

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an American religion founded by Joseph Smith in 1830. Joseph Smith and his followers were persecuted, beaten, robbed, incarcerated and driven out of their homes. After the murder of Joseph Smith, they migrated to an abandoned land (Salt Lake City, Utah) where nobody would want to live. Perseverance and patience of the members of the LDS Church prevailed which has made the LDS Church one of the fastest growing and the richest religious organizations in the United States of America. Its members are known as the Latter-day Saints or the Latter-day Saints and they number close to 14 million. The Church has its headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Numerous books have been written by the LDS Church and anti-Mormons (majority of them are Christians hailing from different sects as well as former Mormons) on the Mormon theology. However, this essay will present an honest picture of the Church from Biblical as well as Islamic perspective, making it unique in its kind.

The ultimate purpose of this essay is to present an overview of the theology of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to critically analyze it, and to prove the truthfulness of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This will be achieved, God willing, in two parts. The first part of the essay will give the readers an understanding of what the LDS Church and its missionaries preach about the founder of the Church, Joseph Smith, its scriptures and beliefs. The second part will educate readers by presenting the real picture of Joseph Smith, beliefs of the Church, and those scriptures which are often hidden from the investigators and, their critical analysis. The bulk of the sources used in this essay is from official LDS scriptures

and books, creating an effective tool for presentation to the LDS missionaries and members of the Church to provoke critical reflection about Mormonism among their ranks.

I pray to God, the Almighty, that the contents of this essay may be useful in strengthening the faith of every Muslim as well as in enlightening those who have gone astray so that they may come back to the right path. Amen.

Chapter 1

JOSEPH SMITH

“God had a work for me to do;
and that my name should be had
for good and evil among all nations,
kindreds, and tongues, or that it
should be both good and evil
spoken of among all people.”

Family Background and Birth

Joseph Smith was a sixth generation American; his ancestors emigrated from England in the 1600s. He himself tells his ancestry:

My father, Joseph Smith, was born July 12th, 1771, in Topsfield, Essex County, Massachusetts; his father, Asael Smith, was born March 7th, 1744, in Topsfield, Massachusetts; his father, Samuel Smith, was born January 26th, 1714, in Topsfield, Massachusetts; his father, Samuel Smith, was born January 26th, 1666, in Topsfield, Massachusetts; his father, Robert Smith came from England.¹

It is recorded that the Smith's family believed in God and they were associated to different Churches and served them with devotion. Joseph Smith's ancestors lived most of their lives in Topsfield, Massachusetts. Later, his father, Joseph Smith Senior moved to the state of Vermont and then to Palmyra in the state of New York. There, he married Lucy Smith who conceived nine children. Joseph Smith tells the names of his father's family:

His family consisting of eleven souls, namely-my father, Joseph Smith, my mother, Lucy Smith, (whose name, previous to her marriage, was Mack, daughter of Solomon Mack,) my brothers, Alvin, (who died November 19th, 1824 in the 27th year of his age)

Hyrum, myself, Samuel, Harrison, William, Don Carlos, and my sisters, Sophronia, Catherine, and Lucy.²

Joseph Smith was born December 23rd, 1805 in the town of Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont and he was named after his father. It is said that his parents were poor but were very hardworking and faithful. They used to make their living by farming the wooded lands, trading, or by teaching at school. Joseph Smith used to help his parents in the farms which often required a lot of hard work.

Childhood and Religious Excitement

Joseph Smith's childhood was spent on the farms of his father and he would spend most of the time helping his father. He belonged to a very poor family and it is for this reason that he and his siblings could not get proper education. They would work with their father to run the big family. Joseph Smith, in particular, could only learn how to read and write and some basic rules of arithmetic.

As mentioned earlier Joseph Smith hailed from a religious family. He was raised in a religious atmosphere. At that time in America, generally and particularly in New York State, there was an unusual religious excitement. There were many sects of Christianity, some were in the making and some were all out to get the converts. Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist were among the very active sects and they were getting a large number of converts at that particular time. Joseph Smith's family was also engulfed in this religious excitement. Joseph Smith's mother (Lucy Smith), his two brothers (Hyrum and Samuel) and his older sister (Sophronia) joined the Presbyterian Church while Joseph Smith, his father (Joseph Smith Sr.), and his brother Alvin did not. Although Joseph Smith was inclined towards the Methodists but he could not decide whether he should join this sect or not.

The First Vision

It is said that Joseph Smith prayed to God for guidance about which church he should join. Joseph Smith, 14 at that time, saw a vision as an answer to his prayers and he divulged that:

... I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him! My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)—and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.” He again forbade me to join with any of them;...³

This vision is known as the First Vision of Joseph Smith. As commanded by the personage he did not join any church. It is said that when Joseph Smith shared his vision with priests and other people he became subjected to opposition and persecution.

People mocked at him and some even went on to say that it was the work of Satan not the work of God.

The Visits of Moroni

Three years passed in opposition after the first vision. Joseph Smith, saw another vision on 21st September, 1823 that:

... I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor.

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; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people. He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.⁴

The angel Moroni had visited Joseph Smith three times during that night. Moroni quoted many prophecies from the Old Testament as well as from the New Testament concerning coming of a prophet before the second coming of Jesus Christ and told

him that these prophecies shall soon be fulfilled. Moroni also informed him about the great judgements that shall come on earth including wars, famines, plagues, and epidemics. Next morning in the fourth visit of the angel Moroni, Joseph Smith was commanded to share his experience with his father.

Moreover, the angel had commanded him to visit the nearby hill named Cumorah, to see the Gold Plates and the stones. Joseph Smith went there and he met the same angel who showed him the Gold Plates. Joseph made an attempt to take the plates and it was forbidden by the angel. He commanded him to visit the same place every year on the same day for three years.

Marriage and Children

Joseph Smith went to Pennsylvania for a job where he met with Emma Hale. It is said that her parents were not happy with her relationship with Joseph Smith because of his “prophetic visions”. Emma’s parents were against her marriage with Joseph. It was for this reason Joseph took Emma to New York State and married her on the 18th of January, 1826. Joseph and Emma went to Joseph Smith Sr.’s home and lived there. Joseph Smith had nine children with Emma and among them six of them died in infancy. Alvin, born in 1828 and died shortly after his birth, Thadeus and Louisa twins, born in 1831, who also died shortly after their birth. Then Joseph, who died while he was eleven months old. Joseph III, born in 1832; Frederick, born in 1836; Alexander, born in 1838; Don Carlos, born in 1840 and died shortly after his birth; One son named David, born in 1844, after the murder of Joseph Smith.

Possession of the Gold Plates and the Translation

Joseph Smith visited the hill for three years and received guidance and instructions regarding the translation of the plates and about his “prophetic mission”. The time had now arrived for obtaining the Gold Plates and the stones. On 22nd of September, 1827 Joseph Smith went to the hill and the same angel appeared and handed him the plates and warned him to protect the plates

from the hands of thieves and mobs. It is said that the persecution became severe once people knew about the Gold plates. To avoid the bitter persecution, Joseph and Emma moved to Pennsylvania to her father's home where Joseph Smith started the work on the translation of the plates. Later, Oliver Cowdery, a school teacher became his scribe and the work on the translation was fast tracked. On the 15th of May, 1829 while both were working on the translation, they prayed for the restoration of the Priesthood that must come to pass before the second coming of Jesus Christ. John, the Baptist visited them and conferred the Aaronic Priesthood (the lesser Priesthood) upon them. Later, Jesus' apostles Peter, James, and John also appeared and conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood (the higher Priesthood). The translation was completed and the Book of Mormon was published on 26th of March, 1830.

Organization of the Church

After the publication of the Book of Mormon, on the 6th of April, 1830 Joseph Smith organized the church and a group of 60 people joined the church. In this meeting new converts were baptised and the gift of the Holy Ghost was given and men were ordained to the priesthood. Moreover, during this meeting Joseph Smith received a revelation that:

BEHOLD, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ.⁵ (*Doctrine and Covenants 21:1*)

Therefore, Joseph Smith was designated as the Prophet and the leader of the church. At first, the official name of the church was "The Church of Christ" then on the 3rd of May, 1834 it was changed to "The Church of Latter Day Saints". Later, on the 26th of April, 1838 Joseph Smith was revealed the name of the church that: *For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The*

*Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*⁶ (Doctrine and Covenants 115:4)

The church was established and with ever increasing opposition and persecution the church continued to receive many converts. Joseph Smith also organized the structure of the church based on a revelation. This structure consisted of First Presidency, the priesthood quorums, and the auxiliary organization.

Spreading the Message

Joseph Smith received a revelation concerning his message that: *Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, acting in the authority which I have given you, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*⁷ (Doctrine and Covenants 68:8)

Therefore, it is for this reason he trained missionaries and sent them to different parts of the New York state, initially. Missionaries had a great success and the church rapidly grew in New York state and new branches were established in small towns namely, Fayette, Manchester, and Colesville. Joseph Smith was encouraged by the progress of the missionaries. Later, he sent missionaries to various parts of the United States, Upper Canada, and England where church had a great success and a large number of converts were obtained. This also brought in its wake severe persecution and opposition. The Latter-day Saints received constant threats to their lives and properties but the Church continued to receive converts from different parts of the United States, Upper Canada, and England.

Struggle for the Zion City

With the progress of the Church, persecution and opposition continued to grow proportionately. Joseph Smith received a revelation in December, 1830 that: *BEHOLD, I say unto you that it is not expedient in me that ye should translate any more until ye shall go to the Ohio, and this because of the enemy and for your sakes.*⁸ (Doctrine and Covenants 37:1)

Joseph Smith and his wife were the first one to migrate to Kirtland, Ohio. Majority of the Latter-day Saints' population migrated at great loss. They had to sacrifice their houses, farms, and the belongings. This was a costly migration. After establishing new headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, Joseph Smith received another revelation that he and other Church leaders should travel to Missouri. Therefore, Joseph Smith and some other members of the Church embarked on the journey to Missouri. There, he received another revelation on the 20th of July 1831, saying:

HEARKEN, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse.⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 57:1-3)

After laying the foundation of the Zion city and dedication of the land for the gathering of the Latter-day Saints and the temple, Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland, Ohio. There, he encouraged the Latter-day Saints to gather in Jackson County, Missouri. Hence, under the directions of Joseph Smith the Church members migrated to Missouri under the supervision of their priesthood leaders. The church members continue to live in Kirtland, Ohio and Jackson County, Missouri. The construction of the Kirtland temple began in December 1832 and the members of the church not only helped financially but also by working in the construction of the Church. The construction was completed and the temple was dedicated on the 27th of March, 1836.

The population of Latter-day Saints at the settlement in Jackson County, Missouri started to increase rapidly with the migration of the Latter-day Saints from Kirtland, Ohio and other parts of the United States. It had alarmed the local people of Missouri and they had also started to oppose and persecute the Latter-day Saints because of loss of political power and strange LDS practises and doctrines. Persecution became intolerable as mobs and local militia began to create trouble for the Latter-day Saints. Eventually, Latter-day Saints were driven out of Jackson County. In February, 1834, while Joseph Smith was in Kirtland, Ohio, he received a revelation that:

Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, and establish the children of Zion upon the laws and commandments which have been and which shall be given unto you.¹⁰ (*Doctrine and Covenants 103:35*)

Therefore, Joseph Smith with his 200 followers marched towards Jackson County Missouri and this organized group was given the name of Zion Camp. There were many obstacles in this journey and they had to bear many difficulties, hardships, suffering, and an outbreak of cholera. Moreover, Joseph Smith had received the news that there is an increase in mob violence and several counties have sworn to fight against the Latter-day Saints. In the midst of all this, Joseph Smith received a revelation while they were nearing the Jackson County that he must disband the camp. The Latter-day Saints then, moved to Clay County, Missouri but not long after, they were again forced out by the local people. From there, the Latter-day Saints moved to Caldwell County, Missouri. This county was organized by the Missouri State to accommodate the displaced Latter-day Saints. Back in Kirtland, the church continued to grow but during this period the opposition and persecution increased and it was intensified in

1837. The Latter-day Saints were driven out of Kirtland and they also went to Caldwell County, Missouri and united with the other Latter-day Saints who were in the Zion March. Once again, they had to leave their homes, properties, and more importantly they had to leave their temple. It was an unbearable loss.

In Caldwell County, the Latter-day Saints enjoyed the peace for a short while but not long after, they were again in the midst of persecution of mobs and militia. Joseph Smith and other members of the Church retaliated in response. They were arrested and were charged with treason. Joseph Smith was incarcerated in November 1838 and was kept in inhumane conditions. He was imprisoned approximately for six months and was transferred to different jails. It is said that, in mid April, 1839 while he was being transferred to another Jail, he was allowed by a guard (who took pity on him) to escape. During Joseph Smith's imprisonment, the Latter-day Saints were forced to move out of Missouri. Under the supervision of Brigham Young the Latter-day Saints moved to Quincy, Illinois. After his escape, Joseph Smith reunited with Latter-day Saints and here, he commanded his followers to move to another city which he named Nauvoo. Obeying the commandment, the Latter-day Saints flocked to Nauvoo, Illinois and thus making it the most populated area in the State. Joseph Smith's struggle for Zion city resulted in opposition, persecution, loss of properties, loss of souls, and generally a total chaos and he was unable to achieve this goal in his life.

Joseph Smith in Nauvoo

Nauvoo became the new headquarters for the Church and Joseph Smith and his followers lived there in peace for short while. During this period, the Latter-day Saints dreamed and hoped to progress forward but this period was also short lived. On 4th February, 1841 Joseph Smith was elected lieutenant general of the newly organized Nauvoo Legion which was a unit of the Illinois State militia. Now, living in a new head quarters without a temple, therefore, it was commanded by God that temple must be

built in Nauvoo. Thus, the construction work was started and on 6th April, 1841 the cornerstone was laid by Joseph Smith. Joseph Smith did not live to see the Nauvoo Temple completed.

Nauvoo was a Mormon city and was heavily populated by the Latter-day Saints. Therefore, Joseph Smith ran for the mayor's office and on 19th May, 1842 he was elected as mayor of Nauvoo. Joseph Smith was disappointed at the Federal Government because it failed to give the Latter-day Saints their religious rights and could not compensate for their lost properties in Kirtland, Ohio and Jackson County, Missouri. Thus, in January, 1844 Joseph Smith announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States of America. Although, there was no chance of him being elected but it drew public attention. Not long after this announcement, Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum Smith were charged with treason against the state of Illinois and were imprisoned in Carthage Jail. On 27th June, 1844, a mob stormed the jail and murdered Joseph Smith along with his brother Hyrum Smith.

CHAPTER 2

THE LDS SCRIPTURES

“I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”

Religious scripture plays a pivotal role in the success of a religion and almost all the religions of the world have their scriptures. The followers of the true prophets thrive and flourish by abiding by the precepts and teachings that their respective scriptures offer. Just like all other Christian sects, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints follow the Holy Bible but there are other scriptures that are also considered and believed to hold the same importance and position as the Holy Bible. Best way to reason this is to present a revelation of the LDS prophet, Joseph Smith that:

This is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth— And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.¹¹ (*Doctrine and Covenants 68:2-4*)

Therefore, it is for this reason that in this age the LDS church believes that a prophet of God appeared and whatever he said or was revealed, that became the scripture. Thus making the Church

of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints one of few sects if not the only sect to have additional scripture other than what is followed by the mainstream. The scriptures of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are as follows:

The Holy Bible

The Book of Mormon

Doctrine and Covenants

Pearl of Great Price

All the above mentioned scriptures are also referred to as *standard works*. Now, let's look at these scriptures individually from the perspective of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Holy Bible

The Holy Bible, itself, does not need an introduction. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to know that what is the belief of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regarding the Bible and which translation the Bible is used, etc.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes in the Bible and also believes it to be the word of God but with a condition. It is mentioned in the eighth Article of Faith that: "*We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly.*"¹² The LDS church also believes that the Bible, today, is not the same as it was revealed. It is also believed that the Bible has been altered and some portions are distorted and some portions are taken out from the original Bible. Therefore, these things make it imperfect and incomplete. Joseph Smith said that the Bible was altered by: *Ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors.*¹³

The Book of Mormon also records a vision of the prophet Nephi that an angel said to him:

... thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away... Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.¹⁴

As is evident from the above references, the LDS church believes in the Bible but it differs from those who believe the Bible to be the exact word of God. The LDS church also differs from those who are under this false impression that the Bible is perfect, complete, unaltered, and pure from errors.

The LDS Church prescribes a few solutions and claims that these solutions solve most of the problems with the Bible. The first solution is to read the Inspired Translation of the Bible by the LDS prophet that also eradicates errors. The second solution is to read and interpret the Bible in the light of the Book of Mormon and the revelations to remove all ambiguities. The third solution is through the explanation of the modern prophets and apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The last solution is to interpret the Bible with the help of the Holy Ghost and to seek God's guidance and revelation.

The official translation of the Bible that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints uses is the King James version because it is believed to be the most complete English translation of the Bible. Another reason is that the LDS prophet Joseph Smith used this very translation of the Bible. Moreover, Joseph Smith, revised the King James translation. An eminent Mormon writer and an apostle (member of Quorum of the twelve apostles) Bruce R. McConkie writes that:

In consequence, at the command of the Lord and while acting under the spirit of revelation, the Prophet corrected, revised, altered, added to, and deleted from the King James Version of the Bible to form what is now commonly referred to as the Inspired Version of the Bible.¹⁵

Therefore, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been publishing the Inspired Version of the Bible under footnotes of the King James Translation of the Bible. Joseph Smith could not complete the work on the inspired translation hence, the Inspired Translation remains incomplete and was never printed during his life time. Bruce R. McConkie praises the Inspired Version of the Translation in the following words:

In all cases where major changes were made, the student with spiritual insight can see the hand of the Lord manifest; the marvellous flood of light and knowledge revealed through the Inspired Version of the Bible is one of the great evidences of the divine mission of Joseph Smith.¹⁶

It is evident from the above passage that the Inspired Version is not only a “Godly” work but also an evidence of the truthfulness of the LDS prophet Joseph Smith.

Some of the teachings, beliefs, and practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have their original roots in the Old Testament and the New Testament. For example, the first principal of the Gospels (information of this principle will be in the chapter 3, under the heading of Plan of Salvation) which consist of faith, repentance, baptism, gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end have its roots in the New Testament. Furthermore, the dynamic organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is also based on the Old Testament and as well as the New Testament.

The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon is one of the standard works and holds great importance in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Latter-day Saints believe that the Book of Mormon is a divine book and the word of God. It brings man closer to God, and it is the *keystone* to their religion. Moreover, they believe that this is the most complete book on the face of the earth. Just as Joseph Smith said: *I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.*¹⁷

This book is not believed to be the work of a man. To them, it was the work of God and in order to strengthen their argument and belief about it, they quote many verses from different parts of the Bible to prove its divine origin. For this reason, it holds a great importance in their religion.

The prophecies about the Book of Mormon in the Bible

Here are a few verses that are presented by the Latter Day Saints (LDS) or Mormons:

And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.¹⁸ (*Isaiah 29:4*)

The Latter-day Saints believe that this verse describes the coming of the Book of Mormon out of the ground and to whisper out of the dust to people of this age.

In support of their belief about the Book of Mormon, they present another verse:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that

is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.¹⁹ (*Isaiah 29:11-12*)

The Latter-day Saints believe that this prophecy was fulfilled when Martin Harris took a transcript of the characters from the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated to a professor in New York. He gave Martin Harris a certificate that these writings were of ancient Egyptian and that the translations were correct. When asked where and how Martin Harris got these transcripts he was told that Joseph Smith translated them from the Gold Plates by the power of God. He asked to see the certificate and tore it up and asked that if he was given the gold plates, he would translate. Martin Harris responded that the book was sealed. The learned professor then responded, 'I cannot read a sealed book.'

On the contrary, Joseph Smith was unlearned but he completed the translation. It is said that he had mere elementary knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic - thus fulfilling the prophesy that the learned man will say that he cannot read a sealed book but an unlearned man would translate.

The Latter-day Saints also present the following verses:

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.²⁰ (*Ezekiel 37:15-17*)

Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of

Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.²¹ (*Ezekiel 37:19*)

According to The Latter-day Saints, the *stick of Judah* means the Bible and the *stick of Ephraim* means the Book of Mormon. They say that the genealogy found in the Book of Mormon traces them back to the descendants of Ephraim. Joining them together witnesses the dealings of God with man.

Another verse that is presented by the Latter-day Saints in support of the Book of Mormon is: *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*²² (*John 10:16*)

The Latter-day Saints believe that Jesus Christ came in his bodily form to the Americas after his resurrection and warned the inhabitants of the Americas of that time and also gave them glad tidings of his second coming. Thus fulfilling the prophecy, Jesus visited *other sheep* and the Book of Mormon keeps the records and accounts of his visit to *other sheep*.

The Book of Mormon, "An Ancient Record"

According to Mormons, the Book of Mormon contains the migration record of a tribe of the house of Israel that had migrated to the western hemisphere circa 600 B.C. It gives the account of two tribes, the Nephites and the Lamanites. Nephi and Laman were sons of an Israelite prophet Lehi, who led their migration. Laman was the oldest son of Lehi and he is presumed to be a disbeliever. All of his progeny and the followers who followed his footsteps and disbelieved in prophet Lehi and persecuted his believers are called Lamanites. On the other hand, Lehi's younger son, Nephi, was a believer and always obeyed his commandments. His progeny and the followers who followed his footsteps are called Nephites. In short, the Book of Mormon was written and abridged by a prophet historian named Mormon. He

was also a general of the army of Nephites and later became a prophet. At his death, he handed the abridgement to his son Moroni and advised him to hide them because of the war between Nephites and Lamanites. In 1823, Moroni appeared in the form of an angel and told Joseph Smith that God has chosen him to fulfill the task. Then, in 1827, he granted the gold plates to Joseph Smith and commanded him to translate the book in English from ancient Egyptian writings. The translation of these gold plates is now known to us as the Book of Mormon. It contains the record of the remnants of the house of Israel who had migrated to a *New World*. It also contains visions, revelations, commandments, moral teachings, and prophecies of their prophets and persecution of their followers and how God punished their enemies.

Why is it called the Book of Mormon?

It is named after a prophet of Nephites named Mormon, because he collected and abridged the records of the inhabitants of the Americas. He also played a great role in preserving the abridgement by advising his son, Moroni, to hide the plates in the mountain. This is why it is called the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, Joseph Smith also mentioned the reason for naming the abridgement the Book of Mormon. He said:

I wish to mention here that the title-page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates, which contained the record which has been translated...I give below that part of the title-page of the English version of the Book of Mormon, which is a genuine and literal translation of the title-page of the original book of Mormon as recorded on the plate:

The Book of Mormon

An account written by the hand of Mormon, upon Plates, taken from the Plates of Nephi.²³

Another name

According to The Latter-day Saints, the Book of Mormon is, in reality, another *Testament of Jesus Christ*. They believe that Jesus Christ came in his bodily form to the Americas after his resurrection and preached his message and warned the inhabitants of that time and also gave them glad tidings of his second coming. Therefore, it is called *another testament of Jesus Christ* because it keeps the records and accounts of his visit to the Americas, or to the remnant of the House of Israel or to the *other sheep* of the house of Israel.

Translation of the Book of Mormon

Before delving into how the Book of Mormon was translated, it is important to know how, why and when Joseph Smith received the golden plates. For this inquisition, let's go back to the history and witness how it all began.

The Vision

At the age of 17, Joseph Smith desired to know his standing before God and to receive forgiveness. On the night of September 21, 1823, he retired to his attic bedroom in his family's home in Palmyra, New York. It is said that he earnestly prayed to God to know about *God's purposes* for him. In answer to his prayers, Joseph Smith saw a light appear in his room that grew brighter and brighter until the room was *lighter than at noonday*. An angel appeared and this was Moroni, the last Nephite prophet, who, centuries earlier, had buried the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was written. He had been sent to tell Joseph Smith that God had forgiven his sins and that he had great work for him to do. Joseph Smith said:

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; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or

that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.²⁴

As part of this work, Joseph Smith was to go to a nearby hill, where the sacred record, written on gold plates was deposited. Joseph Smith was to translate the record and bring it forth to the world. Joseph Smith said:

There was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Saviour to the ancient inhabitants;²⁵

He further elaborated:

Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted Seers in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.²⁶

Possession of the Plates

The next day, Joseph Smith went to the hill where the plates were buried. There he met Moroni and saw the plates, but was told that he would not receive them for three years. Joseph Smith said:

I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger, and was again informed that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would it, until four years from that time; but he told me that I should come to that place precisely in one year from that time, and that he would there meet with me, and that I should continue to do so until the

time should come for obtaining the plates. Accordingly, as I had been commanded, I went at the end of each year, and at each time I found the same messenger there, and received instruction and intelligence from him at each of our interviews, respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner His kingdom was to be conducted in the last days.²⁷

After four years, on September 22, 1827, Joseph Smith went to the hill and received the plates from Moroni.

Beginning of the translation

With the ancient record in his possession, Joseph Smith started to work on the translation of the Gold plates which would later be known as the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith's wife, Emma Smith, who was also a school teacher, was his first scribe. Later, Martin Harris, a wealthy and prosperous farmer, and Oliver Cowdery, a school teacher worked as his scribes. In June 1828, Martin Harris took 116 pages of the translation to show it to his family members. The manuscript was stolen from him and it was never returned. Consequently, Maroni took the gold plates and they were later returned to Joseph Smith after repentance. The work on the translation was resumed and it was finally completed in June of 1829 and it is said that Joseph Smith completed the translation in 60 days.

Publication of the Book of Mormon

In August 1829, Joseph Smith had contracted with the publisher Egbert B. Grandin of Palmyra to print the volume. Martin Harris mortgaged his farm to ensure payment of the printing costs and paid Mr. Grandin. He later sold 151 acres of his farm to pay off the mortgage. The printing began and the Book of Mormon was available for sale to the public in Grandin's bookstore on March 26, 1830.

Different Books of the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon consists of 15 books, which are:

1 Nephi	Alma
2 Nephi	Helaman
Jacob	3 Nephi
Enos	4 Nephi
Jarom	Mormon
Omni	Ether
Words of Mormon	Moroni
Mosiah	

These books were translated from four kinds of metal plates by Joseph Smith. A list of these plates is given below:

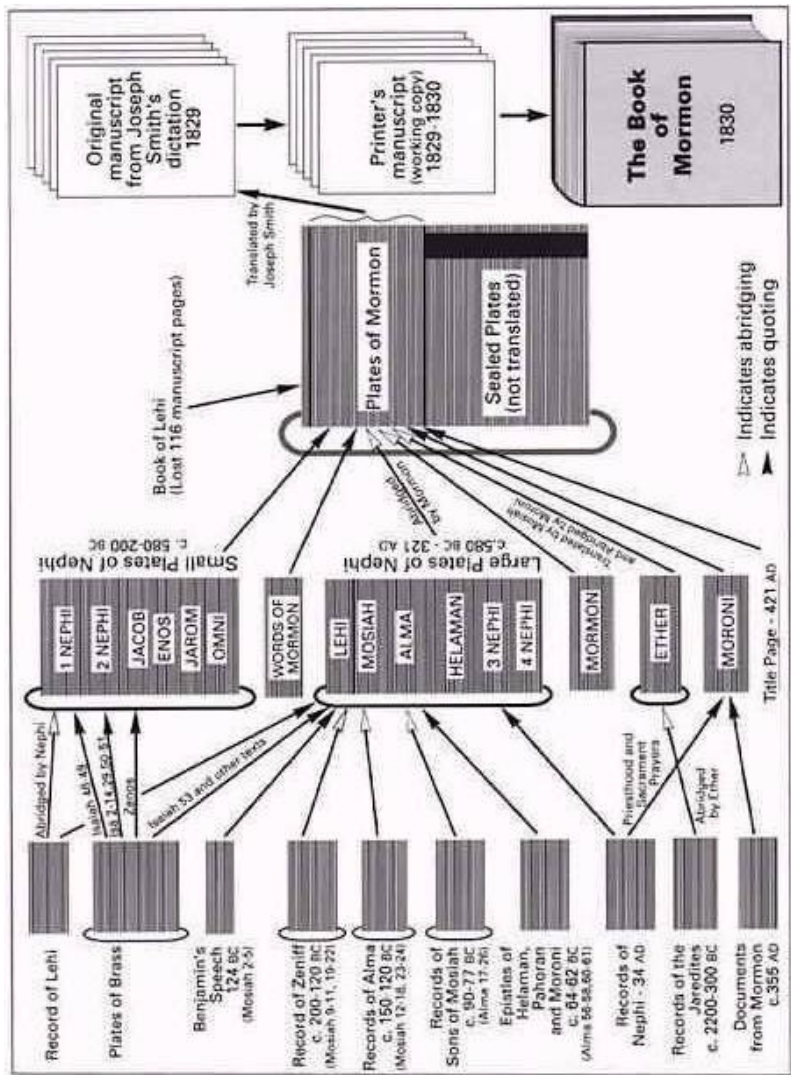
The Plates of Nephi: These plates had two kinds, small and large. The large plates contained the genealogy of Lehi, the history of Nephites, teachings of Jesus Christ when he visited the Americas in his resurrected form, messianic prophecies which are mentioned in the Old and the New Testaments. Whereas, the small plates dealt with spiritual matters and the ministry, teachings of the prophet, their ministries, and their preaching expeditions.

The Plates of Mormon: These plates contained Mormon's commentary on the plates of Nephi and also his sermons and letters which were documented by his son Moroni.

The Plates of Ether: These plates were recorded by a Jaredite prophet named, Ether. Jaredites were those people who were living in Americas before the arrival of Lehi and his people. These plates contained the historical accounts of the Jaredites, and spiritual experience of Ether. Many years after the destruction of Jaredites these plates were discovered by a Nephite prophet who translated them with the help of a stone.

The Plates of Brass: These plates had five books of Moses and Jewish history and prophecies about coming of different prophets.

The following diagram further explains the Book of Mormon in detail:



The Testimonies

As the translation work drew to a close, Joseph Smith felt the need to show the 'Gold plates' to others so that they may give testimony – but it was not permitted by Moroni. Later, he had discovered from the gold plates itself that the Lord would provide three special witnesses who would testify to the world that the Book of Mormon is true. It is said:

And my brother, Jacob, also has seen him as I have seen him; wherefore, I will send their words forth unto my children to prove unto them that my words are true. Wherefore, by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word. Nevertheless, God sendeth more witnesses, and he proveth all his words.²⁸

And behold, ye may be privileged that ye may show the plates unto those who shall assist to bring forth this work;

And unto three shall they be shown by the power of God; wherefore they shall know of a surety that these things are true.

