

are "one in purpose" but not in being (*Articles of Faith, by James Talmage, p. 35.*)

They believe too that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that all men through the atonement of Jesus Christ may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel. By ordinances of the Gospel they understand: Faith in the Lord Jesus; Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; Repentance, and Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

According to Elder M. F. Cowley, in his book "Cowley's Talks on Doctrine," page 83: "The Latter Day Saints regard our Heavenly Father as possessing an actual tabernacle of flesh and bones (not blood) and that in his image man is created." We know by the authority of St. John that Jesus said: "God is a spirit" (John 4:24). On another occasion Jesus said: "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24:39).

Mormons believe there is a mother god, (*Articles of Faith, by James Talmage, p. 443.*) God is married to his goddess wife and has spirit children, (*Mormon Doctrine p. 516.*)

As Latter Day Saints we believe that all creation existed spiritually before the physical organism was brought into existence" (*Cowley's Talks on Doctrine, p. 154.*) They base this theory on Gen. 1:24, by confusing spiritual existence with kinds of creatures. "And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds."

On marriage Mormons hold this opinion: "We believe that God ordained the union of the sexes in marriage, not only for time, but for all eternity: (*Cowley's Talks on Doctrine, p. 274.*)

Jesus teaches a different doctrine. "And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the wife, and raise up children for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no children; and the second took her, and died, leaving no children; and

the third likewise; and the seven left no children. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife." Jesus said to them, "Is not this why you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven" (Matt 22:18-24).

Mormons dream of a happy Millennium when the Savior will visibly dwell and reign on earth in peace and universal happiness for 1,000 years at Zion, the holy city of Jerusalem. He will put His feet on Mount Olivet, "and the mount will cleave in twain." The Jews will be converted to Jesus and will be baptized for the remission of their sins.

While Christians believe that the bible is the inspired word of God and is without error, Mormons "believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly. . ." *8th Article of Faith of the Mormon Church.*

After you become a good Mormon, you have the potential of becoming a god, (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pages 345-347, 354.*) "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," (DC 132:20).

Mormons further believe "If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation [the context is the full gospel including exaltation to Godhood] outside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (*Mormon Doctrine, p. 670.*)

#### **Pope John Paul II Society of Evangelists**

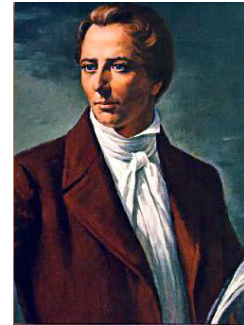
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Pamphlet 147

## **Mormonism**

### **Background, History, and beliefs.**



*Joseph Smith the  
founder of Mormonism*

Joseph Smith, born in Sharon Township, Windsor County, Vermont, December 23, 1805, is the founder of Mormonism. He claimed a heavenly messenger by the name of Moroni appeared to him on the night of September 21, 1823, who revealed to him three times that a complete record written upon gold plates with two transparent stones in silver bows like eye glasses, by means of which the ancient record could be read, were deposited in the earth, in a hill (which was shown him<sup>0</sup>, NEAR Manchester, Ontario County, New York. He moreover stated that this angel placed these records of gold and the stone eyeglasses, called Urim and Thummim, into his hands on September 22, 1827. Sitting behind a blanket to shield these records from profane eyes, the two stones upon his nose, Joseph Smith, the visionary (so he said) began to read these records, the wonderful Book of Mormon. When Joseph Smith read by means of these stone eyeglasses, Oliver Cowdery transcribed. Joseph Smith had never learned to read or write well, for his schooling had been somewhat rejected.

The "Book of Mormon" was published in 1830. It contains a peculiar Testimony of Three Witnesses, who claimed that they saw the plates." And we now testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shewn unto us by the power of God, and not of man. 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.” The names signed are: Oliver Cowdery, David Witmer, and Martin Harris. Several years afterwards each of these three witnesses quarreled with Smith, renounced Mormonism and declared that their testimony in the Book of Mormon was false. When they admitted that they had lied, eight other witnesses asserted that they saw the plates from which Joseph Smith translated by the aid of the stone eyeglasses.

