at salvation in a twofold way:
  - (1) First of all there is an unconditional or general salvation which involves all mankind and comes to them by grace without obedience or faith. Those who receive this salvation will be judged on the basis of their works and will become ministering servants to more worthy persons in eternity (Mormon Doctrine P. 669)
  - (2) There is a second kind of salvation to Mormons which they look upon as conditional and individual. This is that which comes by grace and also by gospel obedience or works. Those receiving this full salvation will have an inheritance in the celestial Kingdom of God and be exalted as gods (Mormon Doctrine pp 669, 670; Doctrine of Salvation Vol. II p. 350).
- b. Mormons believe all men are sons of God when they are born into this world, but they must personally strive for perfection and sanctification to become exalted beings or

gods in the celestial Kingdom (Journal of Discourses Vol. IV. p 7) .

- c. Salvation to the Mormon is closely related to their belief in celestial marriage. In 1890 when the Mormons were forced by law to abandon their polygamous marriages this concept became a substitute and a part of their doctrine. Since Mormons believe the family unit will endure in eternity they insist upon sealing each Mormon man to many wives.
- d. Mormons hold there is no full salvation outside the Mormon church and within it the most important thing a person can do is to marry the right person, in the right place, by the right authority and keep the covenant made in connection with that marriage (Mormon Doctrine p. 118).
- e. It is interesting to note also that Mormons teach that salvation is closely related to Joseph Smith. They say if it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration there would be no salvation (Doctrine of Salvation Vol. II). They say those who believe not Joseph Smith's words shall be damned. Every spirit that does not confess that God sent Joseph Smith, and revealed the everlasting gospel to and through him is of Antichrist (Discourses of Brigham Young p. 435). And in Doctrine and Covenants 135:3 it is said that Joseph Smith has done more for the salvation of men in this world than any man that ever lived in it.

## 2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. First the Bible does not teach universal salvation, but rather that most will be lost and suffer eternal punishment (Matt 7:21-23; Rev. 20:11-15).
- b. Notice also those who are consigned to the lake of fire are not just assigned some ministering position to others as a servant spirit.
- c. Thirdly the Bible teaches that salvation is wholly by grace through faith apart from any works and it is based upon the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8, 9; Rom. 3:23-28).
- d. Notice also as far as marriage being related to salvation, the Bible teaches some men will have the gift of celibacy and it will be for God's glory (Matt. 19: 9-12). The apostle Paul also had the ability to remain unmarried but notice he said marriage is not a sin, but it is not necessary either (I Cor.7:6-9; 25-28).

## F. About Baptism

### 1. What they teach

- a. Mormons teach that unless a person is baptized he will be damned or become a servant spirit (Doctrine and Covenants 84:74)
- b. Since Mormons believe that the family unit will endure in eternity and that no one will be saved apart from baptism, they teach and practice baptism for their dead relatives. They cite I Cor.15:29 as Biblical support.
- c. Mormons believe there is salvation for the dead that would have believed the gospel had they heard it, if they hear it in the spirit world and someone in this life is baptized for them (Mormon Doctrine p. 673; Doctrines of Salvation Vol II p. 100).
- d. The Mormons hold such importance on baptism that if a person neglects to do it in behalf of his dead relatives, this puts his own salvation in jeopardy.

### 2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. The Bible teaches that believers are to obey the Lord in baptism but it nowhere teaches damnation for those who are without it (Luke 23:42,43).
- b. It is sure that Paul did not connect it with salvation (I Cor.1:14-17).
- c. The Bible nowhere teaches salvation for anyone after death, but rather the decision we make in this life determines our salvation or damnation in eternity (Jn 3:3; I Jn. 5:1).
- d. As for the passage in I Cor.15:29 this must be taken in its context. What Paul is saying here is if there is no resurrection of the dead then why should anyone trust Christ and be baptized in the ranks which are left vacant by dead believers.

## G. About last things and heaven

### 1. What they teach

- a. Mormons believe the ten lost tribes are Indians somewhere in the polar regions and will be restored to Zion which to them is Missouri.

- b. Mormons believe Joseph Smith will reappear with those who are saved and they will enter the new Jerusalem which will be located in Missouri.
- c. Mormons believe all men will be resurrected and will inhabit one of three heavens. (Doctrine and Covenants Sect 130:22).
  - ( 1 ) The telestial heaven will be for those who rejected the gospel.
  - ( 2 ) The terrestrial heaven will be for religious people and those who were moral but rejected the message of the Mormons.
  - ( 3 ) The celestial heaven will be for Mormons and it will be divided into three kingdoms. The highest will be for those who are exalted to godhood and it will mean a kingdom for one's self and his family which will be ruling a separate planet. One prerequisite for this estate is being sealed by celestial marriage in a Mormon temple while in this life.

## 2. What's wrong with this teaching

- a. First the Indians of North America are from Mongoloid stock and not of Semetic stock.
- b. Secondly there is no Scripture to support the three heavens of Mormonism.
- c. Thirdly Joseph Smith will not appear with Christ to set up the new Jerusalem but rather to be judged by Him at the Great White Throne.

## H. About abstaining from certain drinks

### 1. What they practice

- a. Mormons don't think hot drinks are for the body so they refuse coffee and tea (Doctrine & Covenants 89:9).
- b. Mormons also abstain from drinking any liquids that are hot and cola drinks containing caffeine.

2. What's wrong with this practice

- a. This may be the one and only thing that Mormons are right about if one is hurt by caffeine.
- b. But notice this in relationship to sanctification is to no avail (Col. 2:16; I Tim. 4:1-4).

SOURCES:

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