And in the mouth of three witnesses shall these things be established; and the testimony of three, and this work, in the which shall be shown forth the power of God and also his word, of which the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost bear record—and all this shall stand as a testimony against the world at the last day.²⁹

It is said that after discovering the above mentioned verses, Joseph Smith prayed about this and received a revelation saying that three men would be permitted to see the plates. Therefore, a few days later, Joseph Smith, and three men, Olive Cowdery,

David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, went into the woods and began to pray for this. Joseph Smith recorded that:

We...had not been many minutes engaged in prayer, when presently we beheld a light above us in the air, of exceeding brightness; and behold, an angel stood before us. In his hands he held the plates which we had been praying for these to have a view of. He turned over the leaves one by one, so that we could see them, and discern the engravings thereon distinctly.³⁰

After seeing the plates three witnesses gave the testimony that:

And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true.³¹

Joseph Smith later showed the gold plates to eight more witnesses and they also had given the testimony that:

And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer
Jacob Whitmer
Peter Whitmer, Jun.
John Whitmer

Hiram Page
Joseph Smith, Sen.
Hyrum Smith
Samuel H. Smith³²

The Latter-day Saints say that by the testimony of ‘three and eight witnesses,’ the prophecies in the Book of Mormon were fulfilled.

Translation of the Book of Mormon in different languages

The Latter-day Saints believe that the Book of Mormon is a source of guidance of everyone and it is the most perfect book. Therefore, the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints feels that it is incumbent upon them to translate the book in all the languages of the world. It is also prophesised that:

For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ.³³ (*Doctrine and Covenants 90:11*)

Hence, the church feels the urgency of this to be fulfilled and the LDS church has done a great amount of work on this task as well. According to *News from the Church: Almost 175 years after Joseph Smith first published the book in English, 104 different language editions are now in print, including 74 full editions of the Book of Mormon and 30 editions of Selections from the Book of Mormon.*³⁴

The Book of Mormon a Key Stone

The Latter-day Saints believe that the Book of Mormon is a key stone to their religion. Joseph Smith said:

I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of

our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.³⁵

At another occasion, he stated: *Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none.*³⁶

The LDS missionaries often explain this by giving an example of an arch that is made from wedge shaped pieces that lean against each other. Keystones in wedges are usually bigger and stronger than the others and hold the most important position. Such is the place of the Book of Mormon among all scriptures.

Doctrine and Covenants

Another LDS scripture which holds a great importance to their beliefs and believed to be the word of God is Doctrine and Covenants. It is the compilation of the revelations that was given to Joseph Smith and his successors. It is not the translation of the ancient documents but it is the modern revelation that was given to Joseph Smith. Joseph Smith said that the Doctrine and Covenant is: *The foundation of the Church in these last days, and a benefit to the world, showing that the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom of our Savior are again entrusted to man.*³⁷ (*Doctrine and Covenants, Section Heading:70*)

Therefore, the importance of these revelation and the whole Doctrine and Covenants cannot be undermined as it holds a key position in the LDS scripture. As a matter of fact, these revelations are a sign of truthfulness of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and without these revelations the LDS church stands on no ground. The LDS prophet Joseph Smith said that: *Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none.*³⁸

The Doctrine and Covenants were first published under the title of Book of Commandment in 1833. This was the time of severe opposition and persecution, therefore, the Book of Commandments did not make it out of the press because a mob

destroyed the printing press along with the copies of the Book of Commandments. Later, in 1835 a successful attempt was made to print this but this time, more revelations were added and a new title Doctrine and Covenants was given. In the first section of Doctrine and Covenants, it is said out loud to everybody that:

Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled. What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.³⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 1:37-38)

Doctrine and Covenants is divided into sections and verses. It has 138 sections and two official declaration of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Pearl of Great Price

The Pearl of Great Price consists of the followings:

The Book of Moses
The Book of Abraham
Joseph Smith-Matthew
Joseph Smith-History
The Articles of Faith
The Book of Moses

It is said that the book of Moses is the *inspired* translation which Joseph Smith began (in June, 1830) after completing the translation of the Book of Mormon. The Latter-day Saints believe that it is a more complete record of Moses' writing at the beginning of the book of Genesis. It is also believed that it contains many doctrines and teachings that were lost from the Bible. It gives additional information about the creation of the

earth, the Lord's dealing with Adam and Enoch and about the plan of salvation.

The Book of Abraham

It is said that the book of Abraham is a translation of some ancient documents that were purchased in 1835 by the church, along with some mummies and those documents happened to be an account of the Prophet Abraham. The Latter-day Saints say that Joseph Smith translated these ancient documents by revelation. This book discusses the pre-mortal council in Heaven, the creation of the earth, the nature of God, and the priesthood.

Joseph Smith-Mathew

Joseph Smith-Mathew talks about the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Joseph Smith-History

This is the official history of Joseph Smith which was prepared by him in 1838 and first published on March 15, 1842.

The Articles of Faith

It contains beliefs and doctrines which were written by Joseph Smith. *The Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* was published on March 1, 1842.

CHAPTER 3

THE LDS BELIEFS

“The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.”

Now let's take a look at the beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and how they are presented before an inquirer or a contact.

God

The Latter-day Saints believe in God and they believe that God is perfect and has many attributes. He is God of truth, knowledge, mercy, grace and goodness. He is slow in anger and abundant in goodness. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient.

When speaking to a Mormon about this particular belief they always reply by presenting the First Article of Faith; *We believe in God, the Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.*⁴⁰ To explain this in further detail it means that God consist of three personages that is:

God as the Father

God as Jesus Christ

God as the Holy Ghost

These three personages make the "Godhead", one Supreme Being. God, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost are three gods, corporally separate yet one in purpose and attributes. This phenomenon is present in almost all LDS literature. Thus, an eminent Mormon writer, Bruce R. McConkie comments in his

encyclopaedic book, *Mormon Doctrine: There are three Gods — the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — who, though separate in personality, are united as one in purpose, in plan, and in all the attributes of perfection.*⁴¹

The Doctrine of the Trinity and the LDS Church

After reading the above quotation, a question immediately arises in the reader's mind: how is this very concept different from the concept of the Trinity? The Latter-day Saints do not believe in Trinity, on the contrary, the LDS Church regards this as a pagan belief. As mentioned above, The Latter-day Saints believe that these three gods are different in body and spirit yet in purpose they are one. On the other hand, Trinity is three gods in one and one in three, meaning that they are inseparable in any form whatsoever. Here is what Joseph Smith said about the Trinity:

Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is a strange God anyhow—three in one, and one in three! It is a curious organization... All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism. It would make the biggest God in all the world. He would be a wonderfully big God—he would be a giant or a monster.⁴²

Therefore, the LDS Church abhors the concept of the Trinity and does not associate itself to this pagan concept. Rather, the LDS Church believes that although they are three personages who are different and distinct from each other, they all form one God — meaning oneness in attributes, perfection and purpose. To further strengthen their belief The Latter-day Saints present the following verses:

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to

me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.⁴³ (*Mathew 3:13-17*)

The Latter-day Saints say that these verses are drawing our attention towards three personages who are different in their bodies but unified in purpose. The aforementioned verses prove that the first God, the Father's voice was heard from heaven and second God, the son was baptised in the water and third God, the Holy Ghost descended like a dove. This evidences the LDS belief that at the baptism of Jesus Christ all three personages were manifested individually and concurrently.

Nature of Three Gods

Another question arises that if they are three gods then what is their nature? The LDS scriptures say about this:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.⁴⁴ (*Doctrine and Covenants 133:22*)

Simply put, the nature of God would be as follows:

- God, The Father, has a body of flesh and bones
- God, the Son, has a body of flesh and bones.
- God, the Holy Ghost, has a spirit only.

On the contrary, mainstream Christians believe that God is an incorporeal spirit not having flesh and bones. To support their point of view, they present the following verse:

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.⁴⁵ (*John 4:23-24*)

When The Latter-day Saints are confronted with this particular issue, then they reply that this passage has been mistranslated. They present the *Inspired Translation* of these verses before mainstream Christians, rendered by Joseph Smith:

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. For unto such hath God promised his Spirit. And they who worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth.⁴⁶

This is how The Latter-day Saints deal with this issue. As a matter of fact, it would be appropriate to mention that the LDS Church put immense stress on the correct translation of the scriptures. So much so that one of the articles of faith is entirely devoted to this very subject. It says that, *We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.*⁴⁷

Coming back to the topic, since Godhead consists of three different entities, then they must have different tasks assigned to each other. Joseph Smith taught that:

Everlasting covenant was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and relates to their dispensation of things to men on the

earth; these personages, according to Abraham's record, are called God the first, the Creator; God the second, the Redeemer; and God the third, the witness or Testator.⁴⁸

This is how Godhead works and the work is individually divided. Sometime, the first God is “the Creator” and sometimes He sends prophets. Then, Jesus – the second god – is “the Redeemer” sometimes and the Comforter at others. The Holy Ghost - the third God – is “the Witness or Testator” at times and sometimes he purifies the chosen ones.

The Plan of Salvation

The plan of salvation, redemption or exaltation is the most important belief which is being taught within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It would not be wrong to say that the plan of salvation is the essence of its teachings. As a matter of fact, the very purpose of creating the Earth and mortal bodies was to receive the salvation. The LDS Church has been teaching and preaching this doctrine to the Christian or “Sectarian World” (this term is used in the LDS scriptures extensively generally referring to Christian sects) with great success as it continues to attract countless converts.

The LDS church preaches that the Plan of Salvation was ordained by God, the Father. The LDS Church believes that all the spirits existed before they were given the mortal bodies in the presence of God just like the Hinduism. The plan was to give the pre-existing spirits a mortal body and send them to the earth and then give them *agency* (i.e. free will; free to choose between good and evil) so that they may be tested. In these trials and tribulations whoever will follow the gospels of Jesus Christ and the ordinances and performances that are given therein, they shall achieve the redemption, the salvation, and the exaltation. They are the ones who shall enter the *celestial kingdom*, the highest

heaven where God, the Father rests. This is the plan of salvation in simpler words.

There are five steps for the plan of salvation or “mortal probation”, which are as follows:

1. Faith in Jesus Christ
2. Repentance
3. Baptism
4. Gift of the Holy Ghost
5. Enduring to the end

The above mentioned steps have been mentioned in the Articles of Faith:

We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.⁴⁹

A Mormon must follow these steps all his life only then shall he be able to go to the Celestial Kingdom, in the presence of God. Glad tidings are given for those who follow these steps; as for those who do not follow these steps and ordinances, it is written:

And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it.⁵⁰

Therefore, it is prime responsibility of a Mormon and whoever is entering into the fold of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to fulfill this obligation to the utmost so that they may dwell in the presence of their heavenly Father.

Now, let's look at five steps in detail which are prerequisites to enter into the celestial kingdom.

1. Faith in Jesus Christ

Faith in Jesus Christ means that a Mormon must believe that Jesus is the literal Son of God and the firstborn. More importantly, The Latter-day Saints have to believe in Jesus' atonement for the mankind. It is the most important step from among all the steps of the Plan of Salvation. In reality, faith in Jesus means to believe in the doctrine of the atonement and importance of this doctrine cannot be overemphasised. Without the doctrine of atonement, the plan of salvation would shatter and the very purpose of the creation of the earth and of the mortal bodies would be traumatized. According to The Latter-day Saints, the doctrine of atonement supports and gives life to all other gospel doctrines and it is the foundation of the Church and everything rests on it and all the things sprout out of it. Describing the doctrine of atonement, Joseph Smith said:

And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us— That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him;⁵¹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:40-42)

Therefore, this doctrine means to believe in the crucified death of Jesus for the sins of the world and to purify the world.

Here, a question arises that if God is Omnipotent and Merciful then why can't God forgive us and why are we in need of the atonement of Jesus Christ? For this inquisition, let's seek help from the LDS scriptures and for this let's look at two very important extracts from the Book of Mormon which are often quoted by the members of the LDS church:

For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.⁵²

Second extract from the Book of Mormon explains that why we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ:

Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. Wherefore, he is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make

intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved.⁵³

In the light of the above mentioned extracts from the Book of Mormon, the doctrine of atonement is based on the following two points:

- I. The Fall of Adam
- II. The Son ship of Jesus Christ

Adam was in the presence of God and in the Garden of Eden. There, God gave Adam and Eve certain commandment that they should not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan caused Eve to transgress and break the commandment and Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree. So because of this transgression, they were granted the mortal bodies and sent to the Earth with other spirits. They were also granted the *agency* or the free will and the life here on the Earth is a probation time for the children of Adam. Then to pay for the inequities and sins of Adam and of the children of Adam and to ransom and to redeem God sent his own “begotten Son”. Without Jesus Christ, the “literal Son of God”, sins of the children of Adam could not be redeemed and they could not dwell in the presence of their Heavenly Father. In other words, the Atonement of Jesus Christ has been formulated and devised for the ransom of mankind.

The LDS scripture says that this has come in the package from our pre-mortal existence when God convened with His heavenly council and presented the plan of salvation. In other words, it was predestined that Adam and Eve would sin and their sin would befall on their progeny as well, then God would send His own “begotten” and “literal son” for the ransom of their sins and inequities. None the less, believing in the atonement of Jesus Christ is the key to the plan of salvation, in fact, it is so important that one article of faith is devoted to this very plan: *We believe that*

*through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.*⁵⁴

Why is atonement important? Without the atonement there would be no salvation and no exaltation and no spiritual growth and no eternal life and no immortal bodies. Belief in the atonement of Jesus Christ makes all this possible.

2. Repentance

Before discussing this subject in detail, let's first define the word *repentance*. The LDS Bible Dictionary defines repentance as:

The Greek word of which this is the translation denotes a change of mind, i.e., a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world. Since we are born into conditions of mortality, repentance comes to mean a turning of the heart and will to God, and a renunciation of sin to which we are naturally inclined. Without this there can be no progress in the things of the soul's salvation, for all accountable persons are stained by sin, and must be cleansed in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. Repentance is not optional for salvation; it is a commandment of God.⁵⁵

Before going further into the subject, it is important to know what the definition of repentance is. For this purpose let's turn to the LDS scripture and find out what it really means:

Repentance is the process by which humans set aside or overcome sins by changing hearts, attitudes, and actions that are out of harmony with God's teaching, thereby conforming their lives more completely to his will. In the words of one latter-day prophet, repentance is "to change one's mind in regard to past or intended actions or conduct. (McKay, p. 14).⁵⁶

The following passage will elaborate further the doctrine of repentance:

In modern as in earlier times, the term “repentance” literally means a turning from sin and a reversing of one’s attitudes and behaviour. Its purposes are to develop the divine nature within all mortal souls by freeing them from wrong or harmful thoughts and actions and to assist them in becoming more Christ like by replacing the “natural man” (1 Cor. 2:14) with the “new man” in Christ (Eph. 4:20-24)⁵⁷

With the basic definition and understanding of repentance, now let’s delve in to the LDS understanding of the principal or the doctrine of repentance. When speaking to The Latter-day Saints about repentance, they say that since the fall of Adam, man needs repentance because he has been falling short and committing sins and doing unjust thing. The Latter-day Saints often quote the following verse that:

Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.⁵⁸

The Latter-day Saints say that the doctrine of repentance was taught to Adam since time immemorial and it was commanded to him and his progeny to teach people about this doctrine and that all must repent. The above mentioned verse also highlights the need, importance and rewards of repentance.

After understanding the basic concept of repentance, another question arises that how can one achieve forgiveness or what is

the Process? After a thorough reading on the subject of repentance from the LDS scriptures, the concept or belief or the process of repentance, as understood, could be described in the following steps:

- Recognition of sins
- Feeling sorrow for sins
- Forsaking sins
- Confessing sins
- Making restitution for sins
- Forgiving others
- Keeping the commandments of God

Now, let's look at each of these stages or steps in further detail.

Recognition of sins

As it can easily be understood from the title that it means that everyone must recognize their sins and it is the first step or stage of repentance. It is very important for everyone to recognize his/her shortcomings, sins, unjust, and unrighteous acts because if a person does not admit or recognize that he or she has wronged himself or herself then how can he or she repent. Therefore, recognition of the sins is the first step on the ladder of repentance.

Feeling sorrow for sins

Once a person has recognized their sins, one must feel sorrow for them. They must feel that they have done a dreadful, terrible act which should not be done in any circumstance. The LDS scripture says that: *I desire that ye should let these things trouble you no more, and only let your sins trouble you, with that trouble which shall bring you down unto repentance.*⁵⁹

In other words, this verse says that one must be troubled by the evil acts that he/she has committed and one should feel pity for his/her sins. Therefore, feeling sorrow for the sins is the second step on the ladder of repentance.

Forsaking sins

The next step on this ladder is to forsake, relinquish, and stop committing the sins. Meaning that if someone had lied in the past then after recognizing and feeling sorrow about this sin he/she shall not lie in the future. If someone had stolen in the past then after recognizing and feeling sorrow about this sin one shall not steal in the future. The LDS scripture says that it is by this action that one can know whether he/she repented or not. It says: *By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them.*⁶⁰ (Doctrine and Covenants 58:43)

Confessing sins

The fourth step on the ladder of repentance is to confess the sins with sincere heart. Confessing the sins in front of those against whom one had sinned. For instance, if a person has put an allegation upon somebody or attributed things that the other person had never done then the accuser must confess in front of the particular person. As far as those sins are concerned, which are committed against God then a person must confess them before God and seek forgiveness. The LDS scripture says that it is very important to confess the sins so that the sins may be forgiven. It says that: *...I, the Lord, forgive sins, and am merciful unto those who confess their sins with humble hearts,*⁶¹ (Doctrine and Covenants 61:2)

Making restitution for sins

The fifth step of repentance is restitution for the sins. For instance, if a person has stolen, then after recognition, feeling sorrow, forsaking and confessing, he/she must return the stolen thing to its owner. Same is the case with other sins. Let's take another example, if someone has defamed somebody's character

then one must restore that by apologizing and speaking good of him. This action will also prove that the repentant was sincere in repentance.

Forgiving Others

The LDS scripture says about forgiving others: *Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.*⁶² (Doctrine and Covenants 64:9)

The above reference clearly shows how important it is to forgive others. Thus, the fifth step on the ladder of repentance is that one must forgive others for their sins and harmful actions against one another.

Keeping the Commandments of God

The last step for repentance is keeping the commandments of God in letter and spirit. The LDS scripture gives glad tidings to the members of the church that: *Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;*⁶³ (Doctrine and Covenants 1:32)

According to the LDS church, keeping the commandment means keeping the gospels' principles and ordinances, keeping the commandments of "the restored gospels" and keeping the commandments of the LDS prophets. Furthermore, it also requires from the LDS members to keep the Sabbath and to give tithes and to obey the Word of Wisdom. After following the last step of the ladder of repentance, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are ready for baptism.

The Author's Experience

Before discussing baptism, let's pause here for a moment. After thoroughly reading and discussing above the doctrine of atonement and the doctrine of repentance, one question remains to be answered is, if everyone is accountable for his own sins and will be punished for it, (The Article of Faith: 2) then whose sins

has Jesus Christ atoned for? (Doctrine and Covenants, 76:40-42) Furthermore, after repentance, how does the atonement of Jesus Christ help the entire mankind? After exhausting the resources, the author went to see the bishop of the Brampton Stake, Bishop Solomon and put the question before him.

He answered first by quoting the following verse:

...I desire that ye should deny the justice of God no more. Do not endeavor to excuse yourself in the least point because of your sins, by denying the justice of God; but do you let the justice of God, and his mercy, and his long-suffering have full sway in your heart; and let it bring you down to the dust in humility.⁶⁴

Meaning that God's attribute of being Just and Merciful go hand in hand. He further elaborated by giving an example saying, think for a moment that Tom lent some money to Harry. The due dates came and went but Harry continued delaying the owed debt. Then, one day Tom got upset and brought the police with him and had Harry arrested. Harry repeatedly asked for forgiveness and mercy but Tom refused to forgive him and showed no mercy. Harry knew a wealthy man and asked him to show some mercy and requested him to pay the debt on his behalf. Then the wealthy man showed mercy on Harry and gave the debt on his behalf – showing mercy and justice at the same time. This is how atonement and repentance work together, Bishop Solomon said. The mercy is to forgive sins and justice is to atone for them. God cannot simply show mercy and forgive everyone and does not do justice by not giving punishment for their inequities. So, God will forgive the sins of the people by having his own "begotten son" atone for their sins. Hence, mercy and justice are both dealt with, at the same time.

3. *Baptism*

Faith in Jesus Christ and repentances are the doctrines or principles of the gospels but baptism is the first ordinance of the Gospels. These two principles prepare the members of the church to be baptised. Although, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints differ in some of the practises of baptism but the LDS church agrees with the other Churches on this aspect that everyone must be baptised to enter in the presence of God. The LDS scripture is overwhelmed with references from the New Testament regarding baptism. Let's look at two quotations from the New Testament which are often quoted by the LDS scriptures:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.⁶⁵
(*Matthew 28:19-20*)

Then, Peter teaches that: *...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*⁶⁶ (*Acts 2:38*)

The above references clearly depicts that baptism is necessary for the repentance as well as for receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. In reality, sins can only be forgiven after repentance and baptism. As a matter of fact, one cannot dwell in the presence of God without baptism.

Now, let's turn towards the LDS scriptures and find out what baptism is, when this ordinance was commanded, to whom it was commanded, how baptism is performed, who has the authority to perform this ordinance, why members should be baptised, its importance, who is eligible to be baptised and which laws must be followed after the baptism.

What is the definition of baptism? The LDS Bible dictionary defines baptism as:

From a Greek word meaning to dip or immerse. Baptism in water is the introductory ordinance of the gospel, and must be followed by baptism of the Spirit in order to be complete. As one of the ordinances of the gospel, it is associated with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, and the laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost... Baptism symbolizes death, burial, and resurrection, and can only be done by immersion.⁶⁷

According to the LDS scriptures, baptism gives a new life and a new beginning. It is also said that once a person receives baptism he is as if is reborn. The LDS scripture says that it also reminds them of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. The Encyclopedia of Mormonism says that: *...Burial in the water and arising out the water symbolize the candidate's faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as the future resurrection of all people...*⁶⁸

With the understanding of the basic definition of the word baptism let's delve upon this ordinance in detail.

When was this ordinance commanded and to whom it was commanded? According to the LDS scriptures the practise of baptism was started by Adam and Jews were also baptising their convert long before John the Baptist. The LDS scripture says that this is an everlasting covenant and was given to Adam as life began on this planet and will continue till the end of the time. The LDS scripture says that:

And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the

water, and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man. And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever;⁶⁹

Furthermore, the Book of Mormon (Mosiah chapter 18) talks about baptism being practised in Americas long before the advent of Jesus Christ and talks about a Nephites' prophet who baptised his people and taught them about this ordinance. The LDS church concludes from this that this ordinance is an ancient practice which was practiced by Adam and his descendants.

How the baptism is performed and who can perform this ordinance?

The LDS church believes that there is only one correct way of baptising and all other ways that are being used in other churches are wrong. The LDS Prophet Joseph Smith said that Jesus Christ revealed to him how to baptize and that is:

The person who is called of God and has authority from Jesus Christ to baptize, shall go down into the water with the person who has presented himself or herself for baptism, and shall say, calling him or her by name: Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Then shall he immerse him or her in the water, and come forth again out of the water.⁷⁰

As mentioned above that this ordinance can only be performed by an authority that is called of God and Jesus Christ. In other words, this ordinance can be performed by those priests who have the Aaronic Priesthood - a lower class of priesthood.

This priesthood refers to Aaron and his priesthood that was given to him in ancient times. The Doctrine and Covenants says that *"And the Lord confirmed priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations, which priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God."*⁷¹ (Doctrine and Covenants, 84:18)

Why is it necessary for a member to be baptised? The LDS members are required to believe in this ordinance because the fourth Article of Faith says that *"We believe that...baptism by immersion for the remission of sins..."*⁷² Wherefore, all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints must receive baptism. Moreover, all those who want to be the part or member of the LDS church must receive baptism; in other words, a person who is willing to join the LDS church cannot be a member of the Church unless or until he receives baptism. The LDS Prophet Joseph Smith taught that:

All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church.⁷³ (Doctrine and Covenants 20:37)

This way is being used to baptise the member of the LDS church around the world. The above mentioned quotation also highlights the fact that who is eligible to perform baptism. That is only that person who is called of God meaning that is authorized by the LDS church. None else can perform this ordinance.

How much importance does it have? The ordinance of baptism holds an extreme importance in The LDS church as it is

prerequisite for the next step of the Plan of Salvation. In other words, anybody who is not baptised cannot dwell in the kingdom of God. Just as Jesus Christ told Nicodemus that: *...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*⁷⁴ (John 3:5)

This is the glad tidings for those who are baptised and those are not baptised they are also warned. The Book of Mormon also records that: *And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned.*⁷⁵

Hence, baptism holds a great importance in the LDS church and it is very important for the members to receive baptism in order to inherit the kingdom of God and also to save themselves from being ruined. In short, baptism is necessary and important for three reasons. First, for the remission of the sins, second, one must be baptised before entering into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and third, it is prerequisite to enter in the celestial kingdom.

Who is eligible to be baptised? According to the LDS church the baptism can be performed once a person has reached the age of eight years. Kids and mentally sick are not baptised in the LDS church because they do not have the ability to sin hence they will not be accountable. The Book of Mormon teaches that:

...Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them;... And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest the word of God unto me; wherefore, my beloved son, I know that it is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children.⁷⁶

The LDS differ in this aspect with some of the other churches.

What laws must be followed after the baptism? Baptism brings more responsibilities and more work for the member of the LDS church. There are certain commandments that he or she needs to fulfill at any given time and it is obligatory upon those members who are willing to be baptised to obey the following commandments:

Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn;
yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort,
and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all
things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until
death,... ye will serve him and keep his
commandments,...⁷⁷

After receiving the baptism, these commandments must be observed in letter and spirit till the demise, only then a member is considered to be a truly baptised one.

4. Gift of the Holy Ghost

The fourth step of the plan of salvation is the gift of the Holy Ghost. Let's dig in to this in detail what is gift of the Holy Ghost, why is it important to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, how the gift of the Holy Ghost is conferred upon and who has the authority to confer this.

What is the gift of the Holy Ghost? The Encyclopedia of Mormonism defines this as: *The gift of the Holy Ghost is the right or privilege of receiving divine manifestations, spiritual gifts, and direction from the Holy Ghost.*⁷⁸

That is, once a person has faith in Jesus Christ, and has repented and has been baptised then he may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost is considered to be the right of a member, once he has followed the first three steps of the plan of salvation and usually it is conferred upon immediately

after receiving baptism. Once the gift of the Holy Ghost is conferred, the member of the LDS church becomes eligible to receive revelation, truth and guidance.

Why is it important to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?

The gift of the Holy Ghost is a very important step in the plan of salvation and it is necessary to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost as it is prerequisite to enter in the celestial kingdom. The Book of Mormon teaches that:

For, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit. And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters; And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.⁷⁹

Therefore, it is important to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost because it helps the members of the LDS church to stay on the right path and so that the guidance of the Holy Ghost always remains with them. More importantly, the Mormons must be reborn with the gift of the Holy Ghost so that they may dwell in the presence of God.

How is the gift of the Holy Ghost conferred and who has the authority to confer it? The New Testament teaches that:

Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.⁸⁰ (*Acts 8:17-19*)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day saints also follow this as it has been taught in the New Testament. However, this authority can only be granted by the church and this type of priesthood is known as the Melchizedek priesthood. It is the highest priesthood. Once a person has received the gift of the Holy Ghost then he may also grant or confer the gift of the Holy Ghost on another member of the church.

5. Enduring to the End

This is the final step for the plan of salvation. It means that the members of the LDS church who have successfully finished the first four steps must obey and follow the laws and ordinances of the Gospels. This step requires from the LDS members to tread on the straight path to the end (meaning till their demise) and leads them into the presence of God or the celestial kingdom. The LDS scripture encourages all the members to endure to the end in the following words: *And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God.*⁸¹ (Doctrine and Covenants 14:7)

Thus, it is obligatory to follow this step in order to receive “the greatest gift of God”. This is the plan of salvation and whoso obey this will dwell in the presence of God.

Tithing

The law of tithing is prescribed to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and it is ancient in its nature. Ancient Biblical prophets were commanded by God to give tithes that is they and their followers were ordained to spend ten percent of what they would earn. Abraham and his son, Jacob, also practised this sacred law and it is said in the Book of Genesis that: *And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*⁸² (Genesis 28:20)

The law of tithing was restored in the LDS church when Joseph Smith received a revelation from God that:

And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people. And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.⁸³ (*Doctrine and Covenants 119:3-4*)

Thus, it is incumbent upon every Latter-day Saint to pay tithing. Although this law was restored in July, 1838, it was not followed on regular basis by all the members. Later, in 1881, the LDS Prophet Wilford Woodruff made this law a requirement for those who wish to receive ordinances in the temples. He also ordered all the Bishops and Presidents of the Stakes not to make recommendations for those who fail to follow this law.

Furthermore, it was also revealed to the LDS prophet Joseph Smith that:

Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass that all those who gather unto the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus properties, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you.⁸⁴ (*Doctrine and Covenants 119:5*)

Hence, the Latter-day Saints must pay their tithing in order to dwell in the city of Zion. In addition to that, tithing is also a requirement for the celestial kingdom. All those who want to dwell in celestial kingdom must pay their tithing willingly and with honesty. This also becomes a test for the Latter-day Saints whether they are honest and loyal to the church in giving their tithing. For this purpose, all the Latter-day Saints are encouraged to meet their bishops for the tithing settlements. That is, at the end of each year they meet with their bishop in private and discuss whether they have been regular in their tithing throughout the whole year.

According to the LDS scripture it is important to give tithing because it saves people from the fire and those who do not follow the law of tithing they will be burnt in the fire at the second advent of Jesus Christ. The Doctrine and Covenants says that:

Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming.⁸⁵ (*Doctrine and Covenants 64:23*)

Tithing is collected by the bishop of the stake and then he sends it to the head quarters. The Latter-day Saint members do not have the right to suggest where their tithing should be spent or what should be done with it. The LDS church has full rights and authorizations to spend the money or tithing wherever the church feels it is necessary. Once the tithing is received at the headquarters, the first presidency and the quorum for the twelve convene and decide where the money should be spent.