Nobody else ever saw these golden plates. The burden of belief is very blatant. Although repeatedly and loudly demanded, these supposed golden plates have never been forthcoming. Even among Mormon leaders the knowledge of those fabulous plates and wonderful stone spectacles is at most customary.

Though his neighbors testified against Joseph Smith, and many held him up to ridicule, he succeeded in organizing his church at Fayette, New York, in April 6, 1830, under the pretentious name of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

He was accepted by his disciples as their first elder, and was subsequently honored by them as prophet and revelator. In 1843, when his lawful wife was jealous because of his cohabitating with other women, Joseph Smith had another vision, which resulted in establishing polygamy, which he taught and practiced. Others followed his example. This public scandal caused the trouble at Nauvoo, Illinois, between the Mormon militia and U. S. soldiers. The governor of the state persuaded the two Smiths, Joseph and Hyrum to surrender and stand trial. But, on June 27, 1844, while they were in prison at Carthage, a mob overpowered the guards and shot and killed Hyrum Smith. Joseph Smith used his revolver on the mob, but when he ran out of ammunition in his attempt to escape, he was shot and fell to the ground dead.

Soon after, Brigham Young was chosen first president of the Mormons. In 1845 the Illinois legislature repealed the Nauvoo charter. A year later Brigham Young went west and finally arrived in Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847. The Mormons founded Salt Lake City that same year. It became their lasting

home. Brigham Young was not only their spiritual leader, but upon the acknowledged petition sent to President Millard Fillmore, in 1850, he became their rightful governor. The practice of polygamy has repeatedly brought them into conflict with the laws of the land.

It may seem strange that the Book of Mormon forbids polygamy, when the founder of Mormonism practiced it to such an extent. Beginning in the 1830s, Joseph Smith, married at least thirty-three women. The majority of Smith's wives were younger than he, and one-third were between fourteen and twenty years of age. Another third were already married, and some of the husbands served as witnesses at their own wife's polyandrous wedding. In addition, some of the wives hinted that they bore Smith children--most notably Sylvia Sessions's daughter Josephine--although the children carried their stepfather's surname.

In the book of Jacob (the third book in the Book of Mormon) chapter 3, v. 27, we read as follows: Wherefore, my brethren, hear me and harken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none.” Joseph Smith, in spite of this, established polygamy as perfectly in harmony with the will of God.

Mormon doctrine states that in order to enter the highest heaven that those who enter must be living in polygamy. Mormon doctrine also states that they believe in being subject to the laws of the land, insofar as those laws protect individual rights. So for the time being, the largest Mormon sect, the LDS church, has decided it is more important to live the laws of the land than those of God. Other Mormon faiths have made a different choice in the matter, and practice polygamy in defiance of what they consider to be the unjust laws of the land.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) finally banned the practice in the 1890s, a decision that paved the way for Utah to be granted statehood.

It is estimated that there are 60,000 polygamists in Utah (5% of Utah Mormons). The largest concentrations of Polygamists in Utah are near Manti and in Hillsdale (Colorado City, Arizona). Practically

the whole town of Colorado City is owned by a religious trust, the members of which practice polygamy. Wherever the LDS has a large concentration of Utah born members, you can be sure that there is polygamy close by.

Although there is not a single verse in the New Testament that specifically prohibits or supports polygamy, when asked about marriage and divorce, Jesus said, "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." [Matthew 19:4-6; see also Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31]

One Mormon argument is when a man becomes a one flesh with his wife (Matthew 19:5-6) this doesn't mean that the man can't be one flesh with another woman. He can be one flesh with his first wife, and one flesh with his second wife, and one flesh with his third wife and so on....

Mormons have a false conception of the fall on man. They believe: “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi, 2:25). In other words they imagine that Adam's sin was one of lust. Scripture plainly states: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. (Gen. 3:6).

They believe in the necessity of baptism. “And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should need to be baptized by water, to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water” (2 Nephi, 31:5). Mormons baptize for the dead.

They believe in the Incarnation and the Virgin birth (Alma 7:10).

Unlike Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Christianity, Mormonism does not include belief in a Trinity, in which the one God consists of three persons. Instead, Mormons believe that the "Godhead" is made up of three distinct beings who