Usually, the money or the tithing is spent to feed the poor and hungry, to spread the gospels to all the nations, to give some provision to those who are in service of the church, to build the temples, chapels, meeting houses, schools, to run the missionary programs, to print and distribute literature and to provide funds to the stakes and wards. The LDS scripture says that the money should be spent; *“For the building of mine house, and for the laying of the foundation of Zion and for the priesthood, and for the debts of the Presidency of my Church.”*⁸⁶ (*Doctrine and Covenants, 119:2*)

Word of Wisdom

Word of Wisdom is often referred to as the LDS Dietary law which was revealed to Joseph Smith on 27th February, 1833. It is called the word of wisdom because the revelation concerning the dietary law starts with “A word of wisdom”. In the LDS scriptures wherever word of wisdom is mentioned, it always

refers to the LDS dietary law. The entire *Word of Wisdom* is mentioned in section 89 of Doctrine and Covenants.

The *word of wisdom* defines what is lawful and what is unlawful to eat or drink for a latter-day saint. The Doctrine and Covenants states that the unlawful things are:

That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him. And, behold, this should be wine, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make. And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies. And again, tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill. And again, hot drinks are not for the body or belly.⁸⁷ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 89:5-9)

From the above reference, three categories can be made which are unlawful to consume in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and these are:

Tobacco

Strong Drinks

Hot Drinks

Strong Drinks refer to all kind alcoholic beverages and Hot Drinks refer to coffee and tea. Although, there is no official verdict from the consumption of the cold drinks which have caffeine such as cola drinks but the Latter-day Saints are still asked and encouraged not to consume such drinks. Furthermore, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints forbids the usage of such things which could be harmful, pernicious and noxious to the

health such as cocaine, marijuana, and over usage of prescribed drugs.

Regarding lawful things the Doctrine and Covenants states that:

And again, verily I say unto you, all wholesome herbs God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man— every herb in the season thereof, and every fruit in the season thereof; all these to be used with prudence and thanksgiving. Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly;⁸⁸ (*Doctrine and Covenants 89:10-12*)

It further states that: *All grain is ordained for the use of man and of beasts, to be the staff of life, not only for man but for the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, and all wild animals that run or creep on the earth;*⁸⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants 89:14*)

All the above mentioned things are lawful, however, the LDS scriptures also teach that consumption of these things should be limited in times of hunger and famine.

Although, it was required from all the Latter-day Saints to follow the *Word of Wisdom* but the early History shows that it was not followed very carefully after it was revealed to Joseph Smith. This carelessness continued until 1930 when it was made a part of requirements for the temple recommendations. Although, Joseph Smith made it clear when it was asked from him that: *Whether disobedience to the word of wisdom was a transgression sufficient to deprive an official member from holding office in the Church, after having it sufficiently taught him?*⁹⁰

Joseph Smith replied that: *No official member in this Church is worthy to hold an office after having the word of wisdom properly taught him; and he, the official member, neglecting to comply with and obey it.*⁹¹

Therefore, since 1930 it has been made one of the requirements for the temple recommendations and the church office holders.

The LDS church encourages its members to be obedient to the commandment of the Word of Wisdom and preaches them about its temporal and spiritual benefits. The Doctrine and Covenants states the temporal and spiritual benefits that:

And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones; and shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; and shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen.⁹² (*Doctrine and Covenants* 89:18-21)

The temporal benefits refer to better health and better way of living while the spiritual benefits refer to safety from the destruction of the destroying angel – in other words, to be in the presence of God. Therefore, all the members must follow the Word of Wisdom to get these benefits and to inherit the celestial kingdom.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Just like the other sects of Christianity, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Latter-day Saints often quote a passage from the New Testament which records the prophecy of Jesus' Second Advent. It is said that when Jesus was ascending to the heaven as his disciples gazed at his ascension then two angels appeared to

them and prophesied that: *...Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*⁹³ (Acts 1:11)

The above mentioned passage also highlights the fact that the same Jesus Christ will return in latter days and his second coming is known as *the great and dreadful day of the Lord*. The LDS scripture says that predicted signs must be fulfilled before the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. It is said that when Jesus Christ will manifest himself on the earth then there will be peace everywhere for one thousand years and this period is known as *The Millennium*.

Now, let's look into this in further detail to see what are the signs of the second coming of Jesus Christ? There are many signs that must be fulfilled before the Second Advent and the LDS scripture says that: *For the hour is nigh, and that which was spoken by mine apostles must be fulfilled; for as they spoke so shall it come to pass;*⁹⁴ (Doctrine and Covenants 29:10)

As it is mentioned that there are many signs of the second coming of Jesus Christ and Bruce R. McConkie (an eminent Mormon writer) writes fifteen signs before the advent of Jesus Christ in his encyclopaedic book, *Mormon Doctrine*. All the signs cannot be presented here however; some signs which are famous and relevant to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are presented here.

An Era of Apostasy

Prior to the second advent of the Jesus Christ there will be apostasy that will encompass the entire earth. People will go astray and they will be devoid of righteousness. The LDS scripture often quotes Paul's statement that apostasy will precede the second coming of Jesus Christ that: *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away*

*first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*⁹⁵ (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

It is also said that during the apostasy there will be false prophets and false Christs leading people astray and people will follow them. Chapter twenty four of Mathew in New Testament, talks about many signs of the Second coming of Jesus Christ and one of the signs is the coming of false prophets and false Christs: *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*⁹⁶ (Matthew 24:24)

Hence, people will be led astray by these false prophets who will perform miracles and will prophesy and this will be one of the signs of his second coming.

Dreadful Days

Another sign of his second coming is that there will be horrible and frightful days and there will be famines, wars, calamities, and earthquakes. Ancient prophets have predicted that troubled times will precede his second coming. Jesus himself had predicted that: *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.*⁹⁷ (Matthew 24:7)

Bruce R. McConkie has summarized in his book *Mormon Doctrine* all these calamities which were predicted in the Holy Bible by the ancient prophets, and he writes that:

Preceding our Lord's return, the prophetic word tells of plagues, pestilence, famine, and disease such as the world has never before seen; of scourges, tribulation, calamities, disasters without parallel; of strife, wars, rumours of wars, blood, carnage, and desolation which overshadow anything of past ages; of the elements being in commotion with resultant floods,

storm, fires, whirlwinds, earthquakes-all of a proportion and intensity unknown to men of former days; of evil, iniquity, wickedness, turmoil, rapine, murder, crime, and commotion among men almost beyond comprehension.⁹⁸

These things must come to past before the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The Restoration of the Gospels

In the midst of all this, an era of restoration will start and according to the LDS scripture that God will choose people to carry out this task. During this time, not only the people will be prepared for the second coming of Jesus Christ but also the gospels will be restored. As John saw in his vision that: *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*⁹⁹ (Revelation 14:6)

Therefore, the Gospels must be restored and preached to all the nations of the world prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon is one of the signs of the second coming of Jesus Christ. The LDS church says that this was prophesized by the ancient Biblical prophets namely Isaiah and Ezekiel. Prophet Isaiah prophesized that:

And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.¹⁰⁰ (Isaiah 29:4)

According to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints it refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon as the angel

Moroni gave the Book of Mormon out from the ground to the LDS Prophet Joseph Smith. Similarly, Prophet Ezekiel had also prophesized that:

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.¹⁰¹ (*Ezekiel 37:15-17*)

Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.¹⁰² (*Ezekiel 37:19*)

According to the LDS church, the above mentioned verses are also a prophecy of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the LDS church explains that the *stick of Judah* means the Bible and the *stick of Ephraim* means the Book of Mormon. The LDS church further explains that the genealogy found in the Book of Mormon traces them back to the descendents of Ephraim. Joining the Bible and the Book of Mormon together becomes one book which contains God's dealings with the twelve tribes of Israel. Hence, the above mentioned reference also proves the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This is also a sign of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel preached to all the nations

Another sign of his coming is that the gospel shall be preached to all the nations and it was prophesized in the New Testament

that: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*¹⁰³ (Matthew 24:24)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been very active in preaching the gospels to all the nations and in their respective languages. The LDS prophet Joseph Smith was also revealed that:

For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fullness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁴ (*Doctrine and Covenants 90:11*)

The LDS church has done a great amount of work in achieving this task. The LDS missionaries have been preaching the gospel vigorously and enthusiastically in different countries of the world and the LDS church has translated the Book of Mormon in seventy four different languages of the world. Therefore, the LDS church has been working extremely hard to fulfill this sign before the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Building of the New Jerusalem

The Book of Mormon also teaches one more sign which must come to pass prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ that is building of the New Jerusalem. It says that:

And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.¹⁰⁵

The LDS church believes that the New Jerusalem will be built in America because God had revealed it to the LDS Prophet Joseph Smith that;

Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased. Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city of New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation.¹⁰⁶
(*Doctrine and Covenants*, 84:3-4)

Therefore, it was for this purpose Joseph Smith had struggled all his life to build the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri and ordered all his followers to gather in Missouri but was unsuccessful in building the city. In return, Joseph Smith and his followers received severe opposition and persecution. The city was never built and then Joseph Smith made the head quarter of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint in Nauvoo, Illinois. Then, after his murder, Brigham Young led the Latter-day Saints to Salt Lake City, Utah and since then it remains the Church's head quarters. However, the LDS church continues to believe that the New Jerusalem will be built sometime in the future in Jackson County, Missouri and all the Latter-day Saints will gather there.

Armageddon

Another sign of the second coming of Jesus Christ is Armageddon. It will be the greatest war that shall ever be fought and it will be good against evil and all nations will gather in Megiddo and shall fight. There are many prophecies in the Holy Bible that warn against the greatest war i.e.

For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.¹⁰⁷ (*Revelation 16:14, 16*)

The Second Coming

When all the above mentioned things will come to pass then Jesus Christ will appear on the Mount of Olives and shall fight the battle and shall take his revenge. It was revealed to the LDS prophet Joseph Smith that at the second coming of Jesus Christ, he will say that:

And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment; for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart.¹⁰⁸ (*Doctrine and Covenants 133:51*)

Therefore, Jesus will come back and participate in the battle and will take his revenge and kill all the evil souls. This second coming is also known as *the great and dreadful day of the Lord*.

After having the understanding of the second coming of Jesus Christ, one question that may arise in reader's mind is that what will Jesus Christ do in his Second Advent? When this question is posed to the Latter-day Saints, they reply that Jesus Christ will:

- **Cleanse the Earth:** By destroying all the wicked, evil, and corrupt things with fire.
- **Judge the people:** He will judge all the nations and divide the righteous from the evil.
- **Lead in the Millennium:** The Millennium is the thousand years when Jesus will rule on the earth and it

will start from his second coming and these years will be of peace, harmony, love, and joy.

- **Complete the Resurrection:** People will resurrect in his second coming and will meet with Jesus and then they will inherit the celestial kingdom, thus completing their resurrection.
- **Take his place as King of heaven and earth:** He will rule the earth and will be greeted as *Lord of Lords and King of Kings* and he will be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God* and *the Prince of Peace* as prophesized.

Therefore, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ as it holds great importance in their faith to receive salvation, exaltation, and also to receive the celestial glory.

Life after Death

According to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints spirits exist since pre-existence and then God sent them here on the earth with mortal bodies. Mortal body lives its life on the earth and at death the spirit leaves the body. Now let's delve into where does the spirit go, and what happens to it, when it leaves the mortal body.

The Spirit World

After the death, the spirit leaves the dead body immediately and goes to a different world. The Latter-day Saints often refer to this new world as the spirit world. In the spirit world, all the spirits, whether they are righteous or evil, will wait till the resurrection. At the time of resurrection, the same bodies will be granted to these spirits so that they may receive the degree of glory which they have prepared for. The Book of Mormon explains what happens to the spirit once it leaves the mortal body after death in the following words:

... the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life. And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow. And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of the wicked, yea, who are evil—for behold, they have no part nor portion of the Spirit of the Lord; for behold, they chose evil works rather than good; therefore the spirit of the devil did enter into them, and take possession of their house—and these shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and this because of their own iniquity, being led captive by the will of the devil. Now this is the state of the souls of the wicked, yea, in darkness, and a state of awful, fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God upon them; thus they remain in this state, as well as the righteous in paradise, until the time of their resurrection.¹⁰⁹

Therefore, immediately after death spirits are judged and are sent to a spirit world. From the above reference it is evident that this spirit world is further divided into two distinct spheres which are:

- Paradise
- Hell

Depending upon the very nature of the spirit, it will be judged whether a spirit shall dwell in the Paradise or in the Hell. Let's explore what the LDS scripture teaches about the Paradise and the Hell.

Paradise

Paradise is also known as heaven. However, there is another term which is often used in the LDS scriptures which is *spirit prison*. Although, the term spirit prison is often referred to as hell, it is also used in its broader meanings for the heaven or paradise. The LDS prophet Joseph Smith taught that: “...*Paradise, spirits in prison, are all one: it is a world of spirits. The righteous and the wicked all go to the same world of spirits until the resurrection.*”¹¹⁰ No matter, how seldom this term is used for heaven or paradise, the LDS prophet used it for both, the heaven and the hell. Not only will heaven and hell be at same place, their inmates will also be intermingling with one another. Furthermore, the LDS scripture teaches that the righteous spirits will be working and preaching the gospels. According to a vision of Joseph Fielding Smith, an LDS prophet, Jesus Christ went to the spirit world and:

...From among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.¹¹¹ (*Doctrine and Covenants 138:30*)

And how will this be conducted? All the righteous spirits will preach the gospels and especially those who were apostles, presidents, bishops and elders. They will also teach the evil spirits to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith once referred to this as: “...*The spirits of the just are exalted to a greater and more glorious work; hence they are blessed in their departure to the world of spirits.*”¹¹² Therefore, the righteous spirits will continue to carry out this “greater and glorious work” of preaching until they are resurrected and their spirits are reunited with their bodies.

Thus, paradise or heaven is an abode where the righteous spirits will abide until their resurrection. These spirits will reside

there in the state of peace, happiness, and joy and they shall not be harmed.

Hell

Second sphere of the spirit world is Hell. This is also known as spirit prison and the *outer darkness*. This will be the abode and waiting sphere for all the wicked and evil spirits in which they will remain till their resurrection. These evil spirits will suffer from the punishment and from the torment of the hell. For those who have never heard of the gospel, they will be preached and will be given the agency (free choice) and will be asked to repent. If they repent and believe in the gospel and Jesus Christ, only then will they be allowed to enter into the paradise. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also believes the fact that there will be an end to hell and to prove this the LDS church presents a verse from the New Testament that: *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*¹¹³ (Revelation 20:13)

Therefore, there will come a time when every spirit will be resurrected and united with its body and at that particular time the spirit world will be uninhabited. After this, the spirits will be ready for the last judgement to receive degrees of glory.

The Last Judgement

After spending the waiting time in the spirit world, the spirits will be resurrected and will be reunited with their physical bodies. The spirits of all men will then be judged. The LDS church believes that this judgement will be conducted by Jesus Christ and by those who will be appointed by Jesus Christ. The gospel of John teaches that: *"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."*¹¹⁴ Peter also teaches that Jesus was *"ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."*¹¹⁵ As mentioned earlier, Jesus Christ will be assisted by those who are appointed by him. But who will those people be? The gospels teach that the

twelve apostles who were with him during his ministry will help him. Jesus Christ himself prophesized that:

Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.¹¹⁶ (*Matthew 19:28*)

Furthermore, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also believes that the first presidency and the twelve apostles of their church will also assist Jesus Christ in the last judgement.

The judgement will be made with the help of a book, known as the book of life. It will have all the record of the individual including everything that he or she had done during his or her mortal life. All men will be judged according to their deeds. The LDS prophet Joseph Smith taught that: *For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his own works, his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared.*¹¹⁷ (*Doctrine and Covenants 76:111*)

This is the reason why the LDS church puts a lot of emphasis on spending life according to the gospel principles and it continues to exhort and encourage its members to live righteous lives.

Kingdom of Glories

After the judgement, everyone will be assigned to one of the four destinations and those are:

- Celestial Kingdom
- Terrestrial Kingdom
- Telestial Kingdom
- Outer Darkness

This doctrine was first taught by Paul and now it has further developed in the teaching of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is being preached all over the world. Paul teaches in the first Corinthians that:

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.¹¹⁸ (*1 Corinthians 15:40-41*)

The LDS prophet Joseph Smith further developed the idea and made it into one of most important beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Now, let's learn what the LDS prophet taught about these kingdoms and outer darkness and who will go where and what will happen in each sphere.

Celestial Kingdom

According to the LDS scripture, this is the highest kingdom of glory where God dwells. It is often referred to as the glory of the sun. Therefore, whoever will dwell here will witness the glory of God. The LDS prophet Joseph Smith has claimed that he was shown the celestial kingdom in a profound vision. He describes the celestial kingdom as:

The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell. I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire; also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son. I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold.¹¹⁹

Joseph Smith also taught that the celestial kingdom is further divided into three more degrees. The highest degree from among these degrees can only be achieved by those members of the LDS church who follow the celestial law, the law of the gospels, and the plan of salvation. The celestial marriage is the new and everlasting ordinance which is a key to the inheritance of the kingdom of God. The celestial marriages must be performed in the LDS temple not anywhere else. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can only enter or dwell in the celestial kingdom provided they have followed the celestial law in their mortal lives. They will be granted the celestial bodies and they will be united with their families and will dwell there forever.

Terrestrial Kingdom

The second glory is known as the terrestrial kingdom and dwellers of this kingdom will not be able to see the glory of God but will be able to witness the glory of Jesus Christ. This glory is often referred to as the glory of the moon. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that dwellers of this kingdom will be those who:

...are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it. These are they who are honourable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men. These are they who receive of his glory, but not of his fullness. These are they who receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fullness of the Father. Wherefore, they are bodies terrestrial, and not bodies celestial, and differ in glory as the moon differs from the sun. These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore,

they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.¹²⁰ (*Doctrine and Covenants 76:73-79*)

To summarize, four kinds of people who had followed the terrestrial law will go into this kingdom:

- Those who die without a law and do not accept the gospel in the spirit world.
- Those who do not accept the gospel in their mortal lives but accept it in the spirit world
- Those who were honourable in their mortal lives but could not accept the gospel because they were blinded by the *craftiness of men*.
- Those who were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but were not righteous.

All the above mentioned people will dwell in this kingdom and will be granted terrestrial bodies which will be different than the celestial bodies.

Telestial Kingdom

This is third and the lowest kingdom and often referred to as the glory of the stars. The LDS scripture teaches that this kingdom will be filled with uncountable people who:

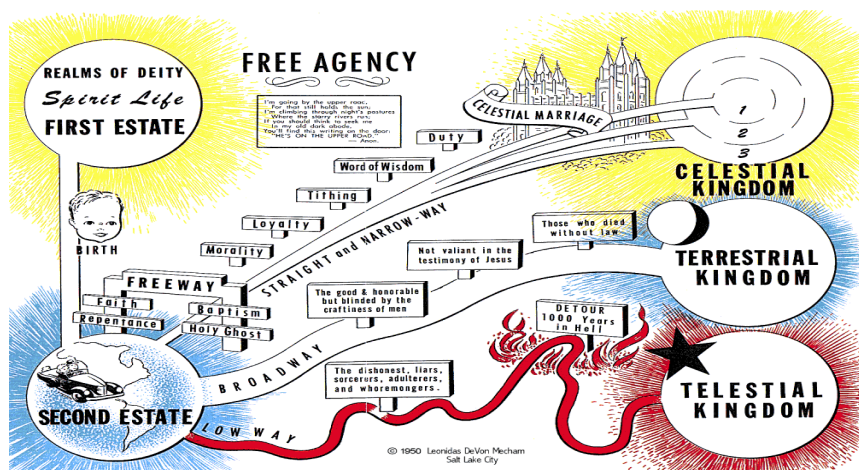
...received not the gospel of Christ, neither the testimony of Jesus. These are they who deny not the Holy Spirit. These are they who are thrust down to hell.¹²¹ (*Doctrine and Covenants 76:82-84*)

These are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie. These are they who suffer the wrath of God on earth. These are they who suffer the

vengeance of eternal fire.¹²² (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:103-105)

Dwellers of this kingdom will neither see the glory of God nor of Jesus Christ but they will receive the glory of the Holy Ghost. They will also be the servant of God and Jesus Christ yet will not be allowed to see their glory.

The following official visual of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints describes the three kingdoms of Glory.



Outer Darkness

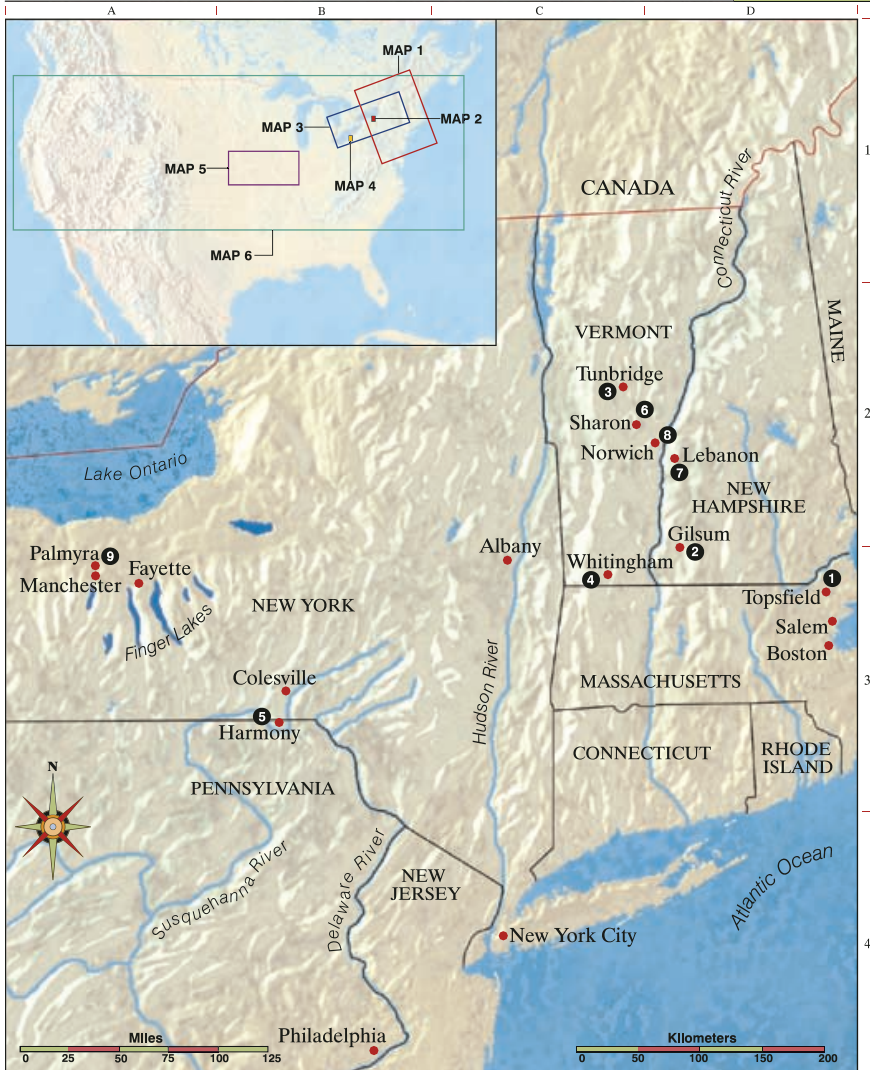
Outer darkness, in other words, the eternal hell is prepared for

those who reject the Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ, and God. According to the LDS scripture these people will not be forgiven and they will be accompanied with Satan. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that:

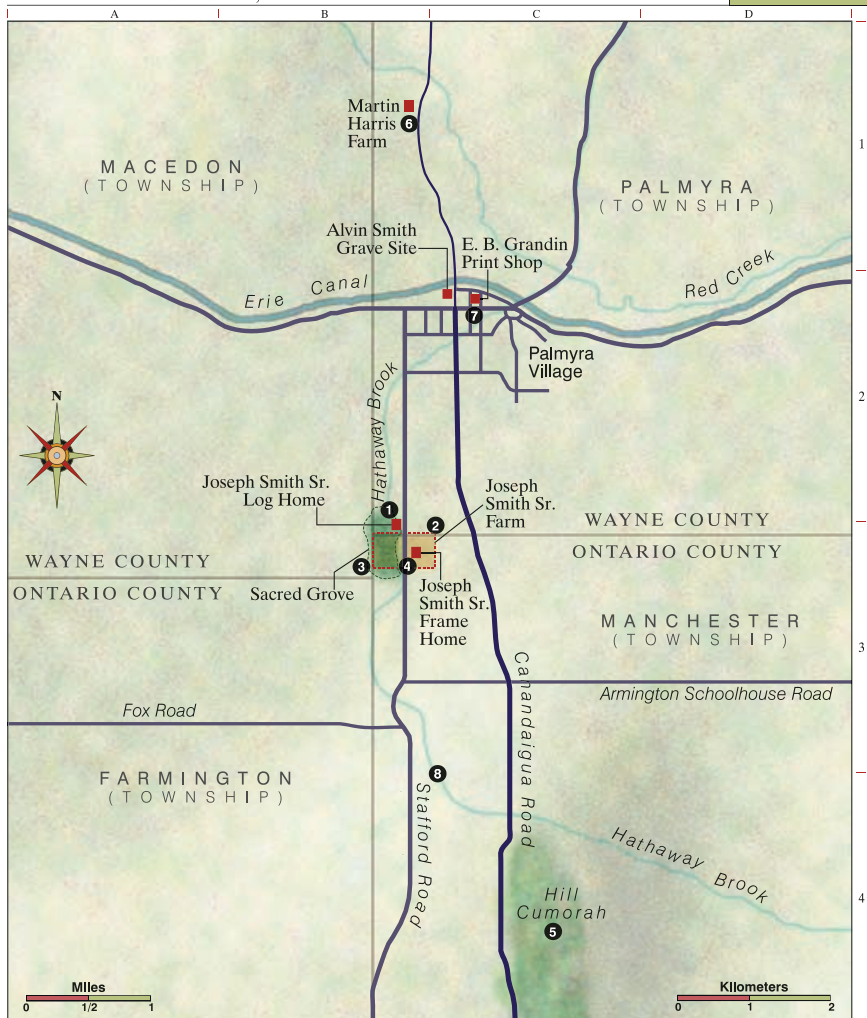
For they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity; Concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come— Having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and

having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame. These are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels.¹²³ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:33-36)

Therefore, outer darkness is the eternal hell where people will be made to suffer and tormented because of their inequities with Satan.



1. Topsfield The birthplace of Joseph Smith Sr., born 12 July 1771.
2. Gilsam Lucy Mack was born here, 8 July 1775.
3. Tunbridge Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack married here, 24 January 1796.
4. Whitingham The birthplace of Brigham Young, born 1 June 1801.
5. Harmony Emma Hale was born in Harmony Township, 10 July 1804.
6. Sharon Joseph Smith Jr. was born here, 23 December 1805 (see JS—H 1:3).
7. Lebanon The Smith family lived in Lebanon Township from 1811 to 1813, during which time Joseph Smith Jr. had a series of leg operations.
8. Norwich The Smith family lived here from 1814 to 1816 before moving to Palmyra.
9. Palmyra The Smith family moved here in 1816 (see JS—H 1:3).



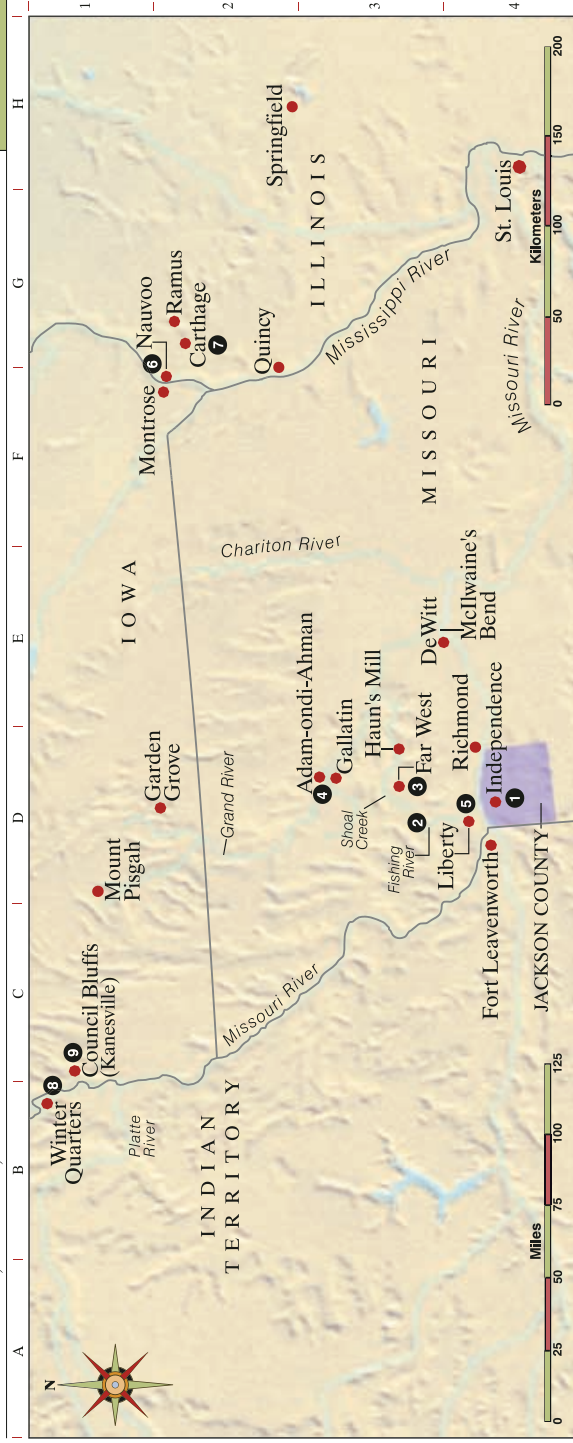
1. Joseph Smith Sr. Log Home The angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith in an upper room of this home on 21–22 September 1823 (see JS—H 1:29–47).
2. Joseph Smith Sr. Farm This 100-acre farm was developed by the Smith family from 1820 to 1829.
3. Sacred Grove Joseph Smith Jr.'s First Vision occurred in this woodland in the early spring of 1820 (see JS—H 1:11–20).
4. Joseph Smith Sr. Frame Home This home was begun in 1822 by Alvin Smith and occupied by the Smith family from 1825 to 1829.
5. Hill Cumorah Here the angel Moroni gave the Prophet Joseph Smith the gold plates on 22 September 1827 (see JS—H 1:50–54, 59).
6. Martin Harris Farm This farm was mortgaged and part of its acreage sold to pay for the printing of the Book of Mormon.
7. E. B. Grandin Print Shop 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon were printed here 1829–30.
8. Hathaway Brook In this brook some early Church baptisms were performed.



1. South Bainbridge Joseph Smith Jr. and Emma Hale were married here on 18 January 1827 (see JS—H 1:57).
2. Colesville The first branch of the Church was organized at the Joseph Knight Sr. home, in Colesville Township, in 1830.
3. Joseph Smith Jr. Home in Harmony Most of the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed here. On the banks of the Susquehanna River the priesthood was restored in 1829 (see D&C 13:128; 20: JS—H 1:71–72).
4. Fayette The Three Witnesses saw the gold plates and the angel Moroni (D&C 17). The Book of Mormon translation was completed here in June 1829. The Church was organized here on 6 April 1830 (see D&C 20: 21).
5. Mendon Early home of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball.
6. Kirtland Missionaries who had been sent to the Lamanites stopped here in 1830 and baptized Sidney Rigdon and others in the Kirtland area. It was the headquarters of the Church from 1831 to 1838. The first temple of this dispensation was built in Kirtland and was dedicated 27 March 1836 (see D&C 109).
7. Erie Canal The three branches of the Church in New York emigrated via the Erie Canal and Lake Erie to Kirtland, Ohio, in April and May 1831.
8. Hiram Joseph and Emma lived here from September 1831 to September 1832. Joseph and Sidney Rigdon worked on the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST). Revelations received here: D&C 1:65; 67; 68; 69; 71; 73; 74; 76; 77; 79; 80; 81; 99; 133.
9. Amherst Joseph Smith was sustained as President of the High Priesthood on 25 January 1832 (see HC 1:243; D&C 75).
10. Toronto Home of John Taylor, third President of the Church, and Mary Fielding Smith, wife of Hyrum Smith.

THE MISSOURI, ILLINOIS, AND IOWA AREA OF THE USA

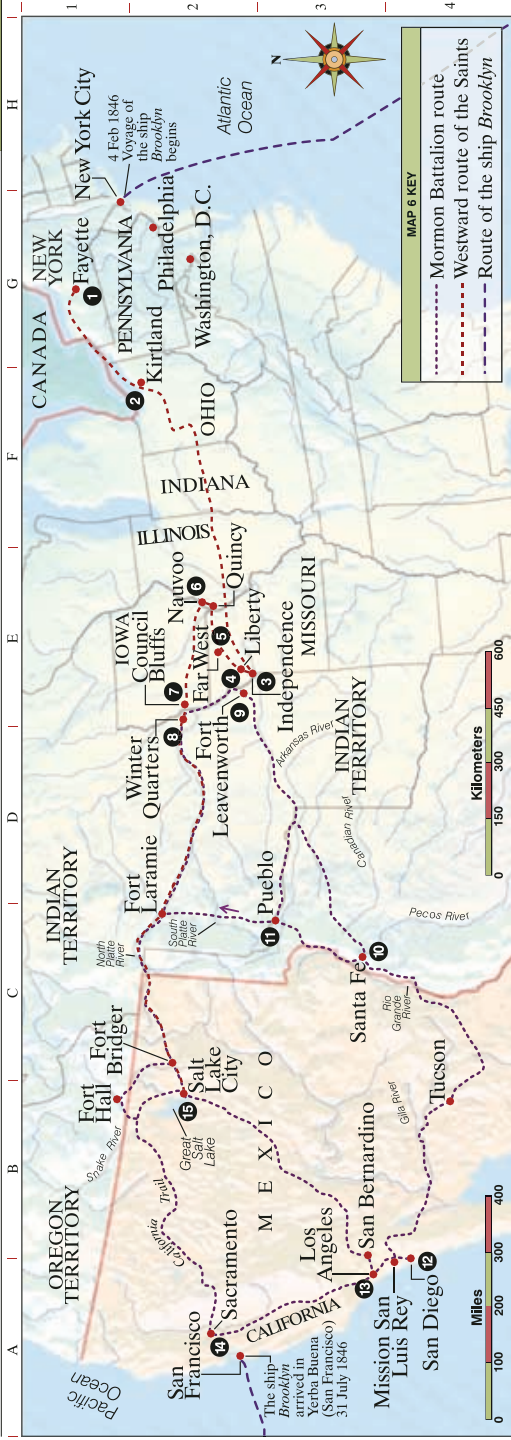
MAP 4



1. Independence Identified as the center place of Zion (see D&C 57:3). A temple site was dedicated on 3 August 1831. The Saints were driven from here in 1833.
2. Fishing River Joseph Smith and Zion's Camp traveled from Kirtland, Ohio, to Missouri in 1834 to restore the Jackson County Saints to their land. D&C 105 was revealed on the banks of this river.
3. Far West This was the largest Mormon settlement in Missouri. A site for a temple was dedicated at this location (see D&C 115). On 8 July 1838, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles received a call from the Lord to serve missions in the British Isles (see D&C 118).
4. Adam-ondi-Ahman The Lord identified this place in upper Missouri as the site where a future great gathering will take place when Jesus Christ comes to meet with Adam and his righteous posterity (see D&C 78:15; 107:53–57; 116).
5. Liberty Jail Joseph Smith and others were falsely imprisoned here from December 1838 to April 1839. In the midst of troubled times for the Church, Joseph called on the Lord for direction and received D&C 121–23.
6. Nauvoo Located on the Mississippi River, this area was the gathering place for the Saints from 1839 through 1846. Here a temple was built, and ordinances such as baptism for the dead, the endowment, and the sealing of families began. Here the Relief Society was organized in 1842. Revelations received include D&C 124–29.
7. Carthage Here the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred on 27 June 1844 (see D&C 135).
8. Winter Quarters The headquarters settlement for the Saints (1846–48) en route to the Salt Lake Valley. The Camp of Israel was organized for the westward journey (see D&C 136).
9. Council Bluffs (Kanesville) The First Presidency was sustained here on 27 December 1847, with Brigham Young as President.

THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT OF THE CHURCH

MAP 5



1. Fayette The Prophet Joseph Smith left Fayette for Kirtland, Ohio, in January 1831. The three New York branches followed in April and May 1831 under the Lord's command to gather (see D&C 37: 38).
2. Kirtland The headquarters of the Church from 1 February 1831 to 12 January 1838, when the Prophet moved to Far West, Missouri.
3. Independence The Lord identified Independence (in Jackson County, Missouri) as the center place of Zion in July 1831 (see D&C 57:3). Mobs forced the Saints out of Jackson County in November 1833.
4. Liberty The Saints from Jackson County gathered in Clay County from 1833 to 1836, when they were again required to leave. The Prophet Joseph Smith and others were imprisoned here.
5. Far West A refuge was established here for the Saints 1836–38. It was the headquarters of the Church in 1838. In 1838–39 the Saints were forced to flee to Illinois.
6. Nauvoo The headquarters of the Church 1839–46. After the martyrdom of the Prophet and his brother Hyrum, the Saints moved west.
7. Council Bluffs The pioneers arrived here June 1846. Members of the Mormon Battalion departed on 21 July 1846 under James Allen's leadership.
8. Winter Quarters Headquarters of the Church 1846–48. The vanguard company under the direction of President Brigham Young departed for the West April 1847.
9. Fort Leavenworth The Mormon Battalion was outfitted here before starting the march west in August 1846.
10. Santa Fe Philip Cooke commanded the Mormon Battalion as it marched from here 19 October 1846.
11. Pueblo Three sick detachments were ordered to Pueblo to recuperate, where they spent the winter of 1846–47 with Saints from Mississippi. These parties entered the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847.
12. San Diego The Mormon Battalion completed its 2,000-mile march here on 29 January 1847.
13. Los Angeles The Mormon Battalion was discharged here 16 July 1847.
14. Sacramento Some discharged battalion members worked here and at Sutter's Mill farther east on the American River, where they helped discover gold.
15. Salt Lake City Brigham Young arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on 24 July

PART II
CRITICAL STUDY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS
CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

CHAPTER 4

JOSEPH SMITH

“But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands and falls with their prophet Joseph Smith. This is what the LDS missionaries teach whilst preaching and encouraging people to pray about Joseph Smith's claim. They go on further to state that God will answer such supplications and often quote the following verses:

Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me. But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.¹²⁴ (*Doctrine and Covenants 9:7-8*)

Therefore, the LDS Church teachers and preachers set this criterion for the truthfulness of Joseph Smith, i.e., burning of one's bosom will tell whether Joseph Smith was a true prophet or not. Is this the criterion presented in the revealed books, i.e., the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an? Is this the criterion upon which all the prophets were judged upon? The prophethood of Joseph Smith will be judged according to the previous revealed books, not according to what he has concocted. For this inquisition, let's first look at what criteria is presented by the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an pertaining to true and false prophets.

The First Criterion

The first criterion is presented by both the Holy Bible as well as the Holy Qur'an. The Gospel of John records: *Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*¹²⁵ (John 5:46)

The same criterion has also been presented in the most complete, perfect, and unchanged book that is the Holy Qur'an, which was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Qur'anic perspective of a true prophet is also necessary because the readership will also be Muslims so that they may weigh the arguments based on their own book. Furthermore, one might be wondering why the author is judging the prophethood of Joseph Smith on the basis of the Holy Qur'an while The Latter-day Saints do not believe in the Holy Qur'an nor in the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The fact of the matter is that a Mormon must believe in the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) if they are a true believer in the Book of Mormon, for it is stated in the Book of Mormon:

For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have; therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom, according to that which is just and true.¹²⁶
(*The Book of Mormon, Alma 29:8*)

This leaves no room for the Latter-day Saints to ignore the Holy Qur'an. At times, the Mormon missionaries take either a sincere or a very diplomatic route whilst preaching or confronting Muslims. They often say that we believe Muhammad (peace be upon him) to be an inspired man, thereby penetrating and getting their message across. Such is also the case with prominent Mormon leaders and Presidents of the Church. For instance, George Quayle Cannon, a prominent LDS leader, member of the

Quorum of the Twelve, Counsellor to Brigham Young, Assistant Counsellor to Brigham Young (the LDS Prophet), and First Counsellor to John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and Lorenzo Snow (the LDS Prophets), once said that:

I believe myself that Mahomed, whom the Christians deride and call a false prophet and stigmatize with a great many epithets – I believe that he was a man raised up by the Almighty, and inspired to a certain extent by Him to effect the reforms which he did in his land, and in the nations surrounding. He attacked idolatry, and restored the great and crowning idea that there is but one God. He taught that idea to his people, and reclaimed them from polytheism and from the heathenish practices into which they had fallen. I believe many men were inspired who lived after him and before him, who, nevertheless, did not have the Holy Priesthood, but were led by the Spirit of God to strive for a better condition of affairs and to live a purer and higher life than those by whom they were surrounded were living.¹²⁷

This explains why the author is using the Holy Qur'an to test the prophethood of Joseph Smith.

This criterion is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the following words:

فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

I have indeed lived among you a *whole* lifetime before this. Will you not then understand?'¹²⁸ (*The Holy Qur'an* 10:17)

Both references present a criterion that a claimant of prophethood spends a very pure and noble life and has a very high standard of morals. This was the criterion presented by Jesus

Christ^{as} and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) of Islam as well as many other prophets. Now, let's test Joseph Smith's prophethood through this litmus test.

Joseph Smith was a "money digger" and was well known for his expertise in this field. His reputation as a "money digger" grew and his fame was spread in adjacent states. Therefore, Joseph Smith himself admitted that he worked as "money digger" and was quite successful. He states that:

...In the month of October, 1825, I hired with an old gentleman by the name of Josiah Staal, who lived in Chenango county, State of New York. He had heard something of a silver mine having been opened by the Spaniards in Harmony, Susquehanna county, State of Pennsylvania; and had, previous to my hiring to him, been digging, in order, if possible, to discover the mine. After I went to live with him, he took me, with the rest of his hands, to dig for the silver mine, at which I continued to work for nearly a month, without success in our undertaking, and finally I prevailed with the old gentleman to cease digging after it. Hence arose the very prevalent story of my having been a money-digger.¹²⁹

It is perfectly fine for a prophet to earn money through legitimate means and professions, but Joseph Smith's ways of making money led him into many troubles, which is certainly cannot be the characteristic of a prophet. He was charged and summoned to court for a trial. Peter Bartley, a leading scholar on Mormonism, writes in his book:

The principal document is a court record, and concerns Joseph Smith's trial before a justice of the peace in Bainbridge, Chenango County, New York on 20 March 1826, at which Smith was charged with being 'a disorderly person and an imposter'. The

document was first brought to light in the nineteenth century when it was published by Bishop Daniel S. Tuttle of Salt lake City in his contributory article to an *Encyclopedia of Religion*. Five witnesses testified at the trial that Joseph Smith used a 'peep-stone' to locate buried treasure. On being questioned by counsel, Joseph Smith admitted to possessing a peep-stone, and using it to locate lost property and buried treasure of various kinds in various places.¹³⁰

The LDS "Prophet", before his claim to prophethood, was charged of being "a disorderly person and an imposter" by the court.

Conclusion

This has been a hallmark of the life of Joseph Smith. He was a "disorderly person" and this caused his followers to bear unbearable losses and great afflictions. There is a huge question mark in front of the Joseph Smith's character and it is not up to the mark. The messengers and the prophets, maintain very high standard of their morals and are people of integrity. Even the sworn enemies cannot point fingers at them, that is certainly not the case with Joseph Smith. Unfortunately, for the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, their so-called prophet, Joseph Smith, does not make the first criterion, which certainly makes him a false prophet. The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, the Promised Messiah^{as} states:

اگر کسی کے دل میں یہ سوال پیدا ہو کہ دنیا میں صد ہا جھوٹے مذہب ہیں جو ہزاروں برسوں سے چلے آتے ہیں۔ حالانکہ ابتداً ان کی کسی کی افتراء سے ہوگی۔ تو اس کا جواب یہ ہے کہ افتراء سے مراد ہمارے کلام میں وہ افتراء ہے کہ کوئی شخص عمداً اپنی طرف سے بعض کلمات تراش کر یا ایک کتاب بنا کر پھر یہ دعویٰ کرے کہ یہ باتیں خدا تعالیٰ

کی طرف سے ہیں اور اس نے مجھے الہام کیا ہے اور ان باتوں کے بارے میں میرے پر اس کی وحی نازل ہوئی ہے حالانکہ کوئی وحی نازل نہیں ہوئی۔ سو ہم نہایت کامل تحقیقات سے کہتے ہیں کہ ایسا افتراء کبھی کسی زمانہ میں چل نہیں سکا۔ اور خدا کی پاک کتاب صاف گواہی دیتی ہے کہ خدا تعالیٰ پر افتراء کرنے والے جلد ہلاک کئے گئے ہیں۔ اور ہم لکھ چکے ہیں کہ توریت بھی یہی گواہی دیتی ہے اور انجیل بھی اور فرقان مجید بھی۔

If someone has a question in his heart regarding the hundreds of false religions that have continued for thousands of years, even though the beginning of such religions are been based on a lie. Then, the answer to this is that by forgery, I mean such lies which a person purposely concocts or that he writes a book and claims that this was from God and He has revealed this to me, and I have received His revelations about these things, even though no such revelation has been received by him. So I say with complete certainty and research that no such forgery has ever been successful in any era. And the book of God bears witness that those who forge lies against God are destroyed at once. And I have written that the Torah and the Gospels also bear witness to this and so does the Qur'an.¹³¹

Indeed, this was the case with the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. No matter how much the Church progresses, it is certain that its building stands on wobbly ground and on a false prophet who met his wretched end according to the prophecies of the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an and this church is prone to fail ultimately.

The Second Criterion

It has been mentioned in the Old Testament, in many verses, that the false prophet or the person who erroneously claims that God speaks to him must be killed. As mentioned above, there are many verses, but three verses should be sufficient in order to solidify this criterion. The first verse is from *Deuteronomy*, chapter 18: *But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.*¹³² (*Deuteronomy 18:20*)

The second verse is from *Deuteronomy*, chapter 13:

And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God. If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.¹³³ (*Deuteronomy 13:1-5*)

Then, *Jeremiah*, chapter 14 also highlights this criterion:

Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets

that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.¹³⁴ (*Jeremiah 14:14-15*)

The New Testament also present the same criterion in the following words:

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.¹³⁵ (*Galatians 1:8-9*)

The above verses explain that a false claimant of prophethood must be killed if he:

- Openly claims to be a prophet.
- Openly claims to receive revelation from God.
- Announces his false dreams and visions to lead people astray.

The same criterion has also been presented in the Holy Qur'an as well. Now, let's read how the Muslims judge a prophet to be true or false. The Holy Qur'an states that:

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ۚ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ۚ ثُمَّ لَقَطْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ۚ فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ۚ

And if he had forged *and attributed* any sayings to Us, We would surely have seized him by the right hand, And then surely We would have severed his life-artery, And not one of you could have held *Us* off from him.¹³⁶ (*The Holy Qur'an 69:45-48*)

From these words, the following conditions can be derived:

- The claimant of revelation must do so purposely. In other words, despite being fully aware that Divine revelation has not been sent upon him, he knowingly and intentionally forges a lie against the Almighty. A psychologically disturbed or mentally ill patient cannot qualify according to this condition.
- The claimant must believe in God as a separate entity and should not be someone who considers his thoughts to be revelations. This condition is found in the word "عَلَيْنَا 'Alaina".
- The claimant should be a believer in the revelation of words and should claim his words to be those of God. It must not be someone who considers his thoughts to be revelation. This condition is found in words "بَغَضَ الْأَقَاوِيلَ Ba'dh-al-'Aqaaweel"
- The claimant must publish or announce his claim openly and this must be a cause of leading people astray then God, Himself will punish him and no one will be able to rescue him from the punishment. This condition is found in the words "فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ" *fa ma minkum min ahadin anhu haajizeen*

If a claimant of prophethood and revelation fulfills the aforementioned conditions, then that person must be killed within 23 years. This is the criterion that is used in Islam to test the claims of a prophet whether the claimant is true or false. The Founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, the Promised Messiah^{as}, issued a challenge more than a hundred years ago saying,

اگر یہ بات صحیح ہے کہ کوئی شخص نبی یا رسول اور مامور من اللہ ہونے کا دعویٰ کر کے
اور کھلے کھلے طور پر خدا کے نام پر کلمات لوگوں کو سنا کر پھر باوجود مفتی ہونے کے

برابر تینیس برس تک جو زمانہ وحی آنحضرت صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم ہے زندہ رہا ہے تو میں
ایسی نظیر پیش کرنے والے کو بعد اس کے جو مجھے میرے ثبوت کے موافق یا قرآن
کے ثبوت کے موافق ثبوت دے دے پانسو روپیہ نقد دیدوں گا۔

If this is true that a person claims to be a prophet or a messenger or appointed from Allah or openly says words to people in the name of God, then despite being a forger, lives for 23 years, which is the duration of the era of Holy Prophet^{sa}'s revelation, I will subsequently grant that person who shows me such an example and then proves it to me or proves it through Quran, 500 rupees in cash.¹³⁷

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at reiterates the same phenomenon in the following couplets:

عزت نہیں ہے ذرہ بھی اُس کی جناب میں	لعنت ہے مفتری پہ خدا کی کتاب میں
لکھا گیا ہے رنگِ وعیدِ شدید میں	توریت میں بھی نیز کلامِ مجید میں
ہو گا وہ قتل ہے یہی اس جرم کی سزا	کوئی اگر خدا پہ کرے کچھ بھی افتراء

The forger of lies is accursed in the Book of God;

He has not even the slightest honour in His sight.

In the Torah, as well as in the Qur'an

It is written in the form of a severe decree.

(That) whoever forges any lie against God

Shall be murdered – this is the punishment for such a crime!¹³⁸

Keeping the above points in mind, let's study the life of Joseph Smith and ascertain as to whether he truly falls under this criteria or not.

Did Joseph Smith Claim to be a Prophet?

First of all, Joseph Smith declared himself to be a prophet sent by God. Not long after the publication of the Book of Mormon, a group of sixty people gathered at the house of Peter Whitmer in Fayette, New York. There, Joseph Smith officially organized the Church and during this meeting, he claimed that he had received the following revelation:

BEHOLD, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ,¹³⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants*21:1)

On another occasion, March 1842, Joseph Smith wrote in a letter to Mr. John Wentworth, Editor and Proprietor of the Chicago Democrat: *I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.*¹⁴⁰

Precisely, on the 6th of April, 1830, Joseph Smith claimed to be a prophet based on the revelation of God.

Did Joseph Smith Claim to Receive Revelations?

Secondly, Joseph Smith claimed that he received revelations from God and it was on the 23rd of September, 1823 when he was visited by an angel called Moroni from the presence of God. Joseph Smith records in the *History of the Church*:

He (Moroni) 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; that God had a

work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.¹⁴¹

During the same visit of the angel, many revelations were given to Joseph Smith, including Section 2 of Doctrine and Covenants:

BEHOLD, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.¹⁴² (*Doctrine and Covenants* 2:1-3)

Although Joseph Smith lived a short life of 39 years, he received many revelations. Additional revelations can also be presented, but it would only prolong the subject unnecessarily, therefore, only his first revelations have been presented in order to settle the matter. The above references leave no ambiguity that Joseph Smith, in reality, claimed to receive revelations from God.

Did Joseph Smith Witness Visions?

Lastly, Joseph Smith not only claimed to saw many visions, but also divulged to the public that he has been seeing Heavenly visions. Again, many examples can be presented to support this as the volumes of the *History of the Church* have been crammed with such visions. Joseph Smith would have visions and revelations whenever he would wish. For instance, Joseph Smith, along with the two counsellors, Oliver Cowdery and Sidney Rigdon, assembled in Kirtland Temple and engaged in the ordinances of the endowment. It is recorded:

All of the Presidency laid their hands upon me (Joseph Smith), and pronounced upon my head many prophecies and blessings, many of which I shall not notice at this time. But as Paul said, so say I, let's come to visions and revelations.

The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell. I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire; also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son. I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold. I saw Fathers Adam and Abraham, and my father and mother, my brother, Alvin, that has long since slept, and marvelled as that he had obtained an inheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set His hand to gather Israel the second time, and had not been baptized for the remission of sins.

Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me, saying--

Revelation. "All who have died without a knowledge of this Gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts."¹⁴³

It is quite remarkable that, at one moment, Joseph Smith says, "*Let us come to visions and revelations*", yet the very next moment,

he not only witnesses the vision but also receives the revelation. After this vision, some of the most ambiguous and bizarre doctrines were added to the LDS Doctrines, i.e., baptism for the dead. If one is to carefully read the above-mentioned vision, then one shall find many strange things (e.g., circling fire in Heaven and the blazing throne of God) are mentioned in the above vision, but this will not be discussed here. In any case, the fact of the matter is that Joseph Smith saw many visions and these visions have very strong ties with the LDS history.

The LDS Stance on Joseph Smith's Murder

Joseph Smith has thus pressed his luck with all three criteria set forth by the Holy Qur'an and the Bible as well. Now, the question remains, was Joseph Smith murdered? This is a known fact that has been recorded in the *History of the Church* that he was murdered. However, The Latter-day Saints often regard Joseph Smith to have been unjustly charged for treason and often make this Messianic connection that Joseph Smith himself said that:

I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am calm as a summer's morning. I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men. If they take my life I shall die an innocent man, and my blood shall cry from the ground for vengeance, and it shall be said of me, 'He was murdered in cold blood!'¹⁴⁴

Therefore, Joseph Smith sealed the testimony with his blood.

Joseph Smith - True or False Prophet?

Is this what really happened? Was Joseph Smith unjustly charged for treason? Did he wilfully give his life to seal this testimony? Or is this another attempt by the LDS Church to rewrite history? Let's meticulously examine the events that led to his murder and find out whether The Latter-day Saints are true in their claim or if Joseph Smith was a false prophet.

As mentioned previously, Joseph Smith was the mayor of Nauvoo, Illinois. He was a very controversial figure and was charged and jailed several times for doing many illegal things. Four years prior to claiming prophethood, he was tried but was acquitted by Justice of the Peace Albert Neely Jr. of a charge of being a disorderly person in South Bainbridge, New York. However, this incident certainly sheds some light on his contentious nature.

The Nauvoo Expositor

In 1844, the year when Joseph Smith was murdered, some former members of the LDS Church assembled together and decided to print a newspaper which would expose the secret life and inequities of Joseph Smith. These former members were not ordinary Latter-day Saints, among them William Law (the counsellor to Joseph Smith), Wilson Law, Dr. Foster, and Charles Ivins held key positions in the Church and were prominent Latter-day Saints. They were excommunicated for a number of reasons and were often referred to as “the apostates” in the *History of Church*. To summarize, they decided to print the newspaper called the *Nauvoo Expositor* which would educate The Latter-day Saints and non-Mormons alike about the life-style of Joseph Smith and the new teachings (e.g., plurality of God, baptism for the dead and the secret practice of polygamy) that he was preaching. *The Nauvoo Expositor* was supposed to be a weekly newspaper, but it ended up coming out with one edition on the 7th of June, 1844. This created a stir within the city - some were excited while others were furious, especially Joseph Smith. Therefore, this matter was presented in the city council and Joseph Smith, being the mayor of the city, convened the council. On the 10th of June, 1844, the following bill was passed:

BILL FOR REMOVAL OF THE PRESS OF THE
NAUVOO EXPOSITOR `Resolved by the city council
of the city of Nauvoo, that the printing office from
whence issues the Nauvoo Expositor is a public

nuisance; and also of said Nauvoo Expositors which may be or exist in said establishment; and the mayor is instructed to cause said establishment and papers to be removed without delay, in such manner as he shall direct.

`Passed June 10th, 1844. GEO. W. HARRIS, President pro tem. `W. RICHARDS, Recorder.'¹⁴⁵

A few hours after the bill was passed, the press was burnt and many copies of the first edition were also burnt. However, some copies were saved and can easily be found on internet¹⁴⁶.

Aftermath of the destruction of the printing press

John Taylor, the third president of the LDS Church, records the aftermath of the destruction of the press:

This, as was foreseen, was the very course our enemies wished us to pursue, as it afforded them an opportunity of circulating a very plausible story about the 'Mormons' being opposed to the liberty of the press and of free speech, which they were not slow to avail themselves of. Stories were fabricated, and facts perverted; false statements were made, and this act brought in as an example to sustain the whole of their fabrications; and, as if inspired by satan,... These reports were communicated to their 'anti-Mormon' societies, and these societies circulated them in their several districts. The 'anti-Mormon' paper, the Warsaw Signal, was filled with inflammatory articles and misrepresentations in relation to us, and especially to this act of destroying the press. We were represented as a horde of lawless ruffians and brigands, anti-American and anti-republican, steeped in crime and iniquity, opposed to freedom of speech

and of the press, and all the rights and immunities of a free and enlightened people; that neither person nor property was secure, that we had designs upon the citizens of Illinois and of the United States, and the people were called upon to rise en masse, and put us down, drive us away, or exterminate us as a pest to society, and alike dangerous to our neighbors, the state, and the commonwealth.¹⁴⁷

A writ was issued that Joseph Smith and the city council members were to be brought to court for a legal hearing.

Joseph Smith Declared Martial Law

Joseph Smith was now sensing that his life was in danger due to the reaction to his illegal act. He was also the general of the Nauvoo Legion, and for preventive measures, he had spread his force in the city of Nauvoo and declared martial law. It is recorded:

At the same time guards were stationed around Nauvoo, and picket guards in the distance. At length opposing forces gathered so near that more active measures were taken; reconnoitering parties were sent out, and the city proclaimed under martial law. Things now assumed a belligerent attitude, and persons passing through the city were questioned as to what they knew of the enemy, while passes were in some instances given to avoid difficulty with the guards.¹⁴⁸

In the meanwhile, destruction of the press had caused many non-Mormons to gather their forces around Nauvoo.

Joseph Smith Fled to Iowa

The Governor issued a new arrest warrant for treason against the State of Illinois because only he (the Governor) could call up a State Militia for action, and the Nauvoo Legion was part of the

State Militia of Illinois. He issued a direct order for the Nauvoo Legion to stand down. Joseph Smith, along with his brother Hyrum Smith, then fled across the Mississippi River to a town called Montrose, Iowa, but a number of his close friends, including his wife Emma, accused him of being a “coward”.

Reynolds Cahoon, Lorenzo D. Wasson and Hiram Kimball accused Joseph of cowardice for wishing to leave the people, adding that their property would be destroyed, and they left without house or home. Like the fable, when the wolves came the shepherd ran from the flock, and left the sheep to be devoured.¹⁴⁹

Some of the prominent leaders of the Church asked Emma to write a letter to Joseph Smith, encouraging him to come back.

Joseph Smith arrested for treason

Joseph and Hyrum Smith reluctantly returned to Nauvoo and surrendered themselves to the Sheriff of Hancock County, who took them to Carthage. An interview was taken of Joseph Smith at Carthage on the 25th of June, 1844; he and his brother were charged and arrested for treason. A writ was issued:

Writ of Arrest on the Charge of Treason--Joseph Smith.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, CITY OF NAUVOO.

The people of the State of Illinois, to all sheriffs, coroners and constables of said state greeting:

Whereas complaint has been made before me, one of the justices of the peace in and for said county aforesaid, upon the oath of Augustine Spencer, that Joseph Smith, late of the county aforesaid, did, on or about the nineteenth day of June. A. D. 1844, at the county and state aforesaid, commit the crime of

treason against the government and people of the State of Illinois aforesaid.

These are therefore to command you to take the said Joseph Smith if he be found in your county, or if he shall have fled, that you pursue after the said Smith into another county within this state, and take and safely keep the said Joseph Smith, so that you have his body forthwith before me to answer the said complaint and be further dealt with according to law.

[Seal] Given under my hand and seal this 24th day of June, A. D. 1844.

R. F. SMITH, J. P.¹⁵⁰

Joseph and Hyrum Smith were now incarcerated in Carthage jail.

Concealing the truth

The LDS Church does not divulge all the events that took place in the Carthage Jail and many Latter-day Saints either do not know or hide these events. These events portray the very personality of Joseph Smith and show a real picture of the LDS Prophet, which is why the Church conceals these events from the public. First of all, Joseph Smith had a pistol smuggled into the jail by one of his very close friends. It is recorded by John Taylor, who was also present in the Carthage Jail, that:

Elder Cyrus H. Wheelock came in to see us, and when he was about leaving drew a small pistol, a six-shooter, from his pocket, remarking at the same time, 'Would any of you like to have this?' Brother Joseph immediately replied, 'Yes, give it to me,' whereupon he took the pistol, and put it in his pantaloons pocket.¹⁵¹

The second incident which is not divulged to the public is that Joseph Smith consumed alcohol in the Carthage Jail. As mentioned previously, Mormons are forbidden to drink alcoholic beverages (*Doctrine and Covenants* 89:5-9), but Joseph Smith's practice was quite the opposite and contrary to his so-called revelations. It is recorded in the *History of the Church* that:

Before the jailor came in, his boy brought in some water, and said the guard wanted some wine. Joseph gave Dr. Richards two dollars to give the guard; but the guard said one was enough, and would take no more.

The guard immediately sent for a bottle of wine, pipes, and two small papers of tobacco; and one of the guards brought them into the jail soon after the jailor went out.

Dr. Richards uncorked the bottle, and presented a glass to Joseph, who tasted, as also Brother Taylor and the doctor, and the bottle was then given to the guard, who turned to go out.¹⁵²

John Taylor, the third president of the LDS Church, who was also present in the jail at that time, had also mentioned in his written accounts of the Carthage Jail, that:

Sometime after dinner we sent for some wine. It has been reported by some that this was taken as a sacrament. It was no such thing; our spirits were generally dull and heavy, and it was sent for to revive us. I think it was Captain Jones who went after it, but they would not suffer him to return. I believe we all drank of the wine, and gave some to one or two of the prison guards. We all of us felt unusually dull and languid, with a remarkable depression of spirits.¹⁵³

What credibility of Joseph Smith, as a prophet, remains, when he preached that which he did not practise.

Another thing that is also kept hidden by the LDS Church is that Joseph Smith killed two men in the Carthage Jail with the smuggled gun. John Taylor testifies to this fact after Hyrum was shot dead in the jail:

He, however, instantly arose, and with a firm, quick step, and a determined expression of countenance, approached the door, and pulling the six-shooter left by Brother Wheelock from his pocket, opened the door slightly, and snapped the pistol six successive times; only three of the barrels, however, were discharged. I afterwards understood that two or three were wounded by these discharges, two of whom, I am informed, died,¹⁵⁴

This is the LDS “Prophet” who initially went to the Carthage Jail as a lamb but ended up killing two people and injuring one. These things will never be mentioned by the LDS missionaries.

Joseph Smith’s murder

Joseph Smith was murdered in the following way:

Joseph, seeing there was no safety in the room, and no doubt thinking that it would save the lives of his brethren in the room if he could get out, turned calmly from the door, dropped his pistol on the floor and sprang into the window when two balls pierced him from the door, and one entered his right breast from without, and he fell outward into the hands of his murderers,¹⁵⁵

Thus, Joseph Smith was shot while trying to escape from the window of the jail. As he was shot, he fell from the second floor of the jail to the ground.

Did Joseph Smith live for 23 years after he claimed to receive revelations?

As mentioned above, the criterion set by the Holy Qur'an is that a false claimant of revelation must die within 23 years. Therefore, in this matter, Joseph Smith did not live for 23 years after claiming to receive revelations from God. On the 23rd of September, 1823, Joseph Smith received the first revelation and on the 27th of June, 1844, he was murdered. Precisely, Joseph Smith lived for 20 years, 9 months and 4 days after claiming to receive that first revelation from God. Therefore, Joseph Smith's murder not only proves that he is a false prophet, but also the truthfulness of the Holy Qur'an.

Conclusion

This is the real story behind Joseph Smith's murder. This not only proves that Joseph Smith falls under the above-mentioned criterion, but also proves how the LDS Church is trying to conceal the truth and rewrite history.

The Third Criterion

The third criterion is also mentioned in the 18th chapter of *Deuteronomy*, and that is:

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.¹⁵⁶ (*Deuteronomy 18:21-22*)

One does not have to be a scholar to understand the above verse. The criterion has been put so that everyone may understand it and that is if someone is not sure whether a claimant of prophethood is true or not then he/she must use the following yard stick:

- If prophecies come to pass, then the claimant is true.
- If prophecies do not come to pass, then the claimant is false.

Keeping the above criterion in mind, let's apply the prophecies of the LDS "Prophet" Joseph Smith and see whether he passes this criterion or not.

Joseph Smith had received many revelations and not many of them came to pass. For example, Joseph Smith received the following revelation on the 26th of September, 1830:

And ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect; for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts; Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked.¹⁵⁷ (*Doctrine and Covenants 28:7-8*)

Then, Joseph Smith again received a revelation concerning this on the 20th of July, 1831, stating:

HEARKEN, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse.¹⁵⁸ (*Doctrine and Covenants 57:1-3*)

On the 7th of March, 1831, the LDS “Prophet” received another revelation:

Wherefore I, the Lord, have said, gather ye out from the eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together ye elders of my church; go ye forth into the western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me. And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you. And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;¹⁵⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 45:64-66)

There are many prophecies concerning the city of Zion to be built in Missouri, but three should be enough to prove whether Joseph Smith was a true prophet or not. As it has been mentioned in the first part under the chapter “Joseph Smith”, he struggled his entire life to build the city of Zion in Jackson County, Missouri, but failed miserably. Joseph Smith and his followers had to pay a very high price for achieving these self-concocted prophecies. The pursuit of the Zion city was ended with the incarceration of the LDS “Prophet”. He was kept in a very deplorable condition and his followers were driven out of Missouri, thus shattering the dreams of the LDS “Prophet”.

Conclusion

If Joseph Smith was a true prophet, then his prophecy should have been fulfilled according to the third criterion. There are many prophecies that were not fulfilled (e.g., revelations about gathering in Zion, Zion shall never be moved, and earthquakes, just to name a few). Thus, Joseph Smith does not match the third criterion that proves him to be a false prophet.

The Fourth Criterion

The fourth criterion is also common in the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an. It is mentioned in a number of verses of the Bible that:

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.¹⁶⁰ (*Psalms 92:12*)

Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.¹⁶¹ (*Matthew 15:13*)

The above-mentioned verses present the following criterion to differentiate between a true and a false prophet:

- A true prophet from God shall flourish and succeed in his missions.
- A false prophet shall not flourish and succeed in his missions and shall die.

Now, let's study the life of the LDS "Prophet", keeping this criterion in mind.

After receiving the Gold plates in September 1827, Joseph Smith started to work on its translation with the help of his "seer stone". By June 1828, he had translated 116 pages of the Book of Lehi. Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, wanted to take the 116 page manuscript to show it to his family. Joseph Smith acquired permission from God through the "seer stone", not through meditation or praying. Martin Harris took the manuscript to his home and lost it. As a result, Joseph Smith received the following revelation:

The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught. For God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said,

therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round. Remember, remember that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men;¹⁶² (*Doctrine and Covenants* 3:3)

Martin Harris and Joseph Smith never recovered the 116 page manuscript. Joseph Smith, in the above reference, admits the fact that none can frustrate the work of God, which is the very criterion he is being judged upon. Everything Joseph Smith did or his “God” revealed him to do, came to an unsuccessful end, misery, and humiliation. A few examples have been presented above and here, another example of his “achievements” is presented. In December 1833, he received the following revelation:

Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered. They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled. And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints.¹⁶³ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 101:17-20)

The above revelation contains the following promises from the Mormon God:

“Shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy.”

“There is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed.”

Joseph Smith struggled all his life to make his dream come true, but failed miserably. His followers, in Missouri, were persecuted, beaten, and lost their properties. Then, in February 1834, Joseph Smith was commanded by God in a revelation:

But verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall not go up unto the land of Zion until you have obtained a hundred of the strength of my house, to go up with you unto the land of Zion. Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, and establish the children of Zion upon the laws and commandments which have been and which shall be given unto you. All victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness, and prayers of faith.¹⁶⁴ (*Doctrine and Covenants 103:34-36*)

Upon this revelation, Joseph Smith organized a camp known as Zion's Camp and more than 200 members were included in this camp. The camp embarked on a journey to Jackson County, Missouri; while they were nearing their destiny, Joseph Smith disbanded the camp. Why? Let's read the very words of the LDS "Prophet":

This night the cholera burst forth among us, and about midnight it was manifested in its most virulent form. Our ears were saluted with cries and moanings and lamentations on every hand; even those on guard fell to the earth with their guns in their hands, so sudden and powerful was the attack of this terrible disease. At the commencement, I attempted to lay on hands for their recovery, but I quickly learned by painful experience, that when the great Jehovah

decrees destruction upon any people, and makes known His determination, man must not attempt to stay His hand. The moment I attempted to rebuke the disease I was attacked, and had I not desisted in my attempt to save the life of a brother, I would have sacrificed my own. The disease seized upon me like the talons of a hawk, and I said to the brethren: "If my work were done, you would have to put me in the ground without a coffin."

Early on the morning of the 25th, the camp was separated into small bands, and dispersed among the brethren living in the vicinity.¹⁶⁵

This was the wrath of God unleashed upon the camp and the LDS "Prophet" feared that he was going to die. Thus, none of the promises were fulfilled by the Mormon God to this day. The Latter-day Saints were driven out of Missouri and never returned with their children and their properties were never recovered, despite the fact that Joseph Smith had tried so hard. On the contrary, Joseph Smith and his followers were smitten with cholera. Moreover, he was incarcerated and remained in deplorable condition.

Conclusion

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at explains how God, the Almighty, helps His prophets and the chosen ones:

خدا کے پاک لوگوں کو خدا سے نصرت آتی ہے	جب آتی ہے تو پھر عالم کو اک عالم دکھاتی ہے
وہ بنتی ہے ہوا اور ہر خس رہ کو اڑاتی ہے	وہ ہو جاتی ہے آگ اور ہر مخالف کو جلاتی ہے
کبھی وہ خاک ہو کر دشمنوں کے سر پہ پڑتی ہے	کبھی ہو کر وہ پانی اُن پہ اک طوفان لاتی ہے
غرض رکتے نہیں ہر گز خدا کے کام بندوں سے	بھلا خالق کے آگے خلق کی کچھ پیش جاتی ہے

The Holy ones of God receive help from Him;
And when it comes, it shows another world to the
entire creation;
It turns into a storm and blows with it all the trash;
It turns into fire and burns every enemy in its wake.
It becomes dust and falls on enemy's head to
humiliate him;
It turns into water and floods the enemies.
In short, Man can not obstruct the works of God;
How can a creature stop the works of the Creator?¹⁶⁶

Indeed, this was not the case with Joseph Smith. As a matter of fact, it was quite the opposite. Therefore, Joseph Smith does not meet this criterion as well. According to this criterion, and in Joseph Smith's own words, *"The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught."* This proves him to be a false prophet because it was not God's plan nor purpose nor design. Joseph Smith's murder also bears testimony to the fact that he was not the plant that was planted by God because He himself had uprooted him.

Joseph Smith, the LDS Church, and Free Masonry

The LDS prophet, Joseph Smith, was a Free Mason who had strong ties with Freemasonry, which makes it quite evident that Joseph Smith and his Church are deeply connected with Freemasonry. Once, the author was reading the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* and came across a picture of a temple having an all-seeing eye on it. It was quite strange, at first, because a religious organization, claiming to restore the gospels, the church, and the Kingdom of God, has a Masonic symbol on their most sacred place. Further research was done and the findings were startling. Anti-Mormon articles and books were read, but the most surprising thing was a speech by one of the most prominent historians of the LDS Church. Dr. Reed C. Durham delivered a presidential address at the Mormon History Association

Convention on the 20th of April, 1974, in which he addressed the very touchy subject of the relationship between Mormonism and Masonry. He discussed the close resemblances and similarities between Mormon and Masonic Temple ceremonies with their names, aprons, penalties, blood oaths, grips, tokens, and the Political Kingdom of God. Moreover, he also highlighted many Masonic markings inside and outside the LDS Temples, for example, the all-seeing eye and an upside down five-pointed star, known as a pentagram, which is the symbol of Satanism. This speech was recorded by few people and it soon became available for people. After delivering the Presidential address, Dr. Reed C. Durham was in hot waters and faced a lot of criticism from the Church and his friends barely escaped excommunication from the Church after writing a letter to the Church reaffirming his faith in the LDS prophet Joseph Smith. Before quoting some extracts from the speech of Dr. Durham, let's read from the *History of the Church*, proving that Joseph Smith and his followers were really Masons:

Tuesday, 15.--I officiated as grand chaplain at the installation of the Nauvoo Lodge of Free Masons, at the Grove near the Temple. Grand Master Jonas, of Columbus, being present, a large number of people assembled on the occasion. The day was exceedingly fine; all things were done in order, and universal satisfaction was manifested. In the evening I received the first degree in Free Masonry in the Nauvoo Lodge, assembled in my general business office.¹⁶⁷

It was precisely the 15th of March, 1842, when the LDS prophet became a Free Mason. Then, the *History of the Church* records that the very next day, Joseph Smith rose to the sublime degree: *Wednesday, March 16.--I was with the Masonic Lodge and rose to the sublime degree.*¹⁶⁸

It did not stop here; the followers of Joseph Smith also followed him and became Free Masons. The *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* records:

The introduction of Freemasonry in NAUVOO had both political and religious implications...Eventually nearly 1,500 LDS men became associated with Illinois Freemasonry, including many members of the Church's governing priesthood bodies—this at a time when the total number of non-LDS Masons in Illinois lodges barely reached 150.¹⁶⁹

Many prominent members of the LDS Church were Free Masons, including Hyrum Smith (Joseph Smith's brother) and Brigham Young (the 2nd prophet of the LDS Church).

This is an undeniable fact that Joseph Smith and the LDS Church were not only influenced by Freemasonry, but it is also deep rooted in the very foundations of the LDS Church. Rather than presenting the anti-Mormon views on this, let's go to the real source and read what Dr. Reed C. Durham Jr., the LDS historian, had said about this touchy topic.

Dr. Reed starts his speech by explaining **how it all started** in the following words:

To begin with, Masonry in the Church had its origin prior to the time Joseph Smith became a Mason. Nauvoo was not its genesis. It commenced in Joseph's home when his older brother became a mason. Hyrum received the first degrees of Masonry in Mount Moriah Lodge No. 112 of Palmyra, New York, at about the same time that Joseph was being initiated into the presence of God and angels and was being entrusted with the sacred gold plates.¹⁷⁰

Then, Joseph Smith's **new converts were deeply involved in Freemasonry** and he had a **Masonic influence** vividly illustrated through his speeches; Dr. Reed says:

By the end of 1832, Joseph Smith had welcomed new brethren, along with their influences, into the Church. Men such as W. W. Phelps, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Newel K. Whitney, each of whom had been deeply involved in Masonry, from one side or the other, before their entrance into the Church. In a sermon the Prophet delivered in 1835, unmistakable Masonic vocabulary was used, and I quote from the Prophet: "I exposed their abominations in the language of the Scriptures and I pray God that it may be like a nail in a sum place, driven by the Master of Assemblies." In that same year and in subsequent years, the Prophet was involved in things Egyptian, the new revelations of suns and moons, governing planets and fixed stars, and, though unique at that time to Mormonism, was commonplace in Masonry.¹⁷¹

These men were so much involved in Freemasonry, that under the supervision and leadership of Joseph Smith, **Mormon Masonry commenced:**

However, at the instigation of John C. Bennett, George W. Harris, John Parker, Lucius Scovil, as well as other Mormon Masons residing at Nauvoo, and certainly with the approval of the hierarchy of the Church, the institution of Masonry commenced. Joseph and Sidney (Rigdon) were inducted into formal Masonry at Sight, on the same day upon which the Illinois Grand Master Mason--and politically ambitious--Abraham Jonas officially installed the Nauvoo Lodge. It was on March 15, 1842. On the next day, both Sidney and Joseph advanced to the Master

Mason Degree. In only a few years, five Mormon Lodge were established, several others in planning, a Masonic Temple constructed, and the total membership of Mormon fraternal brethren was over 1,366.¹⁷²

This had brought in unusual excitement amongst the members and they were **encouraging to join the Mormon Masonry** those who have not yet joined. Dr. Reed highlighted this fact, as well:

Heber C. Kimball wrote to Parley Parker Pratt, who was in England at the time, only three months after Joseph Smith had embraced Masonry, in the following words: "We have received some precious things through the Prophet on the Priesthood which would cause your soul to rejoice. I cannot give them to you on paper, for they are not to be written. So you must come and get them for yourself. We have organized a Lodge here of Masons since we have obtained a charter. That was in March. Since that there have near 200 been made Masons. Brother Joseph and Sidney were the first that were received into the Lodge. All of the Twelve have become members except Orson P. He hangs back. He will wake up soon."¹⁷³

The Influence of Masonry upon Joseph Smith was so immense that it had caused him to incorporate many things into his concocted religion. Dr. Reed admits this fact when he writes:

I have attempted thus far to demonstrate that Masonic influence upon Joseph in the early Church history, preceding his formal membership in Masonry, were significant. However, these same Masonic influences exerted a more dominant character as reflected in the further expansion of the Church

subsequent to the Prophet's Masonic membership. In fact, I believe that there are few significant developments in the Church, that occurred after March 15, 1842, which did not have some Masonic interdependence. Let me comment on a few of these developments. There is absolutely no question in my mind that the Mormon ceremony which came to be known as the Endowment, introduced by Joseph Smith to Mormon Masons initially, just a little over one month after he became a Mason, had an immediate inspiration from Masonry...the similarities between the two ceremonies are so apparent and overwhelming that some dependent relationship cannot be denied.¹⁷⁴

Dr. Reed addressed the question as to **why Joseph Smith became a Mason**. He answered it in the following words:

I believe he accepted Masonry because he genuinely felt he recognized true Ancient Mysteries contained therein. And, that in light of two fundamental concepts, already established within the theological framework of Mormonism--the Restoration of the Gospel and the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times--Joseph was under the strong compulsion to embrace Masonry. The Prophet believed that his mission was to restore all truth, and then to unify and weld it all together into one. This truth was referred to as "the mysteries", and these Mysteries were inseparably connected with the Priesthood. The Prophet further sermonized that these Mysteries were to be discerned, unlocked, unravelled, and appropriately unfolded unto the Church, line upon line, by the one who holds the keys of the Holy Priesthood. Therefore, if Masonry in reality contained any of the true ancient Mysteries, it would have been

necessary for Joseph to accept it... these Mysteries came down into the modern institution of Masonry-- the 12th and 13th centuries, A. D.--they had experienced so many progressive alterations, that there remained only an imperfect image of their original brilliancy. My assumption is that Joseph Smith believed he was restoring Masonry's original pristine brilliancy, and that he was recreating the Mysteries of the ancient Priesthood.¹⁷⁵

Dr. Reed goes on to admit that there are many similarities between Masonry and Mormonism.

The many parallels found between early Mormonism and the Masonry of that day are substantial: conferences, councils, priesthood, temples, anointing with oil, the issuance of licenses, certificates for identifying legitimate fellow workers, elders, high priests, and even the Book of the Law.¹⁷⁶

One of the many similarities is the **architectural constructions of the Mormon and the Masonic Temples**. Dr. Reed admitted to the fact that:

...More importantly, professional architects have only recently called attention to the classical and Gothic elements combined in the architecture of the Kirtland Temple (Picture 1) as containing direct and unmistakable Masonic influences (this picture has been added for better understanding - The Author)...It is also obvious that the Nauvoo Temple architecture was in part, at least Masonically influenced. Indeed, it appears that there was an intentional attempt to utilize Masonic symbols and motifs. The sun stones, and the moon and star stones, were examples. An additional example was the angel used on the weather vane on the top of the Temple. William Weeks (made a Mason

in Nauvoo Lodge. M. B. H.), the architect of the Nauvoo Temple, has many drawings in the Historians Office of the Church. This is one of the preliminary drawings--first drawings--first draft drawings of the Nauvoo Temple. You will notice that it has the beautiful picture in the whole front of the Temple of the All-Seeing Eye, and he was going to have a beautiful angel stand on the top of the Temple. Later, another design by William Weeks again:--modified the All-Seeing Eye, trimmed down the angel on the top of the Temple, and then again, in another plan, he has the small angel on the top--not a huge lady as was before--and this one comes pretty close to the way the Nauvoo Temple looked like. Now, in the Visitors' Center at the Nauvoo Restoration, you see a mock-up of the Temple and on the very top there is, on the weather vane (Picture 2), this little angel. Well, that little angel was photographed. There is the angel: the beautiful horn, the Book of Mormon in the other hand. (this picture has been added for better understanding - The Author) And, then, if you will notice, what looks as if there are crosses on the staff or the spear which is the weather vane. Do you see those crosses there? We blew that up--it is not a very clear picture--to let you know that it is a beautiful compass and square, in the typical Masonic fashion. Now, I wondered where in the world did they get, on the mock-up of the Temple in the Visitors' Center, the compass and square--the Masonic symbols; in fact, the most probably universal Masonic symbols that are known in Masonry. Where did they get that? Until, in the Historian's Office in Salt Lake City, we found the drawing of William Weeks, who very clearly employed the Masonic symbols on that angel... And, there is no question that

it was intentionally to be a Masonic symbol on the top of the Nauvoo Temple.¹⁷⁷

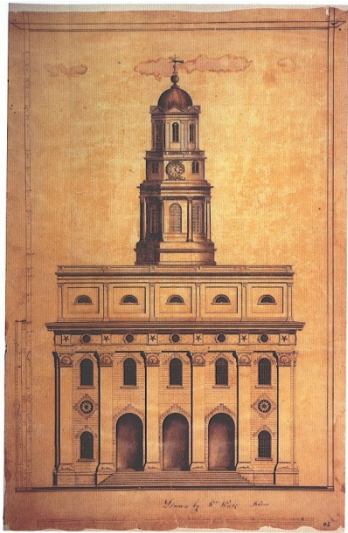
Moreover, Masonic symbols are quite evident from the architectural structure, for instance:

The five pointed star, known as a **pentagram** (Picture 3), which is the Masonic symbol, is also seen on the Nauvoo temple.

Then, the picture of **sunstone** (Picture 4) is found on the Nauvoo Temple building, which is also a Masonic depiction of the sun.

Moreover, the Temple in Salt Lake City, Utah, is also influenced by the Masonic symbols. For example, **the all seeing eye** (Picture 5) and **the secret hand shake** (Picture 6) of Masons is prevalent:

Picture 1: Kirtland Temple

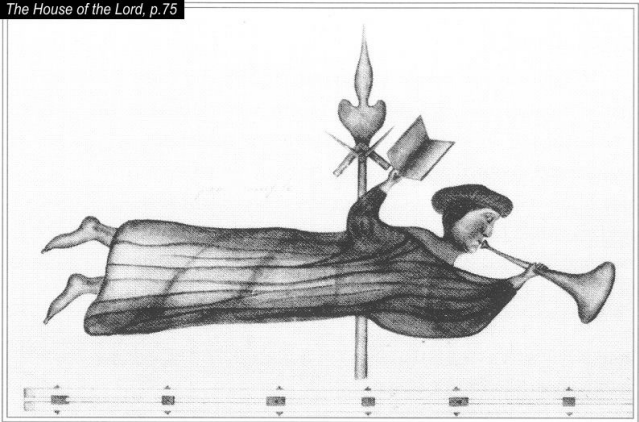


The west facade of the Nauvoo Temple at Nauvoo, Illinois, as drafted by William Weeks, the architect. This Temple was commenced under direction of Joseph Smith and completed by Brigham Young. By 1848, abandoned by the western migration of the Church, it had been reduced to a pile by mob incendiary and a tornado.

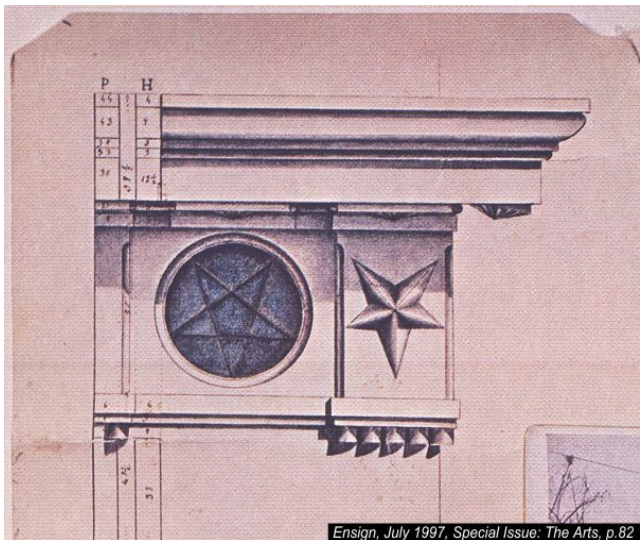
The Salt Lake Temple, p.44

Picture 2: Weather Vane

The House of the Lord, p.75



Picture 3: Pentagram on the Nauvoo Temple building



**Picture 5: Masonic All-Seeing Eye
on the Temple in Salt Lake City**



**Picture 6: Masonic Secret Handshake
on the Temple in Salt Lake City**



Above are just a few examples of the Masonic symbols that are prevalent in the architectural structure of the LDS temples.

Moreover, **the temple** Endowment **ceremonies** have also been taken from Masonry and incorporated by Joseph Smith. Dr. Reed explains:

Let me comment on a few of these developments. There is absolutely no question in my mind that the Mormon ceremony which came to be known as the Endowment, introduced by Joseph Smith to Mormon Masons initially, just a little over one month after he became a Mason, had an immediate inspiration from Masonry...the similarities between the two ceremonies are so apparent and overwhelming that some dependent relationship cannot be denied.¹⁷⁸

Then, **Female Relief** Organization, which was organized by Joseph Smith, was also taken from Masonry. More astonishingly, the very **concept of the Kingdom of God** that Joseph Smith struggled to achieve all his life was taken from Masonry. Furthermore, Dr. Reed elaborates how **the LDS prophet was deeply involved in mysterious and cult** like behaviour:

Now, I should like to initiate all of you into what is perhaps the strangest, the most mysterious, occult-like, esoteric, and yet Masonically oriented practice ever adopted by Joseph Smith. This may also be another fine example of our earlier explained principle of "grabbing on". All available evidence suggests that Joseph Smith the Prophet possessed a magical Masonic medallion, or talisman, which he worked during his lifetime and which was evidently on his person when he was martyred... After months of research, the talisman, presently existing in Utah, was originally purchased from the Emma Smith Bidamon family, fully notarized by that family to be authentic

and to have belonged to Joseph Smith, can now be identified as a Jupiter talisman. It carries the sign and image of Jupiter and should more appropriately be referred to as the Table of Jupiter. And in some very real and quite mysterious sense, this particular Table of Jupiter was the most appropriate talisman for Joseph Smith to possess. Indeed, it seemed meant for him, because on all levels of interpretation: planetary, mythological, numerological, astrological, mystical cabalism, and talismatic magic, the Prophet was, in every case appropriately described... Astrology also declares that every year is governed by one of the planets. And, therefore, the planet directs the affairs of men for good or ill during that year. Joseph Smith's planet was Jupiter; and two significant years governed by Jupiter were 1805 and 1844. The day of the week governed by Jupiter was Thursday. And I don't know--perhaps just coincidence--the fast meetings in the Church were on Thursdays for 60 years, as well as all the regular Mormon Masonic meetings on the first and third Thursdays, as well as the day of the Prophet Joseph Smith's martyrdom, on Thursday, and so many other special events in Church history. So closely is magic bound up with the stars and astrology that the term astrologer and magician were in ancient times almost synonymous. The purpose of the Table of Jupiter in talismanic magic was to be able to call upon the celestial intelligences, assigned to the particular talisman, to assist one in all endeavours... Talismatic magic further declared that anyone who worked skilfully with this Jupiter Table would obtain the power of stimulating anyone to offer his love to the possessor of the talisman, whether from a friend, brother, relative, or even any female... the tradition, which came out of the Emma Smith Bidamon family,

attributed the talisman as being Joseph's Masonic jewel. The relationship with Masonry is possible because "Masonry did contain elements of magic, including this magic Table of Jupiter."¹⁷⁹

In reality, **Mormonism is the real Masonry**; Dr. Reed quotes a portion of a letter:

Heber C. Kimball later wrote, "We have the true Masonry. The Masonry of today is received from the apostasy which took place in the days of Solomon and David. They have now and then a thing that is correct, but we have the real thing." Joseph Fielding, a convert and a missionary from England, wrote in his diary, "Many have joined the Masonic Institution. This seems to have been a stepping stone for preparation for something else, the true origin of Masonry."¹⁸⁰

The most startling part of Dr. Reed's address is the comparison that he made between **Joseph Smith and a Masonic legend**:

There is a famous legend in which the grand orator elaborates in lecture form in the ceremonies of the 13th, 14th and 21st degrees of Masonry which has some very ancient roots, bearing remarkable similarity to Mormonism. The roots of the legend extend back into ancient Hebrew traditions, but were developed most nearly as they are now found in Masonry--out of ancient cabalistic lore and mythology. The refinement of the legend and their incorporation into modern Masonry began in France about 1740 to 1760, but the legend was in American Masonic print by 1802; and by Joseph Smith's time many publications had made the legend popularly well disseminated. Now let me just comment that the basic, introductory aspect of the legend is: that up in the pre-existence, there was a

special Secret Doctrine that was given by Deity, and it was given down to the Earth first to Adam. Adam then was to carefully guard this Secret Doctrine because it contained all the Mysteries. It contained the knowledge of God, and the name it contained was the sacred name of God. Adam then bestowed it upon his son Seth who guarded it very carefully--only among the inner circle of believers--and then it was handed down until it came to Enoch. And, Enoch is the central figure in the legend. It is with Enoch that the remarkable resemblances with Joseph Smith and Mormon history become disconcertingly clear. The major details of the legend are outlined as follows:

1. Enoch, seventh in the line of patriarchs from Adam, was 25 years old when he received his call and vision.

2. He was taken up in vision onto a hill called Moriah.

3. In vision he saw a cavern in a hill, a sacred vault in the bowels of the earth. The cavity was symbolized as being a container for sacred treasures, like an holy ark, and it had a lid on it.

4. In vision, Enoch perceived a shiny gold plate containing unknown engravings and symbols.

5. He recognized the letter "M" upon the gold plate, which designated the name of the hill.

6. He further saw the Sacred name of God, which had been lost to all mankind, and he was commissioned by Deity to preserve this knowledge.

7. He foresaw that a flood would come to destroy all mankind. Therefore, he felt it was his duty to preserve the Sacred Mystery.

8. He placed two pillars inside the hill:

a. One of marble upon which, written in Egyptian hieroglyphics, were found the historical events connected with the tower of Babel.

and

b. One of brass, which contained the history of creation and the Secret Mysteries. These records were placed in the hill along with the treasure of the gold plate.

9. This brass pillar had a metal ball on its top, within which were contained maps, and directions of the world and of the universe, and which also acted as a sort of oracle.

10. Enoch then placed a stone lid, or slab, over the cavity into the hill.

11. Enoch predicted that on the other side of the deluge an Israelitish descendant would discover anew the Sacred buried treasure.

12. As predicted after the flood, a great king, named Solomon, came to power and desired to build a Sacred house for the in-dwelling of the divine presence.

13. Solomon and his builders, the Masons, while building and excavating for the temple at Mt. Moriah, discovered the cavern and the sacred treasure.

14. After three attempts to obtain the treasure, they were finally successful. Those Masons were very rejoiceful upon receiving these preserved Mysteries.

15. But, three wicked men intervened and committed a horrible crime. They attempted to force one of the Masons, one of the faithful Masons who had discovered the treasure, Hiram Abif: or Hiram, the widow's son, to reveal the hiding (place) and the contents of the hidden treasure.

16. He would not reveal his knowledge and therefore they killed him.

17. While being slain, Hiram, with uplifted hands, cried out, "Oh Lord, My God, is there no help for the widow's son?" This has since become a general Masonic distress call.

18. Then three loyal Masons, seeking revenge, pursued the three evil ones.

19. One of the three faithful Masons overtook one of the arch villains. He was asleep with his sword, or knife, nearby.

20. The "Mason slew the villain with his own knife by cutting off his head.

21. In Masonic ceremonies, the words "strike off his head" were employed.

22. Also in Masonic ceremonies. In revolutionary France, the re-acting of the killing of this villain, the tyrant's name was King Phillippe le Bel.

23. The loyal Mason was rewarded by King Solomon.

24. The recovered treasures then became part of the temple treasury. It consisted of the brass records, the gold plate, the metal ball, the breast plate and the urim and thummim.

Such is the Masonic legend of the Secret Doctrine, or the sacred treasure in the sacred hill, or the treasure of the widow's son. The parallels of Joseph Smith and the history of Mormonism are so unmistakable, that to explain them only as coincidence would be ridiculous. Joseph Smith was named Enoch, even by God. He was 25 when he brought forth his Sacred record. His sacred record was buried in the hill by a man who had the initial "M". There were gold plates containing the mysteries of God. They were also in Egyptian hieroglyphics or some Egyptian form. There were brass plates, which also contained an account of the creation of the world. There was another record which contained an account of the tower of Babel. The cavity in the hill, and the hill and the cavity Joseph both saw in vision, was covered with a stone lid. The other treasures in the stone box were the breastplate, the urim and thummim, as well as the round metal ball which served as a director and was called the Liahona. Joseph Smith also claimed to be an Israelite, and he too made several fruitless attempts at getting the treasure when he first saw it. Joseph Smith had three witnesses to the Book of Mormon and the record itself bears witness that an archvillain named Laban, or Laban [La Ban?], was thwarting the availability and accessibility of the sacred records, had his head cut off by his own sword. This prophet also built temples for the in-dwelling of God's spirit. Now these parallels, dramatic as they seem, still do not represent the strongest part of the story. All of these aspects of the legend seem transformed into the history of Joseph

Smith, so much so that even it appears to be a kind of symbolic acting out of Masonic lore. But there is a point in this drama where the action goes beyond metaphor and the symbol merges into a tragic reality. This has to do, of course, with the death of Hiram Abif in the legend and the martyrdom of Joseph Smith. In June Joseph Smith gave himself up to be imprisoned and on June 27, 1844, a mob stormed the little Carthage jail. Hyrum was killed instantly and John Taylor seriously wounded. Joseph Smith, Master Mason and widow's son, went to the window and with upraised hands, commenced giving the Masonic distress call to fraternal Masons who were present in the mob: "Oh, Lord, My God." He was unable to complete his plea and fell out of the window to his death. How does a Mormon historian interpret Joseph Smith and the Masonic Enoch legend? The parallels demand an answer. Was Joseph Smith the fruition of Enoch's prophecy? Was this an extreme "grabbing on" by the Prophet? Or did mysterious and divine, even magical, forces attach themselves to him? Can anyone deny that Masonic influence on Joseph Smith and the Church, either before or after his personal Masonic membership? The evidence demands comments. I have attempted to indicate that with regard to Mormonism and Masonry, there remains an abundance of that which is "new under the sun". I do not believe that the Nauvoo story can adequately be told without an inquiry into Masonry. There are many questions which still demand the answers. I earnestly hope I have raised some questions. Perhaps I have answered a few. But if we, as Mormon historians, respond to these questions and myriads like them relative to Masonry in an ostrich-like fashion, with our

heads buried in the traditional sand, then I submit:
there never will be "any help for the widow's son."¹⁸¹

This is the real face of the LDS prophet Joseph Smith and his church and the only reason to present such long extracts from a genuine source was so that the readers may get the true picture - he used Christianity to achieve his Masonic goals as mentioned in the speech. Joseph Smith, the Free Mason, had disguised himself in the Divine office of prophethood and incorporated Masonic Doctrines in Christianity by deceiving people into believing that these doctrines were revealed to him by God. Joseph Smith met his horrendous end, thus fulfilling the prophecies of the Divine scriptures stating that a false claimant of revelation must be killed.

Another salient Characteristic of Joseph Smith

Joseph Smith claimed to be a prophet sent by God to restore the true church and the true gospel on the face of the earth, yet it was perfectly fine with him to blatantly tell lies. This is not an accusation on the LDS prophet as one may think, but the fact of the matter is that there are many examples to support this salient feature of the LDS prophet. Only one example will be provided here, which is of Joseph Smith's practice of polygamy. According to the book, *No man knows my history*, by Fawn M. Brodie, who was born and raised as a Mormon, Joseph Smith had 33 wives apart from his legal wife, Emma Smith. She has given the list of Joseph Smith's wives with substantial evidences. Not to mention, some of these "secret wives" were also married at the same time with other men. Joseph Smith was practising polygamy in secret. Moreover, when he concocted *the new and everlasting doctrine*, he threatened Emma in the following words:

And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord

thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law.¹⁸² (*Doctrine and Covenants 132:54*)

This is how Joseph Smith used his concocted revelation for his means, but at the same time, he openly denied such polygamous activities. For instance, when he was once asked about it, he replied: *What a thing it is for a man to be accused of committing adultery, and having seven wives, when I can only find one.*¹⁸³

Joseph Smith lied many times to cover up his wrongdoings – this is certainly not the characteristic of a true prophet. All of the above-mentioned criteria, historical facts, secret ambitions, and lying to cover up proves Joseph Smith to be a false prophet beyond a shadow of doubt.

CHAPTER 5

THE LDS SCRIPTURES

“Had it been from anyone other
than Allah, they would surely have
found therein much disagreement.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' scriptures have been discussed in detailed in the first part now let's read their scriptures from a critical perspective.

The Qur'anic Criterion

The Holy Qur'an is believed to be the most complete and perfect book and a source of guidance for mankind. The Holy Qur'an sets a very logical criterion which cannot be denied by any rational man. That is, if a book claims to be from God, then the following should be the standard to judge such book:

وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٥٠﴾

Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much disagreement.¹⁸⁴ (The Holy Qur'an 4:83)

Here, disagreement can be taken in the sense of contradiction. Therefore, the decisive factor is that if a book is claiming to be from God, and still has many contradictions, then that book shall be ruled out to be false in its claim. This is the criterion to judge any book which has such claims.

Keeping the same criterion in mind, let's take a look at the LDS scriptures. While reading, two obvious questions that come to mind are, firstly: **Does the LDS Church say that their scripture**

is from God? The answer is yes, they do and Joseph Smith blatantly divulged that:

This is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth— And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.¹⁸⁵ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 68:2-4)

Therefore, the LDS Church not only considers their scriptures to be the Word of God, but also based on this, the LDS prophet Joseph Smith claimed that:

I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.¹⁸⁶

Now, the second question comes to mind is: **Are there any contradictions in the LDS scriptures?** Again the answer is yes, there are many contradictions in the LDS scriptures and few will be presented to prove this. Here are a few examples:

The LDS scriptures contradict with each other on the very belief of God whether god is one consisting of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost or whether there are many gods. For example the following verses tell that there is one God:

And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the

kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end.¹⁸⁷

And he hath brought to pass the redemption of the world, whereby he that is found guiltless before him at the judgment day hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end.¹⁸⁸

And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name; for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one.¹⁸⁹

The above verses say that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost make one God; in other words, these verses support the false doctrine of Trinity. On the other hand, the 'Mormon god' reveals this to Joseph Smith:

According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest.¹⁹⁰ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 121:32)

Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the

angels are subject unto them.¹⁹¹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:20)

Abraham received concubines, and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law; as Isaac also and Jacob did none other things than that which they were commanded; and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods.¹⁹² (*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:37)

Here, Joseph Smith's 'god' revealed to him that there are many gods, thus, clearly contradicting verses from the LDS scriptures.

Then, another contradiction in that the LDS scriptures have is that in some verses it says that God has a spirit but in other verses it says that god has body, flesh, and bones. For instance:

And then Ammon said: Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said: This is God. And Ammon said unto him again: Believest thou that this Great Spirit, who is God, created all things which are in heaven and in the earth?¹⁹³

And the king said: Is God that Great Spirit that brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem? And Aaron said unto him: Yea, he is that Great Spirit, and he created all things both in heaven and in earth. Believest thou this? And he said: Yea, I believe that the Great Spirit created all things, and I desire that ye should tell me concerning all these things, and I will believe thy words.¹⁹⁴

The above verses teach that God is a spirit; but on the contrary, the following verse says that God has body, flesh and bones:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.¹⁹⁵ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 130:22)

Please note that these are not ordinary contradictions, the very belief in God is contradicted in the Mormon scriptures yet it is claimed that their scriptures is Word of God and the most complete book. The god of Mormonism could not ever present himself properly without contradicting his statements consequently proving that the LDS scriptures are certainly not from God, the Almighty.

Moreover, the LDS scriptures also contradict the issue of lying. On one hand it says that God does not lie and on the other, the Mormon god commands his people to lie. For instance:

And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak? And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie.¹⁹⁶

Moreover, 'god' condemns lying and says in the Book of Mormon: *Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell.*¹⁹⁷

From the above references, it is evident that God neither tells a lie nor likes those who lie but the following verses show that Mormon god is commanding Prophet Abraham to lie:

And it came to pass when I was come near to enter into Egypt, the Lord said unto me: Behold, Sarai, thy wife, is a very fair woman to look upon; Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see her,

they will say—She is his wife; and they will kill you, but they will save her alive; therefore see that ye do on this wise: Let her say unto the Egyptians, she is thy sister, and thy soul shall live. And it came to pass that I, Abraham, told Sarai, my wife, all that the Lord had said unto me—Therefore say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee.¹⁹⁸

Clearly contradicting statements from the LDS scriptures fail to prove its divine origin because God's word cannot be contradictory.

Furthermore, the LDS scriptures also disagree on whether or not the death of a person seals his fate. The Book of Mormon states that death seals a man's fate in the following words:

And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom's paths that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved— I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God; therefore he listeth to obey the evil spirit, and becometh an enemy to all righteousness; therefore, the Lord has no place in him, for he dwelleth not in unholy temples. Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever

and ever. And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment.¹⁹⁹

It seems that Mormon god has a short memory as he makes one statement and then forgets about it and goes on to make another statement which contradicts the previous one. He makes the following contradicting statement:

These are they who are cast down to hell and suffer the wrath of Almighty God, until the fulness of times, when Christ shall have subdued all enemies under his feet, and shall have perfected his work; When he shall deliver up the kingdom, and present it unto the Father, spotless, saying: I have overcome and have trodden the wine-press alone, even the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. Then shall he be crowned with the crown of his glory, to sit on the throne of his power to reign forever and ever. But behold, and lo, we saw the glory and the inhabitants of the telestial world, that they were as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore; And heard the voice of the Lord saying: These all shall bow the knee, and every tongue shall confess to him who sits upon the throne forever and ever; For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his own works, his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared; And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.²⁰⁰
(*Doctrine and Covenants 76:106-116*)

The LDS god cannot make up his mind whether to give a chance after one's death, clearly saying that one will get a second chance after death.

Another contradiction among many is the concept of polygamy. At some points it is discouraged and at others, it has been commanded to the believers that one must accept “the new and everlasting covenant” in order to achieve his exaltation and to become god eventually. The Book of Mormon condemns the doctrine of plural wives in the following words:

And now it came to pass that the people of Nephi, under the reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices, such as like unto David of old desiring many wives and concubines, and also Solomon, his son.²⁰¹

Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord.²⁰²

...they should have save it were one wife, and concubines they should have none, and there should not be whoredoms committed among them.²⁰³

For behold, he did not keep the commandments of God, but he did walk after the desires of his own heart. And he had many wives and concubines. And he did cause his people to commit sin, and do that which was abominable in the sight of the Lord. Yea, and they did commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness.²⁰⁴

The above verses not only clearly condemn and forbid polygamy, but also explain that it is a sin corresponding to adultery. This way, they branded all the prophets who had practised polygamy as sinners and adulterous (God forbid). Now, let's read from Doctrine and Covenants where it has been commanded and encouraged:

VERILY, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines—²⁰⁵ (*Doctrine and Covenants 132:1*)

Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same. For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.²⁰⁶

Abraham received concubines, and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law; as Isaac also and Jacob did none other things than that which they were commanded; and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods. David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me. David's wives and concubines were given unto him of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me save in the case

of Uriah and his wife; and, therefore he hath fallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world, for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord.²⁰⁷

And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood—if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else. And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified.²⁰⁸

The above verses show how the LDS scriptures contradict with each other. At first, those prophets who practised polygamy were called sinners and adulterous yet later, they were justified and Joseph Smith was also commanded to do the same. This is for certain that God's word cannot have such manifest errors and contradictions. A question can be raised that Islam has also commanded polygamy. In brief, a reply to the allegation on Islam is that unlike the Mormonism, God, the Almighty has not commanded all Muslims to practice it in order to go to heaven; rather, the option is given under certain circumstances. Furthermore, Islam is the only religion that has put a restriction on the number of wives that a man can have while before Islam, this was certainly not the case. Anyone could have as many wives as he so desired, and so is the case with Mormonism that Joseph Smith is reported to have had more than 33 secret wives apart from his legal wife, Emma Smith and most of his secret wives were also married to different men²⁰⁹. Islam never permits believers to have a secret wife. The Holy Qur'an commands the believers:

فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ
مُسَفِّحَاتٍ وَلَا مَتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

So marry them with the leave of their masters and give them their dowries according to what is fair, they being chaste, not committing fornication, nor taking secret paramours.²¹⁰ (*The Holy Qur'an* 4:26)

To this day, many sects of Mormonism, especially Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints continue to follow the footsteps of their prophet Joseph Smith in America and practise of polygamy is far greater in early Mormons and Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints than in Islam. These polygamist activities are unveiled in a documentary "*Lifting the veil of polygamy*" produced by a group of former Mormons who are now known as "*Living Hope Ministry*".

As mentioned above, these are not ordinary contradictions that can be ignored. These are grievous contradictions that certainly prove that these scriptures cannot be from a divine source. There are numerous other contradictions in the LDS scriptures but these should be enough to prove that the LDS Church is false in its claims and that their scriptures are not from God as they have many contradictions. Not to mention, there are more than 4000 changes that took place in the Book of Mormon alone after its first publication; yet the LDS Church still claims that it is the most complete book despite apparently missing 116 pages. Ed Decker, a former Mormon who is considered to be an authority on Mormonism writes in his book *Decker's complete handbook on Mormonism* that: *There have been more than 4000 changes made to the Book of Mormon, and all of them are minor.*²¹¹

Credibility of Joseph Smith and the witnesses

The credibility of the person who allegedly translated the Book of Mormon is not trustworthy because Joseph Smith was not only charged as a "disorderly person" but also was convicted

criminal and fugitive. Moreover, the witnesses of the Book of Mormon are certainly not reliable either. All the witnesses except Joseph Smith Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Samuel H. Smith left the Church. Notably, Oliver Cowdery who was also the scribe of Joseph Smith and actually saw the gold plates was excommunicated from the Church for accusing Joseph Smith of adultery, and in response, Joseph Smith publically charged him of stealing, lying, and adultery. Moreover, the other two witnesses of the Book of Mormon who had actually seen the gold plates were also excommunicated which includes David Whitmer who later made his Church known as the New Church of Christ and his followers were also known as Whitmerites. Oliver Cowdery also joined him and became his counsellor. Such is the state of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon which is briefly touched upon. In reality, after reading the actual events relating these witnesses no rational person can admit the credibility and validity of the Book of Mormon.

Archaeology of the Book of Mormon

A lot of research has been done and many books are written to prove the truthfulness or falsehood of the Book of Mormon. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Brigham Young University founded the *New World Archaeological Foundation* (NWAf) in 1952 which was funded by the Church. The ultimate purpose of this particular foundation was to prove the Book of Mormon through archaeological research. The mastermind behind this was Mr. Thomas Stuart Ferguson, who planned this foundation hoping to achieve his purpose to prove the Book of Mormon. The LDS Church funded the foundation with hundreds of thousands of dollars. However, after thorough research all his work regarding the Book of Mormon proved to be futile. He later admitted that he wasted 25 years of his life proving the Book of Mormon. The idea is not to present the lengthy research of NWAf here, but two extracts will be presented from *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* which is an independent Mormon quarterly publication, which gives the summary of its research. The first

extract is from an article written by Mr. Michael Douglas Coe who is one of the leading authorities on American Archaeology, he writes that:

Let me now state un-categorically that as far as I know there is not one professionally trained archaeologist, who is not a Mormon, who sees any scientific justification for believing the foregoing to be true,... Next, we come to "Book of Mormon archaeology," which I would define as an attempt by Mormons to establish the historicity of the Book of Mormon...Green's assertion that "The first myth we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology exists"... nothing, absolutely nothing, has ever shown up in any New World excavation which would suggest to a dispassionate observer that the Book of Mormon, as claimed by Joseph Smith, is a historical document relating to the history of early migrants to our hemisphere.²¹²

Then, the second extract from an article by a Mormon scholar Mr. Dee F. Green who was honest enough to publicly admit that:

Just how much the foundation (New World Archaeological Foundation, the author) is doing to advance the cause of Book of Mormon archaeology depends on one's point of view about Book of Mormon archaeology. There have been no spectacular finds (from the Book of Mormon point of view), no Zarahemlas (a huge ancient city according to the Book of Mormon, the author), no gold plates brought to light, no horses uncovered,... In assessing the future relationship of the Book of Mormon to archaeology, one must first consider how long it will take us to rid ourselves of the unfortunate myths we have built around the relationship. For the general Church

membership my prognosis is unfortunately pessimistic... The first myth we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology exists... a department of Archaeology at BYU (Brigham Young University, the author) devoted to the production of Book of Mormon archaeologists do not insure that Book of Mormon Archaeology really exists. If one is to study Book of Mormon archaeology, then one must have a corpus of data with which to deal. We do not. The Book of Mormon is really there so one can have Book of Mormon studies, and archaeology is really there so one can study archaeology, but the two are not wed. At least they are not wed in reality since no Book of Mormon location is known with reference to modern topography. Biblical archaeology can be studied because we do know where Jerusalem and Jericho were and are, but we do not know where Zarahemla and Bountiful (nor any other location for that matter) were or are. It would seem then that a concentration on geography should be the first order of business, but we have already seen that twenty years of such an approach has left us empty-handed.

Another myth which needs dispelling is our Lamanite syndrome. Most American Indians are neither descendants of Laman nor necessarily of Book of Mormon peoples... there is ample evidence in the archaeological record to show that this hemisphere was widely populated by peoples of Asiatic stock crossing the Bering Strait long before Book of Mormon peoples were supposed to have arrived on the scene.

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These are the words of a Mormon scholar who was an editor of the *University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, published at Church's owned Brigham Young University. This also proves the

fact that this is a well known phenomenon amongst the well educated and intellectuals that the Book of Mormon is a religious fiction and myth.

Is Book of Mormon “the most correct of any book”?

For inquisition into the correctness or completeness of the Book of Mormon, let's look at what makes a thing complete. Everything is said to have four causes of its existence and those are:

Efficient cause (as in the maker)

Material cause (the matter of which the thing is made)

Formal cause (that form in which its essence consists)

Final cause (purpose for which is made)

These causes are also known as Aristotle's Four Causes. The following reference explains further in detail on what are the four causes:

Aristotle proposed in *Physics* II, 3 that we employ four very different kinds of explanatory principle {Gk. aition [aition]} to the question of why a thing is, the four causes:

The **material cause** is the basic stuff out of which the thing is made. The material cause of a house, for example, would include the wood, metal, glass, and other building materials used in its construction. All of these things belong in an explanation of the house because it could not exist unless they were present in its composition.

The **formal cause** {Gk. *eidos* [*eidos*]} is the pattern or essence in conformity with which these materials are assembled. Thus, the formal cause of our exemplary house would be the sort of thing that is represented on a blueprint of its design. This, too, is part of the explanation of the house, since its materials would be only a pile of rubble (or a different house) if they were not put together in this way.

The **efficient cause** is the agent or force immediately responsible for bringing this matter and that form together in the production of the thing. Thus, the efficient cause of the house would include the carpenters, masons, plumbers, and other workers who used these materials to build the house in accordance with the blueprint for its construction. Clearly the house would not be what it is without their contribution.

Lastly, the **final cause** {Gk. *teloV* [*télos*]} is the end or purpose for which a thing exists, so the final cause of our house would be to provide shelter for human beings. This is part of the explanation of the house's existence because it would never have been built unless someone needed it as a place to live.

Causes of all four sorts are necessary elements in any adequate account of the existence and nature of the thing, Aristotle believed, since the absence or modification of any one of them would result in the existence of a thing of some different sort. Moreover, an explanation that includes all four causes completely captures the significance and reality of the thing itself.²¹⁴

In the case of a book, it can only be considered “perfect” if it has all the four characteristics. If a book lacks in any of the four causes then in that case it will be considered to be an incomplete and imperfect book. The founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at has used this very point to prove the claim of the Holy Qur’an and he writes:

اول قرآن شریف کے نزول کی علت فاعلی بیان کی اور اس کی عظمت اور بزرگی کی طرف اشارہ فرمایا اور کہا اَللّٰہم میں خدا ہوں جو سب سے زیادہ جانتا ہوں۔ یعنی نازل کنندہ اس کتاب کا میں ہوں جو علیم و حکیم ہوں جس کے علم کے برابر کسی کا علم نہیں۔ پھر بعد اس کے علت مادی قرآن کے بیان میں فرمائی اور اس کی عظمت کی طرف اشارہ فرمایا اور کہا اَللّٰہُ الْکِتَابُ وہ کتاب ہے یعنی ایسی عظیم الشان اور عالی مرتبت کتاب ہے جس کی علت مادی علم الہی ہے یعنی جس کی نسبت ثابت ہے کہ اس کا منبع اور چشمہ ذات قدیم حضرت حکیم مطلق ہے۔ اس جگہ اللہ تعالیٰ نے وہ کالفظ اختیار کرنے سے جو بعد اور دوری کے لئے آتا ہے۔ اس بات کی طرف اشارہ فرمایا کہ یہ کتاب اس ذاتِ عالی صفات کے علم سے ظہور پذیر ہے جو اپنی ذات میں بے مثل و مانند ہے جس کے علوم کاملہ و اسرار دقیقہ نظر انسانی کی حد جولان سے بہت بعید اور دور ہیں۔ پھر بعد اس کے علتِ صوری کا قابلِ تعریف ہونا ظاہر فرمایا اور کہا لَا رَیْبَ فِیْہِ یعنی قرآن اپنی ذات میں ایسی صورت مدلل و معقول پر واقع ہے کہ کسی نوع کے شک کرنے کی اس میں گنجائش نہیں۔ یعنی وہ دوسری کتابوں کی طرح بطور کتھا او کہانی کے نہیں۔ بلکہ ادلّٰہِ یقینیہ و براہین قطعیہ پر مشتمل ہے اور اپنے مطالب پر حججِ بیّہ اور دلائل شافیہ بیان کرتا ہے اور فی نفسہ ایک معجزہ ہے جو شکوک اور شبہات کے دور کرنے میں سیفِ قاطع کا حکم رکھتا ہے۔ اور خدا شناسی کے بارے میں صرف ہونا چاہئے کے ظنی مرتبہ میں نہیں چھوڑتا بلکہ ہے کے یقینی اور قطعی مرتبہ تک پہنچاتا ہے۔ یہ تو علل ثلاثہ کی

عظمت کا بیان فرمایا اور پھر باوجود عظیم الشان ہونے ان ہر سہ علتوں کے کہ جن کو تاثیر اور اصلاح میں دخل عظیم ہے۔ علتِ رابعہ یعنی علتِ غائی نزولِ قرآن شریف کو جو رہنمائی اور ہدایت ہے صرف متقین میں منحصر کر دیا اور فرمایا *هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ* یعنی یہ کتاب صرف ان جو اہرِ قابلہ کی ہدایت کے لئے نازل کی گئی ہے جو بوجہ پاک باطنی و عقل سلیم و فہم مستقیم و شوقِ طلبِ حق و نیتِ صحیح انجامِ کارِ درجہ ایمان و خدا شناسی و تقویٰ کامل پر پہنچ جائیں گے۔ یعنی جن کو خدا اپنے علمِ قدیم سے جانتا ہے کہ ان کی فطرت اس ہدایت کے مناسب حال واقعہ ہے۔ اور وہ معارفِ حقانی میں ترقی کر سکتے ہیں۔ وہ بالآخر اس کتاب سے ہدایت پا جائیں گے۔

The **Efficient cause** is made to the Author of the Holy Quran and His Grandeur and Majesty are indicated. It is said: I am Allah the All-Knowing; that is to say, I, Who Am All-Knowing and All-Wise, Whose knowledge is not matched by the knowledge of anyone else, am revealing this Book. Then, the **Material cause** is the greatness of the Holy Quran is referred to and it is said: This is the Perfect Book; that is to say, this is a grand and high graded Book which derives from Divine knowledge. It is established with regard to it that its source and spring is the Eternal Being of the All-Wise. By referring to it as The Book, God Almighty has indicated that this Book derives from the knowledge of that Being with high attributes, Who is Matchless and Peerless and Whose perfect knowledge and minute mysteries are very far from the limits of human sight.

Then it is said that the **Formal cause** i.e. the body of the Quran is so well reasoned that there is no room left in it for any kind of doubt, meaning that like other books it is not a mere tale or story, but is

comprehensive of conclusive arguments and reasoning, and sets forth clear proofs of its objects and purposes, and is in itself a miracle which operates like a sharp sword for the removal of doubts and suspicions, and does not leave the matter of the recognition of God at the conjectural stage of He should be, but carries the matter to the certainty of, He is.

Despite the grandeur of these purposes which are greatly concerned with effect and reform, it proceeds to define the fourth purpose which is its **Final cause**, which is the provision of guidance for the righteous. It announces that this Book has been revealed for the guidance of those who, on account of their pure interiors, and sane reason, and firm intelligence, and eagerness for search of truth, and right motives, would, in the end, arrive at a high degree of faith and recognition of God and perfect righteousness. In other words, those about whom God knows that their nature is suited to this guidance and they can make progress in true insights, will in the end be guided by this Book.²¹⁵

The Holy Qur'an has all the four causes as is vividly illustrated in the commentaries of the Promised Messiah^{as} and his caliphs. Let's find out whether the Book of Mormon has all the four reasons or not and whether it is "the most complete book" or not.

The **Efficient cause** of the Book of Mormon is a "seer stone" and Joseph Smith would put that stone in his hat and it would glow and the English translation would appear. Then, he would read the translation to his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, and he would write and read it back to him and if the translation was correct the then the sentence in the "seer stone" would disappear and the

next sentence would appear and if it was not then it would remain there until the corrections were made. Moreover, the title of the Book of Mormon proves the fact that the origin of this book is a man not God.

THE
BOOK OF MORMON

AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY
THE HAND OF MORMON
UPON PLATES
TAKEN FROM THE PLATES OF NEPHI²¹⁶

Thus, the Book of Mormon has failed in the first cause and failed to justify its boastful claim. Whereas, the Holy Qur'an in its beginning says that this Book is from God who is All-knowing:

اَلَمْ ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيْهِ

Alif Lam Mim (I am Allah the All-knowing). This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it²¹⁷ (*The Holy Qur'an* 2:2-3)

Then, the **Material cause** of the Book of Mormon is its greatness which is established by its origin. In this case of the Book of Mormon it is the "seer stone" or it's writer Mormon, or it's translator. In any case, the greatness of the Book of Mormon should have been in its claims to be "the most complete book" but it is a well known fact that there have been more than 4000 corrections since its first publication in 1830. Up to this day, 180 years have passed and the Book of Mormon has seen more than 4000 changes and this is the "greatness" of this book. On the converse, the Holy Qur'an which has made the same claim, 1400 years have passed and not a single correction or alteration has been made. Even the most bitter enemies of Islam had no choice but to admit the fact that the Holy Qur'an is the same book today as it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon

him) 1,400 years ago. Sir William Muir admits that: "There is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries (now 14 centuries) with so pure a text." Therefore, this cause also proves that the Book of Mormon is not the most complete book.

Then, the **Formal cause** of the Book of Mormon is that its body should be well reasoned so as to leave no doubt about it. However, the Book of Mormon gives the account of those people who lived in ancient America. Not to mention archaeologists are yet to find evidences pertaining to the people about whom the book was written. Therefore, the book is full of doubts and ambiguities in entirety.

Furthermore, the **Final cause** is guidance for mankind. Although Joseph Smith claims that "*a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book,*"²¹⁸ the Book of Mormon does not make any such claim. Despite this statement of Joseph Smith, he failed to attain nearness to the Almighty and instead incurred Divine wrath. The final cause does not apply to the Book of Mormon thus proving that it is wrong in its boastful claims and certainly not the most complete book.

CHAPTER 6

THE LDS BELIEFS

“And when Allah will say, “O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, ‘Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah?’”, he will answer, “Holy art Thou. I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou Who art the Knower of hidden things. “I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me — ‘Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.’ And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them; and Thou art Witness over all things.”

The beliefs that were presented in the first part are often taught and preached by the LDS missionaries to the gentiles. Here are a few of the most ambiguous beliefs that are often hidden and not divulged to the public.

Plurality of gods

Although The Latter-day Saints say that they believe in One God, it is nonetheless evident from the revelations of Joseph Smith that his beliefs consist of many gods. Joseph Smith taught that:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.²¹⁹ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 130:22)

The above quotation clearly proves how the Mormons believe that there is more than one god. Joseph Smith's "god" once revealed to him on the 20th of March, 1839:

A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.²²⁰ (*Doctrine and Covenants* 121:28)

This "prophecy" was fulfilled 11 days prior to his murder when he delivered a lecture on the "Plurality of Gods". Here is an extract from his sermon:

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

I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods. If this is in accordance with the New Testament, lo and behold! we have three Gods anyhow, and they are plural; and who can contradict it?

Our text says, "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." The Apostles have discovered that there were Gods above, for John says God was the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. My object was to preach the scriptures, and preach the doctrine they contain, there being a God above, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am bold to declare I have taught all the strongest doctrines publicly, and always teach stronger doctrines in public than in private. John was one of the men, and apostles declare they were made kings and priests unto God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It reads just so in the Revelation, Hence the doctrine of a plurality of Gods is as prominent in the Bible as any other doctrine. It is all over the face of the Bible. It stands beyond the

power of controversy. A wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein...

Scriptural Interpretation

Some say I do not interpret the Scripture the same as they do. They say it means the heathen's gods. Paul says there are Gods many and Lords many; and that makes a plurality of Gods, in spite of the whims of all men. Without a revelation, I am not going to give them the knowledge of the God of heaven. You know and I testify that Paul had no allusion to the heathen gods. I have it from God, and get over it if you can. I have a witness of the Holy Ghost, and a testimony that Paul had no allusion to the heathen gods in the text. I will show from the Hebrew Bible that I am correct, and the first word shows a plurality of Gods; and I want the apostates and learned men to come here and prove to the contrary, if they can. An unlearned boy must give you a little Hebrew. Berosheit baurau Eloheim ait aushamayeen vehau aurait, rendered by King James' translators, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." I want to analyze the word Berosheit. Rosh, the head; Sheit, a grammatical termination; the Baith was not originally put there when the inspired man wrote it, but it has been since added by an old Jew. Baurau signifies to bring forth; Eloheim is from the word Elo, God, in the singular number; and by adding the word heim, it renders it Gods. It read first, "In the beginning the head of the Gods brought forth the Gods," or, as others have translated it, "The head of the Gods called the Gods together." I want to show a little learning as well as other fools.

The head God organized the heavens and the earth. I defy all the world to refute me. In the beginning the heads of the Gods organized the heavens and the earth. Now the learned priests and the people rage, and the heathen imagine a vain thing. If we pursue the Hebrew text further, it reads, "The head one of the Gods said, Let us make a man in our own image." I once asked a learned Jew, "If the Hebrew language compels us to render all words ending in heim in the plural, why not render the first Eloheim plural?" He replied, "That is the rule with few exceptions; but in this case it would ruin the Bible." He acknowledged I was right. I came here to investigate these things precisely as I believe them. Hear and judge for yourselves; and if you go away satisfied, well and good.

In the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation. It is a great subject I am dwelling on. The word Eloheim ought to be in the plural all the way through—Gods. The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us; and when you take [that] view of the subject, its sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness and perfection of the Gods. All I want is to get the simple, naked truth, and the whole truth.

Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is a strange God anyhow—three in one, and one in three! It is a curious organization. "Father, I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou hast given me." "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are." All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism. It would make the biggest God in all the

world. He would be a wonderfully big God—he would be a giant or a monster...

Abraham's Reasoning

I learned a testimony concerning Abraham, and he reasoned concerning the God of heaven. "In order to do that," said he, "suppose we have two facts: that supposes another fact may exist—two men on the earth, one wiser than the other, would logically show that another who is wiser than the wisest may exist. Intelligences exist one above another, so that there is no end to them.

"If Abraham reasoned thus—If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that He had a Father also. Where was there ever a son without a father? And where was there ever a father without first being a son? Whenever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor? And everything comes in this way. Paul says that which is earthly is in the likeness of that which is heavenly, Hence if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that He had a Father also?...

I want you to pay particular attention to what I am saying. Jesus said that the Father wrought precisely in the same way as His Father had done before Him. As the Father had done before? He laid down His life, and took it up the same as His Father had done before. He did as He was sent, to lay down His life and take it up again; and then was committed unto Him the keys. I know it is good reasoning.²²¹

Moreover, Joseph Smith taught that god was an “exalted man”. In April of 1844, he addressed the church conference and blatantly taught the following:

God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible,—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man;... it is necessary we should understand the character and being of God and how He came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.²²²

Meaning that Jesus had a father, that father had a father and so on and so forth, i.e., an innumerable number of gods.

Moreover, the LDS apostle and author of many books, Bruce R. McConkie, also taught that their god has a family and that human beings are their literal children. He states:

God lives in the family unit. He is our Father in heaven—the literal and personal Father of the spirits of all men. He begat us; we are the offspring of Heavenly Parents: we have an Eternal Father and an Eternal Mother. We were born as spirits, and we dwelt in the presence of our Eternal Parents; we lived before our mortal birth. As spirits we were in all respects as we are now save only that we were not housed in mortal bodies as is the present circumstance. Christ was the Firstborn of all the heavenly host; Lucifer was a son of the morning; each of us came into being as

conscious identities in our appointed order; and Christ is our Elder Brother.²²³

Critical Analysis

This is reality of the LDS “god”. This is paganism disguised in the veil of Christianity. This is what Paul had started and Joseph Smith has perfected. Thus, Joseph Smith was a strong believer in the plurality of gods and he preached this doctrine all his life. He attempted to prove that this doctrine exists in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. Joseph Smith said that Paul taught this doctrine and presented the following verse:

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.²²⁴ (1 *Corinthian* 8:5-6)

Thus, it was Paul who opened the window of plurality of gods and said that Jesus is god’s “begotten son” - now there is no stopping. He was the one who distorted the pure and pristine teachings that were brought by Jesus Christ. Then, Joseph Smith came and went beyond the Pauline Christianity and taught that there are many gods and that we are the literal sons and daughters of god. Furthermore, he and his successors fervently taught that human beings can also become gods; in fact, this is the very purpose of the creation of human beings. Once a religion deviates from the Oneness of God, the Holy Qur’an says:

وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ
الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ۝

And whoso associates anything with Allah, falls, as it were, from a height, and the birds snatch him up, or

the wind blows him away to a distant place.²²⁵ (*The Holy Qur'an* 22:32)

This is what has happened to Christianity, from the moment they believed Jesus to be a “begotten son” of god, Christians were forced to adopt the pagan and Hindu concept of god. The only way for Christians to return to the doctrine of Oneness of God is to leave the concept of the deification of Jesus Christ, in other words, they would have to accept that Jesus was only a human prophet of God and nothing more. The Christians, including the Latter-day Saints, have fallen away from the pure and pristine teachings that were brought by Jesus Christ, i.e., “...*The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*”²²⁶ Jesus Christ taught all his life that there is only One God and he never taught that which was taught by Paul and Joseph Smith.

Joseph Smith quoted Genesis 1:1 in Hebrew and misinterpreted it to prove that there are many gods. First of all, Jews are monotheistic and they have been reading the Torah in their own language and it has never occurred to them that *Elohiem* refers to many gods. This is a really absurd and ludicrous argument that Joseph Smith has exploited in order to support his preconceived version of god. Secondly, since Joseph Smith quoted the Hebrew version of the Torah, therefore, for a better explanation, the author contacted two scholars who are well-versed in the Hebrew language. The first was Dr. Seymour Epstein, a Jewish scholar who acquired his Bachelor of Hebrew Literature in 1968 from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and for ten years, from 1999 to 2009, Dr. Epstein was the director of Toronto’s Board of Jewish Education at UJA Federation and is now teaching at York University in Toronto, Canada and consulting in the field of Jewish education. He explained this quote in the following words:

This quote has misinterpreted the Hebrew of Genesis 1:1. God is called by several names in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament according to Christians). Elohim is one of them and, although in this case, it signifies one God, the God of Israel, its form is plural. Many singular nouns have a plural form such as scissors or pants in English. In other places, Elohim does refer to several gods, but not the God of Israel, rather pagan gods of neighbouring cultures. For example, Deuteronomy 11:16, "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them."²²⁷

Then, Mr. Falah Odeh, who was born, raised and spent most of his life in Kababir, Israel, is considered to be an authority on Semitic and Arabic languages and is currently teaching in Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada, thoroughly explained this issue in the following words:

The quotation 'Berosheit baurau Eloheim ait aushamayeen vebau aurait' that you showed me from the book 'SCRIPTUAL TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH' is in the Yiddish Language (East European Ashkinazi Jewish accent).

The normal regular Hebrew transliteration of that quotation from the Bible (Genesis 1:1) is as follows:

Be rashith (In beginning) bara (created) Eloheim (Eloheim) ait hashamayim (the heavens) ve (and) ait haarets (the earth)

In Hebrew and Arabic languages, like other languages, the plural form is often used instead of singular out of respect and honour.

Anyway, Judaism is a monotheist religion. It believes in One God. In the Bible, we see in the book Deuteronomy, chapter 6, verse 4:

Shm'a (hear-you) Israel (Israel) ieue (Yahweh)
elohainu (Eloheim-of-us) ieue (Yahweh) aihad (one)²²⁸

This needs no further explanation and it makes quite evident that Joseph Smith misinterpreted the verse in the Hebrew language to lead innocent people astray. This is the real face of the LDS "prophet".

The Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an teach that there is only One God, Who, alone, is the Creator of this universe and many more. Here are a few examples from the Old Testament that prove the Oneness of God:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:²²⁹
(Deuteronomy 4:6)

... O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.²³⁰ (2 Kings 19:15)

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.²³¹ (Isaiah 45:5-6)

A few examples from the New Testament that prove the Oneness of God are as follows:

Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with

all thy strength: this is the first commandment.²³²
(Mark 12:29-30)

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.²³³
(Mark 10:17-18)

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.²³⁴ (John 17:3)

These verses leave no doubt that the Old Testament as well as the New Testament teach and preach only the One, True God and all other gods, be it Jesus or any other, to be false gods.

Now, let's read a few verses from the most complete and revealed Book, the Holy Qur'an, which teaches the Oneness of God:

وَالَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

And your God is One God; there is no God but He, the Gracious, the Merciful.²³⁵ (*The Holy Qur'an* 2:164)

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

Allah bears witness that there is no God but He — and also do the angels and those possessed of knowledge — Maintainer of justice; there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise.²³⁶ (*The Holy Qur'an* 3:19)

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah *far* above that which they associate *with Him*.²³⁷ (*The Holy Qur'an* 59:24)

The above verses emphatically teach that there is only One God. Thus, the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an teach and preach only One God and rejects all the other gods.

Lastly, God is One and He does not have any family as The Latter-day Saints believe. This was refuted 1500 years ago in the Holy Qur'an and in the following words:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ
كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

Say, 'He is Allah, the One; 'Allah, the Independent and Besought of all. 'He begets not, nor is He begotten; 'And there is none like unto Him.'²³⁸ (*The Holy Qur'an* 112:2-5)

These verses cut at the root of all polytheistic beliefs that exist in one form or another - belief in two, three or more gods, and this includes the Latter-day Saints.

Jesus: "literal son of god"

The LDS Church teaches that Jesus Christ, Lucifer (Satan) and the human race are all the literal sons and daughters of god. For

that matter, god and the human race are the same species. Brigham Young, the second prophet of the LDS Church, said that:

...we actually believe that God the Father is our heavenly Father, that we are His children; and we believe that Jesus Christ is our elder brother – that he is actually the Son of our Father and that he is the Savior of the world, and was appointed to this before the foundations of this earth were laid.²³⁹

Furthermore, he explained that:

...He (Jesus), as we are the sons of our earthly fathers. God is the Father of our spirits, which are clothed upon by fleshly bodies, begotten for us by our earthly fathers. Jesus is our elder Brother spirit clothed upon with an earthly body begotten by the Father of our spirits.²⁴⁰

How was Jesus born? Let's read this story in the very words of Brigham Young:

Things were first created spiritually; the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with Him. Then He commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, precisely as He had been created in this flesh himself, by partaking of the course material that was organized and composed this earth, until His system was charged with it, consequently the tabernacles of His children were organized from the coarse materials of this earth.

When the time came that His first-born, the Saviour, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the Father came Himself and favoured that spirit (Mary) with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it. The Saviour was begotten by the

Father of His spirit, by the same Being who is the Father of our spirits, and that is all the organic difference between Jesus Christ and you and me. And a difference there is between our Father and us consists in that He has gained His exaltation, and has obtained eternal lives. The principle of eternal lives is an eternal existence, eternal duration, eternal exaltation.²⁴¹

In simpler words, god, himself, came to Earth and had intercourse with Mary so that his son, Jesus, could be conceived (God forbid). This concept is also present in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* and other literature of the LDS Church. For instance:

...Jesus Christ is the Son of Elohim both as spiritual and bodily offspring; that is to say, Elohim is literally the Father of the spirit of Jesus Christ and also of the body in which Jesus Christ performed His mission in the flesh, and which body died on the cross and was afterward taken up by the process of resurrection, and is now the immortalized tabernacle of the eternal spirit of our Lord and Savior.²⁴²

Critical Analysis

Dear readers, this is Mormonism or paganism at its best. To prove that Jesus was the son of god, the LDS Church has concocted such stories. Indeed, the real Christianity has been high-jacked by these pagan doctrines that were introduced and taught by Paul and perfected by Joseph Smith. One must be a lunatic to believe in such medieval doctrines and fairy tales in this DNA Age.

Jesus: Son of god or Prophet?

Jesus: was he the son of god or was he only a prophet of God? For this inquisition, let's carefully study the Gospels and figure out the very role of Jesus in Christianity.

The First question: Did Jesus ever teach that he is a god besides God? No, Jesus never taught this doctrine and always rejected such ideas. It is said in the 12th chapter of the Gospel of Mark that a few scribes came to enquire about a few things. One of them asked Jesus as to which commandment is the first of all commandments. This was the best chance to make his position known, that he is the son of God and that he shares Divinity with Him, but Jesus replied:

The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.²⁴³ (Mark 12:29-30)

Then, the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Mark makes it even clearer when a man knelt down before Jesus, called him “Good teacher” and sought his guidance. Jesus replied in the following words: *Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.*²⁴⁴ (Mark 10:18)

Here, again, Jesus declared himself to be humble just like all other prophets and if he was the son of God, then he should have encouraged the man rather than telling him that “*There is none good but one, that is God*”.

The Holy Qur’an also supports the view that Jesus never taught the doctrine of plurality of gods, nor the doctrine of his divinity. It is recorded:

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّيَ إِلَهَيْنِ
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ إِنْ
كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
عَلَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ ۝

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝

And when Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, 'Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah?'" he will answer, "Holy art Thou. I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou Who art the Knower of hidden things. "I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me — 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them; and Thou art Witness over all things."²⁴⁵ (*The Holy Qur'an* 5:117-118)

These are powerful and thought provoking words for Christians and as well as for The Latter-day Saints. The above is a discourse between God, the Almighty, and Jesus Christ after his demise where he totally rejects teaching such false doctrines and makes himself innocent before God, the Almighty, that he had only taught them to worship "You", i.e., God. Hence, according to the Holy Qur'an, the doctrine of plurality of gods was never the teaching of Christ. As a matter of fact, Jesus Christ brought the same teachings that all other prophets taught before him, that is, to worship the One True God, Who has no associates besides Him.

The references from the Gospels and the Holy Qur'an clearly indicate and leave no doubt that Jesus taught to worship only One God and he never taught the doctrine of plurality of gods. This is

a false doctrine that was concocted and taught by Paul and the real Christianity has been hijacked by this doctrine.

The second question: What does the term god mean? The term god or sons of Gods or His children is often used in revealed scriptures or by inspired or saintly people for referring to those who receive the word of God and those who are prophets. Jesus was also called son of god in this sense, that is, in metaphoric terms, not in literal terms. Keeping these metaphorical meanings in mind, let's study the Gospel of John, chapter 10, when some scribes came to Jesus:

I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? ²⁴⁶ (*John 10:30-35*)

In the above verses, Jesus, himself, has explained what the term god meant, i.e., those who are blessed by God and chosen by him and to whom He reveals His words. This term was not alien to the scriptures nor to the Jews at that time. For instance, the Lord, God, said to Moses that: *See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.*²⁴⁷ (*Exodus 7:1*)

Moses is also called god in the scriptures because he had received the word of God, or the law, and his brother was called a prophet because he did not bring any law, thus making him a lesser prophet in terms of rank.

This terminology has also been used in the Holy Qur'an on numerous occasions and it is always translated in metaphoric terms and never taken as literal. For example:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

Celebrate the praises of Allah as you celebrated the praises of your fathers, or even more than that.²⁴⁸ (*The Holy Qur'an* 2:201)

In the above verse, God, the Almighty, is exhorting the believers to worship, and glorify Him as their fathers, yet this verse is never taken literally. Then, God, the Almighty, addressed the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), saying:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ

Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee indeed swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands.²⁴⁹ (*The Holy Qur'an* 48:11)

This verse was revealed on the eve of the treaty of *Hudaibiyyah*. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was taking the oath of allegiance, his hand was on top of the hands of the believers, but God, the Almighty, said that His hand was over their hands. This is always translated in a metaphorical sense and the Muslims, unlike the Christians and the Mormons, never translate it to mean that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was God (God forbid). At another instance in the Holy Qur'an, God, the Almighty, addressed the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

So you killed them not, but it was Allah Who killed them. And thou threwest not when thou didst throw, but it was Allah Who threw²⁵⁰ (*The Holy Qur'an* 8:18)

This was at the Battle of *Badr*, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) threw pebbles towards the army of the enemies, but God, the Almighty, said that it was He Who threw the pebbles. Again, this is always translated in a metaphorical sense and the Muslims, unlike the Christians and the Latter-day Saints, never translate it to mean that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was God (God forbid).

The above references from the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an prove beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus never thought or considered himself to be the literal son of God. He used the term god or son of God as it was used in the scriptures. The Latter-day Saints and the Christians are preaching the false doctrine of the divinity of Jesus, which he never owned or claimed.

The third and last question: Was Jesus a prophet? Yes, indeed Jesus was a prophet and he was known to be a prophet amongst the people. First of all, Jesus himself believed that he was a prophet sent by God, just like all other prophets who were sent by God. His prayer is recorded in the Gospel of John where he openly admits to be a prophet sent by God in the following words: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*²⁵¹ (John 17:3)

Then, the Gospel of Matthew records that, once, Jesus went to the temple of Jerusalem where he addressed the multitude who accepted his message as a prophet of God. Let's read how Jesus Christ was known at the time of his presence: *And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.*²⁵² (Matthew 21:10-11)

At another instance, he was also addressed as the prophet of God:

And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.²⁵³ (Luke 24:18-19)

Gospel of John also proves the fact that Jesus was a prophet of God; *For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.*²⁵⁴ (John 4:44)

These verses not only prove that Jesus claimed to be a prophet of God, but also prove that the people of his time also knew him, believed in him and accepted his message as a prophet of God.

The Holy Qur'an also supports the fact that Jesus Christ was a prophet of God. For instance:

إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Verily, the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a Messenger of Allah.²⁵⁵ (The Holy Qur'an 4:172)

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ط أَتْنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ۖ

He said, 'I am a servant of Allah. He has given me the Book, and made me a Prophet.'²⁵⁶ (The Holy Qur'an 19:31)

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
يَبْنِي يَدَى مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۖ

And remember when Jesus, son of Mary, said, 'O children of Israel, surely I am Allah's Messenger unto

you, fulfilling that which is before me of the Torah.²⁵⁷
(*The Holy Qur'an* 61:7)

These verses emphatically prove that Jesus Christ was a man and a prophet of God sent for the guidance of the Israelites.

Jesus Christ and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at is unique and it stands out amongst all the other sects of Islam in regards to its belief in Jesus. It believes that Jesus was a man and a prophet of God sent only for the guidance of the Israelites. He preached the unity of God and faced severe persecution at the hands of his enemies. He had to pass through many trials and tribulations and the biggest among them was his crucifixion. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at believes that Jesus of Nazareth was put on the cross but was miraculously saved by God through his earnest prayers. He met his disciples after his recovery and migrated to *Kashmir*, India to gather his lost sheep. He completed his mission and died a natural death at the age of 120 years. This was revealed to the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian, by God, the Almighty, and he has proved it in his book *Masih Hindustaan mein* (Jesus in India). Furthermore, he prophesised more than a century ago:

یاد رکھو کہ کوئی آسمان سے نہیں اترے گا۔ ہمارے سب مخالف جواب زندہ موجود ہیں وہ تمام مریم گے اور کوئی اُن میں سے عیسیٰ بن مریم کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گا۔ اور پھر ان کی اولاد جو باقی رہے گی وہ بھی مرے گی اور ان میں سے بھی کوئی آدمی عیسیٰ بن مریم کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گا۔ اور پھر اولاد کی اولاد مرے گی۔ اور وہ بھی مریم کے بیٹے کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گی۔ تب خدا ان کے دلوں میں گھبراہٹ ڈالے گا کہ زمانہ صلیب کے غلبہ کا بھی گزر گیا۔ اور دنیا دوسرے رنگ میں آگئی مگر مریم کا بیٹا عیسیٰ اب تک آسمان سے نہ اترے۔ تب دانشمند یک دفعہ اس عقیدہ

سے بیزار ہو جائیں گے۔ اور ابھی تیسری صدی آج کے دن سے پوری نہیں ہوگی کہ عیسیٰ کے انتظار کرنے والے کیا مسلمان اور کیا عیسائی سخت نومید اور بدظن ہو کر اس جھوٹے عقیدہ کو چھوڑیں گے اور دنیا میں ایک ہی مذہب ہو گا اور ایک ہی پیشوا۔ میں تو ایک ختم ریزی کرنے آیا ہوں۔ سو میرے ہاتھ سے وہ ختم ہو گیا اور اب وہ بڑھے گا اور پھولے گا اور کوئی نہیں جو اس کو روک سکے۔

Remember, that no one will descend from heaven. All our opponents who are alive today will die and no one will see Jesus son of Mary descending from heaven. Then their next generation will pass away and no one of them will see this spectacle. Then the generation next after that will pass away without seeing the son of Mary descending from heaven. Then God will make them anxious that though the time of the supremacy of the cross had passed away and the world had undergone great changes, yet the son of Mary had not descended from heaven. Then the wise people will suddenly discard this belief. The third century after today will not yet have come to a close when those who hold this belief, whether Muslims or Christians, will lose all hope and will give up this belief in disgust. There will then be only one religion that will prevail in the world and only one leader. I have come only to sow the seed, which has been sown by my hand. Now it will sprout and grow and flourish and no one can arrest its growth.²⁵⁸

Thus, Latter-day Saints and the whole of Christianity believe in the hoax of Jesus ascending to heaven and then descending from heaven and that The Latter-day Saints are to build the kingdom of God before the “*great and dreadful days of the Lord*”, but fact the matter is that their Lord, Jesus Christ, never ascended to

heaven and will never descend from heaven. They are waiting for somebody who is resting in peace in *Kashmir*, India.

The Mormon Doctrine of godhood

This is an absurd doctrine that is being taught by the LDS Church all over the world. That is, that the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hope to become gods of their own worlds and procreate an infinite number of children. This is the goal of every Mormon in this life. On the 12th of July, 1843, Joseph Smith received a 'revelation' concerning this doctrine and this is now part of the Doctrine and Covenants. The relevant part of the revelation is as follows:

And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant,...Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths...and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory. For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me.²⁵⁹
(*Doctrine and Covenants* 132:19-22)

To be obedient to this is to become god after this life, when one will have his own kingdom and goddess wives with whom they will be procreating their children; and one will be called god of that kingdom. This is how Jesus achieved his godhood and this is how the Mormon god achieved godhood and this is how other gods achieved their godhood. Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth president of the LDS Church, explained this very doctrine in his book, *Doctrines of Salvation*:

The Father has promised us that through our faithfulness we shall be blessed with the fulness of his kingdom. In other words we will have the privilege of becoming like him. To become like him we must have all the powers of godhood; thus a man and his wife when glorified will have spirit children who eventually will go on an earth like this one we are on and pass through the same kind of experiences, being subject to mortal conditions, and if faithful, then they also will receive the fulness of exaltation and partake of the same blessings. There is no end to this development; it will go on forever. We will become gods and have jurisdiction over worlds, and these worlds will be peopled by our own offspring. We will have an endless eternity for this.²⁶⁰

This doctrine is found extensively in the LDS scriptures including the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, *Mormon Doctrine*, the *Millennial Messiah*, and *Journal of Discourses*, but two references should be sufficient in order to develop an understanding of this doctrine.

Critical Analysis

Joseph Smith taught that man can become god and that the goal of every Mormon is to become god. This sounds very familiar. For this inquisition, let's go back in history to refer to older scriptures and find out who else taught that man can

become god and where, exactly, Joseph Smith got this idea from. The result is that when God created Adam and Eve, He gave them certain commandments. Among them was that they should not eat the fruit from the forbidden tree, but then Satan beguiled them by promising: *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*²⁶¹ (Genesis 3:5)

The LDS scripture presents the same verse in the Book of Moses: *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*²⁶²

Therefore, it was Satan who beguiled Eve and said that if you eat the fruit of this tree, then you will become god. Joseph Smith and his church are doing the same, teaching and making people gods in their temples. As a matter of fact, the tenth president of the LDS Church, Joseph Fielding Smith, said that:

When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden, the Lord passed a sentence upon him. Some people have looked upon that sentence as being a dreadful thing. It was not; it was a blessing. I do not know that it can truthfully be considered even as punishment in disguise...Therefore, worlds are created and peopled with the children of God, and they are granted the privilege to pass through the mortal existence, with great gift of agency in their possession. Through this gift they choose good and choose evil, and thus receive a reward of merit in the eternities to come. Because of Adam's transgression we are here in mortal life...

The fall of man came as blessing in disguise, and was the means of furthering the purposes of the Lord in the progress of man, rather than a means of hindering them.²⁶³

So, Adam's transgression was a "gift" and a "blessing in disguise" - this is what the LDS Church teaches. According to the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants, Satan taught Adam and Eve that they will become gods and, according to the LDS scriptures (as mentioned above), Joseph Smith also taught that if they believe in him, they will also become gods. Furthermore, the LDS Church has been making their members gods in their temples.

Another astonishing fact that welds Mormonism with Satanism is that Joseph Smith said that an Angel of Light was visiting him. Who was this angel? It was the angel Moroni, who is the very symbol of Mormonism, just as the Star of David is the symbol of Judaism and the Cross is the symbol of Christianity. In editions printed until 1979, The Introduction page of the Doctrine and Covenants verifies that Moroni is an angel of light. It states, "...Joseph Smith received visitations from Moroni, an angel of light..." The editions printed after 1979 do not have this sentence. Why? Because it gave readers clues as to the origin of Mormonism. Let's read from the New Testament and find out who exactly the angel of light is: *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*²⁶⁴ (2 Corinthians 11:14-15)

Therefore, according to the above reference, the angel of light is Satan, or Lucifer, and Joseph Smith also admitted the fact that *"The Devil may appear as an angel of light."*²⁶⁵ Moreover, in the book, *Mormon Doctrine*, Burch R. McConkie writes under the angel of light *"See Devil"*. These evidences prove beyond a shadow of doubt that the angel of light who visited Joseph Smith was in fact Satan, who gave him the same message that Satan had conveyed to Eve earlier.

Blood Atonement

Another absurd belief of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that if a man commits an unpardonable sin, e.g., murder, adultery, stealing, marrying a black person, and breaking a covenant, then the blood of Jesus Christ cannot atone for his/her sins. They must be killed and their blood must be shed so that their sins can be forgiven for that matter. Now, let's read what the LDS church teaches about this belief.

The second LDS Prophet, Brigham Young, taught the following:

There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins; and the smoking incense would atone for their sins, whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

I know, when you hear my brethren telling about cutting people off from the earth, that you consider it is strong doctrine; but it is to save them, not to destroy them... It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall and those committed by men, yet men can commit sins which it can never remit.²⁶⁶

Brigham Young further taught, inciting people to shed the blood of people who turned away from the Church:

I have known a great many men who have left this Church for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation, but if their blood had been spilled, it would

have been better for them. The wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid this principle's being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force. This is loving our neighbour as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it. Any of you who understand the principles of eternity, if you have sinned a sin requiring the shedding of blood, except the sin unto death, would not be satisfied nor rest until your blood should be spilled, that you might gain that salvation you desire. That is the way to love mankind.²⁶⁷

Now, the question remains as to what are these unpardonable sins. The first unpardonable sin is murder, as Joseph Smith states:

I was opposed to hanging, even if a man kill another, I will shoot him, or cut off his head, spill his blood on the ground, and let the smoke thereof ascend up to God;²⁶⁸

The second is adultery, as Brigham Young taught:

... Suppose you found your brother in bed with your wife, and put a javelin through both of them, you would be justified, and they would atone for their sins, and be received into the kingdom of God. I would at once do so in such a case; and under such circumstances,²⁶⁹

The third is stealing, as, again, Brigham Young teaches:

If you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, I say kill him on the spot, and never suffer him to commit another iniquity... if I caught a man stealing on my premises I should be

very apt to send him straight home, and that is what I wish every man to do, to put a stop to that abominable practice in the midst of this people.²⁷⁰

The fourth is to marry someone of African origin. Presented below is an extract from the LDS prophet, Brigham Young, commenting on this matter:

Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot. This will always be so.²⁷¹

The last one is to break a covenant, as Heber C. Kimball, an LDS apostle, taught:

If men turn traitors to God and His servants, their blood will surely be shed, or else they will be damned, and that too according to their covenants.²⁷²

Critical Analysis

This is the barbaric teaching of the “peace-loving” LDS Church, which is to take the law into one’s own hands and kill people who commit unpardonable sins. Can anyone conceive this teaching to have emanated from God? Can anyone imagine that someone who is inspired by God could teach this? What kind of vengeful god is this - one who cannot even forgive? These teachings still exist in LDS scriptures, which means that the Church still adheres to such teachings. These are ambiguous and perplexing teachings of a Church that does not have any support from God. The Church accepts the atonement of Jesus Christ, yet at the same time, rejects it by declaring that there are sins that cannot be pardoned and, thus, necessitate the shedding of blood of a sinful person. In reality, these teachings of the Church show that it is a wolf disguised as a lamb, who justifies killings in the name of salvation.

In reality, Jesus Christ neither died on the cross nor did he atone for anyone. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) brought a wonderful law that appeals to the intellect. He taught that everyone must pay for their shortcomings or seek forgiveness from the Merciful God, Who loves to forgive. This teaching speaks for itself and those who read this without bias will certainly agree to the fact that this teaching is from God and that the Prophet who brought this teaching was, indeed, ordained by God, the Almighty. The Holy Qur'an says:

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغَىٰ رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

Say, 'Shall I seek a lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things?' And no soul acts but only against itself; nor does any bearer of burden bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord will be your return, and He will inform you of that wherein you used to differ.²⁷³ (*The Holy Qur'an* 6:165)

This is the most perfect teaching that satisfies the requirements of justice, i.e., no one has to suffer for anyone's sins and every soul should be responsible for his own deeds. The God of Islam is a Merciful and Forgiving God and not a cruel God like the god of Mormonism. The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, by whose hand the renaissance of Islam has been initiated, refuted the false doctrine of atonement in his many books, but just a passage is presented here:

اور پھر ایک اور بات پر بھی غور کرو کہ خدا کا قدیم سے قانونِ قدرت ہے کہ وہ توبہ اور استغفار سے گناہ معاف کرتا ہے۔ اور نیک لوگوں کی شفاعت کے طور پر دعا بھی قبول کرتا ہے۔ مگر یہ ہم نے خدا کے قانونِ قدرت میں کبھی نہیں دیکھا کہ زید اپنے سر پر

پتھر مارے اور اس سے بکڑی درد سر جاتی رہے۔ پھر ہمیں معلوم نہیں ہوتا کہ مسیح کی خودکشی سے دوسروں کی اندرونی بیماری کا دور ہونا کس قانون پر مبنی ہے۔ اور وہ کونسا فلسفہ ہے جس سے ہم معلوم کر سکیں کہ مسیح کا خون کسی دوسرے کی اندرونی ناپاکی کو دور کر سکتا ہے۔ بلکہ مشاہدہ اس کے برخلاف گواہی دیتا ہے۔ کیونکہ جب تک مسیح نے خودکشی کا ارادہ نہیں کیا تھا تب تک عیسائیوں میں نیک چلنی اور خدا پرستی کا مادہ تھا۔ مگر صلیب کے بعد تو جیسے ایک بند ٹوٹ کر ہر ایک طرف دریا کا پانی پھیل جاتا ہے۔ یہی عیسائیوں کے نفسانی جوشوں کا حال ہوا۔ کچھ شک نہیں کہ اگر یہ خودکشی مسیح سے بالا ارادہ ظہور میں آئی تھی تو بہت بے جا کام کیا۔ اگر وہی زندگی و وعظ و نصیحت میں صرف کرتا تو مخلوق خدا کو فائدہ پہنچتا۔ اس بے جا حرکت سے دوسروں کو کیا فائدہ ہوا۔ ہاں اگر مسیح خودکشی کے بعد زندہ ہو کر یہودیوں کے روبرو آسمان پر چڑھ جاتا تو اس سے یہودی ایمان لے آتے۔ مگر اب تو یہودیوں اور تمام عقل مندوں کے نزدیک مسیح کا آسمان پر چڑھنا محض ایک فسانہ اور گپ ہے۔

You should also consider that it is God's eternal and established law that He forgives in response to repentance and penitence, and hears the prayers of His righteous servants which are offered by way of intercession. But we never observe in the Divine law of nature that 'A' hits his own head with a stone and this cures the headache of 'B'. We are, therefore, at a loss to understand how people can acquire inner purification through the suicide committed by the Messiah. Is there any law or philosophy which can make us understand how the Messiah's blood could have cleansed the inner impurities of other people? Our observation is, in fact, opposed to this principle, because, until the time when the Messiah decided to commit suicide, we find an element of righteousness

and godliness among the Christians. After the crucifixion, however, their carnal passions burst forth like a river which breaks its banks and inundates the land. There is no doubt that even if this suicide on the part of the Messiah was deliberate, it was quite needless. If he had, instead, spent his life in preaching and exhortation, he would have done a lot of good for God's creation. But this act did not serve them in any way. Yes, if the Messiah had indeed come back to life after his suicide, and had ascended to heaven before the very eyes of the Jews, they would surely have believed in him. But, as things stand, the Jews, and all reasonable people, consider the Messiah's ascension to be no more than a fable.²⁷⁴

God, the Almighty, gives glad tiding to everyone in the Holy Qur'an, stating:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

And whoso does evil or wrongs his soul, and then asks forgiveness of Allah, will *surely* find Allah Most Forgiving, Merciful.²⁷⁵ (*The Holy Qur'an* 4:111)

Here, God, the Almighty, rejecting the Mormon doctrine of Blood Atonement and saying that whoever transgresses or commits a sin (whether it be an unpardonable sin according to the Mormons or not), then he repents sincerely and seeks His forgiveness, he will then find God a Merciful and Forgiving God. The doors of repentance and forgiveness are always wide open, but with the sole condition of true repentance. In another verse, God, the Almighty, says:

قُلْ يَبَادِي الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

Say, "O My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls! despair not of the mercy of Allah, surely Allah forgives all sins. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Merciful."²⁷⁶ (*The Holy Qur'an* 39:54)

This verse presents a divine promise of forgiveness for everyone. This is what the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) taught throughout his life - that the doors of repentance are always open. Once, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, very profoundly, that the joy of God at the repentance of a sinful servant of His is greater than the joy of a lonely wayfarer who, while travelling in the desert, loses his camel laden with provisions and despairs of life, but then suddenly finds it. The God of Islam is not a vengeful god, but a Loving, Passionate and Merciful God, Whose Mercy encompasses all things.

CHAPTER 7

THE BLEAK FUTURE OF MORMONISM

“All those who resemble the Anti-Christ, those who love this world overmuch and who have only one eye, having lost the eye for spiritual truth, all of them will end by the sword of solid unanswerable arguments. Truth will prevail. A new bright day will dawn again for Islam. Same as it did before. The sun of Islam will rise in full bloom, same as it did before.”

A Question

Before discussing the future of Mormonism, one very important question needs to be answered: i.e., if Joseph Smith is a false prophet, then what is the reason of the success of the Church? This is a valid question and must be addressed before going further. Let it be known that there are two kinds of successes; the first is religious and the second is worldly.

When it comes to religious success, the truthfulness or falsehood of the founder of that particular religious community is significant. In light of this, Joseph Smith has miserably failed in the aspect of religion – not only in his lifetime, but also after his death. His chief mission was to set up the Kingdom of God and to build Zion City in Jackson County, Missouri but that was an unfortunate experience that eventually resulted in his arrest. His little success in Nauvoo, Illinois did not last very long. His wrongdoings led to a rapid yet inevitable downfall and murder. Then, after his death his Church was further divided into other churches. Today, there are more than one hundred denominations of his Church, such as, *the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Church of Jesus Christ of the First Born of the Fullness of Times, the Church of Zion, the Apostolic United Brethren, the Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints, the Righteous Branch of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Restoration Church of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant Church of God, and the Time & Living Church of Jesus Christ*

of *Latter-day Saints* – to name a few. All of them justify themselves as the true followers of Joseph Smith and declare each other strayed from the right path. For instance, the *Fundamentalist* LDS Church thinks that mainstream LDS have strayed from the right course when they compromised with the government to give up ‘the new and everlasting covenant.’ According to the scriptures, the mainstream LDS cannot be resurrected and become gods and goddesses. As a result, one does not really know which church truly follows Joseph Smith and which should, in effect, be adopted.

Moreover, the teachings that Joseph Smith brought suffered a few huge blows – another defeat or loss to Joseph Smith and his Church. This refers to when his followers were forced to stop the practise of polygamy and to give equal rights to African Americans. The communities of true prophets face all sorts of dangers and accept every difficulty, misfortune, and blizzards of hostilities with smiling faces, but nothing moves them away from their beliefs – as Joseph Smith and his followers were shaken. On the contrary, the living example of the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian, and his community when he proclaimed that Jesus Christ has died a natural death is worthy of note. He wrote a book named “*Masih Hindustan Mein*” (Translated as: *Jesus in India*) in which he has proved:

حضرت مسیح علیہ السلام مصلوب نہیں ہوئے اور نہ آسمان پر گئے اور نہ کبھی امید رکھنی
چاہئے کہ وہ پھر زمین پر آسمان سے نازل ہوں گے بلکہ وہ ایک سوئیں برس کی عمر پا کر
سرینگر کشمیر میں فوت ہو گئے اور سرینگر محلہ خان یار میں ان کی قبر ہے۔

Jesus did not die on the cross, nor did he go up to the heavens; nor should it be supposed that he would ever again come down to the earth. On the contrary, the fact of the matter is that he died at the age of 120 years

at Srinagar, Kashmir, where his tomb is still to be found in the Khan Yar quarter.²⁷⁷

He has proved it from the testimonies from the Gospels, the Holy Qur'an, the *Ahadith* (narrations of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)), medical literature, historical records, oral traditions which have been handed down from generation to generation, miscellaneous circumstantial evidence, logical argument, and from the fresh revelations that he had received from God.

After announcements like the one mentioned above, and others such as the declaration of termination of religious wars, everyone turned against him and his followers and branded them as "disbelievers". His community has been suffering persecution at the hands of its enemies for more than 110 years, but has remained faithfully steadfast, never turning away from his teachings. This is the example of the community of a true prophet who was sent by God, the Almighty.

The second type of success is worldly success where truthfulness and falsehood of the founder of a particular community does not matter. According to this clause, be it a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Hindu, an Atheist, or a Mormon, whoever strives for a cause and spends all his resources to achieve his goals, then it is against the very attribute of God not to reward such efforts. God is Gracious and He rewards people according to their deeds. For instance, let's take an example of two students; one is a monotheist and the other is an atheist and both are writing exams for the same class. The monotheistic student, although a believer in God, does not work hard while the atheist student studies well, resulting in his success. God is Just and Gracious. He rewards according to the efforts of His servants, regardless of the opinion they hold about His Being. God, the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ

And that man will have nothing but what he strives for;²⁷⁸ (*The Holy Qur'an*, 53:40)

This is the case with the Latter-day Saints – they work hard and spread their message diligently and God rewards them for their hard work – but this hardly proves that Mormonism is a right faith just as it cannot be surmised that God does not exist based on the atheist's success in class.

Spread of Light at the Advent of a Prophet

It is a law of nature that at the advent of a prophet, God sends His angels who prepare people's heart to accept the prophet. This law has been outlined by God the Almighty in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ۚ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۚ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۚ تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ امْرٍ ۚ
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ۚ

Surely, We sent it down on the Night of Destiny. And what should make thee know what the Night of Destiny is? The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months. Therein descend angels and the Spirit by the command of their Lord – with every matter. *It is all* peace till the rising of the dawn.²⁷⁹ (*The Holy Qur'an*, 97:2-6)

The Promised Messiah^{as} has explained this law of nature in very profound words that:

یہ نکتہ بھی یاد رکھنے کے لائق ہے کہ جب آسمان سے مقرر ہو کر ایک نبی یا رسول آتا ہے تو اس نبی کی برکت سے عام طور پر ایک اور حسب مراتب استعدادات آسمان سے نازل ہوتا ہے اور انتشار روحانیت ظہور میں آتا ہے تب ہر ایک شخص خوابوں کے

دیکھنے میں ترقی کرتا ہے اور الہام کی استعداد رکھنے والے الہام پاتے ہیں اور روحانی امور میں عقلیں بھی تیز ہو جاتی ہیں کیونکہ جیسا کہ جب بارش ہوتی ہے ہر ایک زمین کچھ نہ کچھ اس سے حصہ لیتی ہے ایسا ہی اس وقت ہوتا ہے جب رسول کے بھیجنے سے بہار کا زمانہ آتا ہے تب ان ساری برکتوں کا موجب دراصل وہ رسول ہوتا ہے اور جس قدر لوگوں کو خوابیں یا الہام ہوتے ہیں دراصل ان کے کھلنے کا دروازہ وہ رسول ہی ہوتا ہے کیونکہ اس کے ساتھ دنیا میں ایک تبدیلی واقع ہوتی ہے اور آسمان سے عام طور پر ایک روشنی اترتی ہے جس سے ہر ایک شخص حسب استعداد حصہ لیتا ہے وہی روشنی خواب اور الہام کا موجب ہو جاتی ہے اور نادان خیال کرتا ہے کہ میرے ہنر سے ایسا ہوا ہے مگر وہ چشمہ الہام اور خواب کا صرف اس نبی کی برکت سے دنیا پر کھولا جاتا ہے اور اس کا زمانہ ایک لیلۃ القدر کا زمانہ ہوتا ہے جس میں فرشتے اترتے ہیں جیسا کہ اللہ تعالیٰ فرماتا ہے تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَكَةِ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ سَلَّمَ جَب سے خدا نے دنیا پیدا کی ہے یہی قانون قدرت ہے۔

When a messenger or a prophet comes, being appointed from the Heaven, a light descends from heavens according to each's capacity due to the prophet's blessing, and spirituality is wide-spread. Then each person excels in the viewing of true dreams, and those with the capabilities of receiving revelation receive revelation, and minds become sharpened in spiritual matters. **Because when it rains all types of land benefit more or less from it. The same happens when the season of spring arrives due to the arrival of a prophet. At that time all the blessings are in actuality due to the prophet because with him a change occurs in the world, and a light normally descends from heaven, from which each person takes his share according to his capacity. That very light is the cause of true dreams and revelation. And the foolish think that it**

is due to his own skills, but in reality that fountain of revelation and true dreams is due to the blessings of the prophet. And the era of the prophet is the era of Lailat-ul-Qadr – The night of decree, in which angels descend. As Allah says that

“Therein descend angels and the Spirit by the command of their Lord — with every matter”.

This has been the law of nature since the beginning of the world.²⁸⁰

Therefore, according to the law of nature, angels descend with prophet to assist him and to spread the heavenly light and spirituality. It is merely because of angels that descend with the prophet not because of anyone’s abilities to receive true dreams and revelations. Now, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian – a prophet for latter-days – was born on the 13th of February, 1835. If he was a true prophet, then according to the law of nature, people should have seen dreams and experienced revelations with the help of angels which would lead them to his acceptance.

There are many examples of this that people received revelation but it did not make them true or chosen people. The Holy Qur’an gives an example of a man named Bal’am bin Ba’ur, it is related that he lived in the time of Moses^{as}. He was virtuous and used to receive revelations from God but pride turned him away from God. He followed his evil desires and inclinations and met his miserable end. God says in the Holy Qur’an:

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَسَّهُ مِثْلُ
الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتَرَكَّهُ يَلْهَثْ ذَلِكَ مِثْلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصْ الْقِصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝

And if We had pleased, We could have exalted him thereby; but he inclined to the earth and followed

his evil inclination. His case therefore is like the case of a thirsty dog; if thou drive him away, he hangs out his tongue; and if thou leave him, he hangs out his tongue. Such is the case of the people who disbelieve in Our Signs. So give them the description that they may ponder.²⁸¹ (The Holy Qur'an, 7:177)

There is another example of a man who used to be one of the scribes of the revelations that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) received from God, the Almighty. His name was Abdullah bin abi Sarah, once he was writing the revelation of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Due to the affect of the revelation on the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), he also received a portion of the revelation which caused his downfall. He thought that he could also receive revelation this had let him to become an apostate. Moreover, the Promised Messiah^{as} has also mentioned that even a prostitute can see a true dream, so in this case a true dream does not make her a pious lady. Therefore, many examples exist of this kind but these examples do not prove by any means the truthfulness of a particular person.

As the Latter-day Saints are addressed in this essay, so let's find out whether Joseph Smith saw any dream or receive any revelation about the latter-days' prophet who had also claimed to be the second advent of Jesus Christ^{as} which was promised by him. If any dream or revelation are found then this will not make Joseph Smith a true prophet by any chance as it has been clearly mentioned that the ability for receiving revelations and dreams is enhanced at the advent of a true prophet as an example of rain. Therefore, if Joseph Smith has a revelation about the coming of the Latter-day Reformer under the law of nature, this will not make him a true prophet.

A day after Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was born, Joseph Smith received the following revelation on February 14, 1835: Go

forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, or the coming of the Lord, which was nigh--even fifty-six years should wind up the scene.²⁸²

Moreover, Joseph Smith received another revelation on the 2nd of April, 1843 about the coming of Jesus Christ^{as} that:

I was once praying very earnestly to know the time of the coming of the Son of Man, when I heard a voice repeat the following: Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man; therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter. I was left thus, without being able to decide whether this coming referred to the beginning of the millennium or to some previous appearing, or whether I should die and thus see his face. I believe the coming of the Son of Man will not be any sooner than that time.²⁸³
(*Doctrine and Covenants*, 130:14-17)

This tells that Jesus Christ will appear in 1890 or 1891. Therefore, at the end of 1890, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian claimed to be sent as the second advent of Christ and he writes in his book *Fath-e-Islam* (translated as: *Victory of Islam*):

میں اس کو بار بار بیان کروں گا اور اس کے اظہار سے میں رک نہیں سکتا کہ میں وہی ہوں جو وقت پر اصلاح خلق کے لئے بھیجا گیا تادین کو تازہ طور پر دلوں میں قائم کر دیا جائے۔ میں اس طرح بھیجا گیا ہوں جس طرح وہ شخص بعد کلیم اللہ مرد خدا کے بھیجا گیا تھا جس کی روح ہیرودیس کے عہد حکومت میں بہت تکلیفوں کے بعد آسمان کی طرف اٹھائی گئی۔ سو جب وہ دوسرا کلیم اللہ جو حقیقت میں سب سے پہلا اور سید الانبیاء ہے دوسرے فرعونوں کی سرکوبی کے لئے آیا جس کے حق میں ہے اِنَّا اَرْسَلْنَا اِلَيْكُمْ رَسُوْلًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْنَكُمْ كَمَا اَرْسَلْنَا اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُوْلًا۔ سو اس کو بھی جو اپنی کارروائیوں میں کلیم اول کا شیل مگر رتبہ میں اس سے بزرگتر تھا ایک شیل المسیح کا وعدہ

دیا گیا اور وہ مثیل المسیح قوت اور طبع اور خاصیت مسیح ابن مریم کی پاکر اسی زمانہ کی مانند اور اسی مدت کے قریب قریب جو کلیم اول کے زمانہ سے مسیح ابن مریم کے زمانہ تک تھی یعنی چودھویں صدی میں آسمان سے اتر اور وہ اترنا روحانی طور پر تھا جیسا کہ مکمل لوگوں کے صعود کے بعد خلق اللہ کی اصلاح کے لئے نزول ہوتا ہے اور سب باتوں میں اسی زمانہ کے ہم شکل زمانہ میں اتر جو مسیح ابن مریم کے اترنے کا زمانہ تھا۔ تا سمجھنے والوں کے لئے نشان ہو۔

I must say and I cannot be stopped from repeating that I am the promised one who has been sent to restore the faith, to re-establish it in the hearts of men. I have been sent exactly as was sent my prototype to follow the man of God they call Kalimullah (One who converses with God-the author). I have come like him whose spirit underwent hardships in the reign of Herod and was at last raised to heaven. My coming became imperative after the coming of the second Kalim (One who converses with God-the author), he who is greater than the first Kalim being the chief of all prophets. This second Kalim came to defeat and disgrace the Pharaohs of his time. It is of him that it has been said in the Holy Book, "we have sent unto you a Messenger as witness over you, even as we sent to Pharaoh a Messenger" (*Holy Quran 73:16*).

In accordance with this the second Kalim, similar to the first but superior to him in spiritual rank, was also promised a Messiah similar to the first. This second Messiah has come in the power and character of the first, at a time similar to his and after the lapse of a similar length of time after his own Kalim: that is after about 1,400 years. His coming is described in prophecies as a descent from heaven but the descent is

a spiritual descent. In holy idiom, men who achieve perfection rise to heaven. When they come to reform their people they may be said to descend from heaven. The second Messiah has descended at a time which resembles in all essentials the time of the first Messiah, the Messiah son of Mary that it may serve as a sign for those who understand.²⁸⁴

He further states:

سو اس عاجز کو اور بزرگوں کی فطرتی مشابہت سے علاوہ جس کی تفصیل براہین احمدیہ میں بہ بسط تمام مندرج ہے حضرت مسیح کی فطرت سے ایک خاص مشابہت ہے اور اسی فطرتی مشابہت کی وجہ سے مسیح کے نام پر یہ عاجز بھیجا گیا تا صلیبی اعتقاد کو پاش پاش کر دیا جائے۔ سو میں صلیب کے توڑنے اور خنزیروں کے قتل کرنے کے لئے بھیجا گیا ہوں۔ میں آسمان سے اتر اہوں ان پاک فرشتوں کے ساتھ جو میرے دائیں بائیں تھے۔ جن کو میرا خدا جو میرے ساتھ ہے میرے کام کے پورا کرنے کے لئے ہر ایک مستعد دل میں داخل کرے گا بلکہ کر رہا ہے اور اگر میں چپ بھی رہوں اور میری قلم لکھنے سے رکھی بھی رہے تب بھی وہ فرشتے جو میرے ساتھ اترے ہیں اپنا کام بند نہیں کر سکتے اور ان کے ہاتھ میں بڑی بڑی گرزیں ہیں جو صلیب توڑنے اور مخلوق پرستی کی ہیکل کچلنے کے لئے دئے گئے ہیں۔ شاید کوئی بے خبر اس حیرت میں پڑے کہ فرشتوں کا اترنا کیا معنی رکھتا ہے۔ سو واضح ہو کہ عادت اللہ اس طرح پر جاری ہے کہ جب کوئی رسول یا نبی یا محدث اصلاح خلق اللہ کے لئے آسمان سے اترتا ہے تو ضرور اس کے ساتھ اور اس کے ہمراہ ایسے فرشتے اترتے ہیں کہ جو مستعد دلوں میں ہدایت ڈالتے ہیں اور نیکی کی رغبت دلاتے ہیں اور برابر اترتے رہتے ہیں جب تک کفر و ضلالت کی ظلمت دور ہو کر ایمان اور راستبازی کی صبح صادق نمودار ہو جیسا کہ اللہ جل شانہ فرماتا ہے۔ تَنْزِيلُ

الْمَلَكَةُ وَ الرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ
الْفَجْرِ -

This humble one is similar in character to other holy ones. This subject is described in detail in my book Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya. But similarity to Jesus Christ is more pronounced. Because of this similarity, this humble one has been sent in the name of Jesus Christ. So that belief connected with the Cross may be banished. I have been sent to break the Cross, to kill the swine. I have come from heaven with angels on my right and left. Angels whom God will send, nay, is already sending into willing hearts. This, to help complete my mission. Even if I speak or write nothing, even then the angels who have descended with me will carry on their work. They have maces in their hands, given to them so that they may break the cross and break the idol of man- worship. Maybe the ignorant will ask, what does it mean - this descent of angels from heaven? Let them know it is the custom of God that when a prophet or apostle or saint descends from heaven to reform and restore a people to faith, then angels also descend with him, in his company. These angels enter human hearts willing and ready. They draw them to virtue and keep drawing them, until unbelief and misguidance disappear and the dawn of belief and righteousness shows its face. As indeed God Almighty Himself says in the Holy Quran: *"In it - the Night of Power - descend angels and a New Spirit, all by the command of their Lord and charged with every kind of affair. Peace it is, peace - till the rising of the dawn"*.²⁸⁵

Therefore, as prophesised by Joseph Smith, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah ^{as} came as the

second advent of Jesus Christ ^{as}. **Just to make it clear, this does not make Joseph Smith a true prophet by any chance as it has been clearly mentioned that the ability for receiving revelations and dreams is enhanced at the advent of a true prophet and so was the case with Joseph Smith.**

The future is bleak for Mormonism, at least spiritually – and true salvation and redemption lies in the acceptance of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the message of the true Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian, who appeared in the latter-days for the reformation of mankind. His advent was also in accordance to their ‘prophet’s revelation, but more importantly (and reliably) according to the glad tidings given in the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Bible. If The Latter-day Saints are waiting for the same corporal form of Jesus Christ^{as}, like mainstream Christians, then let it be known that he is certainly not returning. They can either remain without a Messiah, or accept the one sent by Almighty God the Creator Himself! For indeed,

یاد رکھو کہ کوئی آسمان سے نہیں اترے گا۔ ہمارے سب مخالف جواب زندہ موجود ہیں وہ تمام مریں گے اور کوئی اُن میں سے عیسیٰ ابن مریم کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گا۔ اور پھر ان کی اولاد جو باقی رہے گی وہ بھی مرے گی اور ان میں سے بھی کوئی آدمی عیسیٰ بن مریم کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گا۔ اور پھر اولاد کی اولاد مرے گی۔ اور وہ بھی مریم کے بیٹے کو آسمان سے اترتے نہیں دیکھے گی۔ تب خدا ان کے دلوں میں گھبراہٹ ڈالے گا کہ زمانہ صلیب کے غلبہ کا بھی گزر گیا۔ اور دنیا دوسرے رنگ میں آگئی مگر مریم کا بیٹا عیسیٰ اب تک آسمان سے نہ اتر۔ تب دانشمند یک دفعہ اس عقیدہ سے بیزار ہو جائیں گے۔ اور ابھی تیسری صدی آج کے دن سے پوری نہیں ہوگی کہ عیسیٰ کے انتظار کرنے والے کیا مسلمان اور کیا عیسائی سخت نو میدان بدظن ہو کر اس جھوٹے عقیدہ کو چھوڑیں گے اور دنیا میں ایک ہی مذہب ہو گا اور ایک ہی پیشوا۔ میں تو

ایک تخم ریزی کرنے آیا ہوں۔ سو میرے ہاتھ سے وہ تخم بویا گیا اور اب وہ بڑھے گا
اور پھولے گا اور کوئی نہیں جو اس کو روک سکے۔

Remember, that no one will descend from heaven. All our opponents who are alive today will die and no one will see Jesus son of Mary descending from heaven. Then their next generation will pass away and no one of them will see this spectacle. Then the generation next after that will pass away without seeing the son of Mary descending from heaven. Then God will make them anxious that though the time of the supremacy of the cross had passed away and the world had undergone great changes, yet the son of Mary had not descended from heaven. Then the wise people will suddenly discard this belief. The third century after today will not yet have come to a close when those who hold this belief, whether Muslims or Christians, will lose all hope and will give up this belief in disgust. **There will then be only one religion that will prevail in the world and only one leader.** I have come only to sow the seed, which has been sown by my hand. Now it will sprout and grow and flourish and no one can arrest its growth.²⁸⁶

The only path of salvation is to accept the One and true God, His beloved and chosen Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the one and only latter-day reformer: Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah^{as}. Kingdom of God had been established fourteen hundred years ago by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and all other prophets have come under his spiritual canopy. All those who wish to get to God, earning His pleasure, must accept the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). In addition, in this age, the acceptance of the Promised Messiah^{as} is essential to attain nearness to God. He said:

وَإِنِّي عَلَى مَقَامِ الْخْتِمِ مِنَ الْوَلَايَةِ- كَمَا كَانَ سَيِّدِي الْمُصْطَفَى عَلَى مَقَامِ
الْخْتِمِ مِنَ النَّبُوَّةِ- وَ إِنَّهُ خَاتَمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ- وَ أَنَا خَاتَمُ الْأَوَّلِيَاءِ- لَا وَلِيَّ
بَعْدِي- إِلَّا الَّذِي هُوَ مِنِّي وَ عَلَى عَهْدِي- وَ إِنِّي أُرْسِلْتُ مِنْ رَبِّي بِكُلِّ
قُوَّةٍ وَ بَرَكَهٍ وَ عِزَّةٍ- وَ إِن قَدَمِي هَذِهِ عَلَى مَنْارَةٍ خْتِمٌ عَلَيْهَا كُلُّ رِفْعَةٍ-
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ أَيُّهَا الْفِتْيَانُ- وَ اعْرِفُونِي وَ أَطِيعُونِي وَ لَا تَمُوتُوا بِالْعُصْيَانِ- وَ
قَدْ قَرَّبَ الزَّمَانُ- وَ حَانَ أَنْ تُسْأَلَ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ وَ تُدَانَ- الْبَلَايَا كَثِيرَةٌ وَ
لَا يَنْجِيكُمْ إِلَّا الْإِيمَانُ-

And I have certainly come to complete the institution of sainthood just as our Master, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) completed [and perfected] the institution of prophethood. And he is the Seal of the Prophets, while I am the Seal of the Saints. There is no saint after me [i.e. outside the scope of my obedience] except he who is from me [i.e. my community] and upon my pledge [of allegiance]. And I have been sent from my Lord with utmost strength, blessings, and honour. And my footstep is upon such a minaret which is the apex of all heights. So fear God O ye youthful! And recognize me and do not disobey me, nor die in a state of disobedience. The era has arrived close at hand and the hour is nigh when every soul shall be questioned about its actions and shall be requited. There is an abundance of vice and only faith will grant you salvation.²⁸⁷

The Promised Messiah^{as} outlines the ultimate future of mankind (which includes the Latter-day Saints) in the following words:

دنیا کے لوگ جو تاریک خیال اور اپنے پرانے پرانے تصورات پر جے ہوئے ہیں وہ اس کو قبول نہیں کریں گے مگر عنقریب وہ زمانہ آنے والا ہے جو ان کی غلطی ان پر ظاہر کر دے گا۔ دنیا میں ایک نذیر آیا پر دنیا نے اس کو قبول نہیں کیا لیکن خدا اسے قبول کریگا اور بڑے زور آور حملوں سے اس کی سچائی ظاہر کر دے گا۔ یہ انسان کی بات نہیں خدا تعالیٰ کا الہام اور رب جلیل کا کلام ہے۔ اور میں یقین رکھتا ہوں کہ ان حملوں کے دن نزدیک ہیں۔ مگر یہ حملے تیغ و تبر سے نہیں ہونگے اور تلواروں اور بندو قوں کی حاجت نہیں پڑیگی۔ بلکہ روحانی اسلحہ کے ساتھ خدا تعالیٰ کی مدد اترے گی اور یہودیوں سے سخت لڑائی ہوگی۔ وہ کون ہیں؟ اس زمانہ کے ظاہر پرست لوگ جنہوں نے بالاتفاق یہودیوں کے قدم پر قدم رکھا ہے۔ ان سب کو آسمانی سیف اللہ دو ٹکڑے کر دیگی اور یہودیت کی خصلت مٹا دی جائے گی اور ہر ایک حق پوش دجال دنیا پرست یک چشم جو دین کی آنکھ نہیں رکھتا حجت قاطعہ کی تلوار سے قتل کیا جائے گا اور سچائی کی فتح ہوگی اور اسلام کے لئے پھر اس تازگی اور روشنی کا دن آئیگا جو پہلے وقتوں میں آچکا ہے اور وہ آفتاب اپنے پورے کمال کے ساتھ پھر چڑھے گا جیسا کہ پہلے چڑھ چکا ہے۔

True, there are men steeped in darkness or in thoughts of their own. They will not accept. But the time is near when God will make plain to them their error. God has said:

"A warner came into the world but the world accepted him not. God, however, will accept him and manifest his truth by mighty signs."

These words proceed not from the mouth of man. They are God's words, words of the Mighty Lord Himself. The mighty attacks mentioned in this prophecy are near. But these attacks are not by

physical weapons, not swords or guns. These are spiritual weapons, which will come as help from God...All those who resemble the Anti-Christ, those who love this world over-much and who have only one eye, having lost the eye for spiritual truth, all of them will end by the sword of solid unanswerable arguments. **Truth will prevail. A new bright day will dawn again for Islam. Same as it did before. The sun of Islam will rise in full bloom, same as it did before.** ²⁸⁸

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على نبينا ﷺ

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