

October 1, 2005

H.I.S. Ministries Newsletter, covering September 2005

On 25th of September we received from *Tower to Truth Ministries* (towertotruth@comcast.net), the following results of a survey done among seven thousand four hundred and forty one (7, 441) mainline Protestant ministers. They were presented a few pointed questions. This survey was conducted by Sociologist Jeffrey Haden.

Question: Do you accept Jesus' physical resurrection as a fact?

51 % of Methodist pastors said "NO"
35 % of Episcopalian pastors said "NO"
33% of American Baptist pastors said "NO"
30 % of Presbyterian pastors said "NO"
13 % of American Lutherans said "NO"

Question: Do you believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus?

60 % of Methodist pastors said "NO"
49 % of Presbyterian pastors said "NO"
44 % of Episcopalian pastors said "NO"
34 % of American Baptist pastors said "NO"
19 % of American Lutherans pastors said "NO"

Question: Do you believe the Scriptures are the inerrant word of God in Faith History and secular matters?

95 % of Episcopalian pastors said "NO"

87 % of Methodist pastors said "NO"
77 % of American Lutheran pastors said "NO"
67 % of American Baptist pastors said "NO"

Don't you feel like weeping? This is sad, very sad.

A couple of years ago, Barna Research reported that **only half or less of the nation's senior pastors hold a "biblical worldview"**. The report showed **Senior Baptist pastors "as winners" in this with only 51% of them believing in the biblical view, while others scored a lot lower, from about 40-23%**. Are we in trouble, or what?! **If pastors and ministers of the Gospel in America do not believe even the most basic biblical teachings, how can we expect that their congregations do any better, or even that much?** People seem to be into "*tolerance*" and "*acceptance of all faiths*". They seem to be only concerned about the "*here and now*" rather than concerned about God and eternity, and what happens the minute they die. People in the world at large have become more or less biblical illiterates - and a lot of this is **because they have not been encouraged enough to study their Bibles. Why would they if their pastors do not take the Bible as absolute truth?** They hear "sermon-ettes" about life in general, "*mingled with scriptures*", but not much of anything about the important and life-changing doctrines presented in the Bible. And why would they care, if their pastors do not consider it to be accurate in the most basic Christian teachings as the **resurrection of Jesus, His Virgin Birth and inerrancy of the Bible as a whole? This is why cults like Mormonism flourish**. There are times in peoples lives, almost everyone's life, that they seek to know the truth about God and life after this life. We know that death comes to all, with 100% surety. Many

go to their pastors for answers, but do not get much. I recall when I, as a young teen in Finland, after my father's death, I went to see a Lutheran pastor for answers and comfort, but he was not offering any. Some years later came the Mormon missionaries telling me that God is speaking again. He came to Joseph Smith and had him organize "the only true church", because all Christian churches were abomination to Him. They said that God is now, and since Joseph Smith, been speaking to people through His living prophet. They said in essence that **even if the Bible is not accurate, what we get from God's prophet today is absolutely correct.** A cult like Mormonism takes hundreds of thousands members annually, world-wide, from Christian churches. Christian churches are found to be **unfaithful to God by not knowing and teaching His Word.** People are leaving churches for "other gods", they accept "another gospel", and "another Jesus ", enforced by "another spirit", warned of by Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:4, 13-15. They are not counseled to **test all things** as is instructed in 1 Thess. 5:21, in 1 John 4:1 and in 1 Tim. 4:1. They do not know that a false gospel brings God's curse, sooner or later, to all who accept "another gospel" or preach it. (Galatians 1:6-9.) Anything that is not the worship of the true God is unfaithfulness to Him. *In the Bible this unfaithfulness to God is called whoredom, fornication and adultery.* This is a serious issue. I know that from my own personal experience. I joined the Mormon Church because I did not know the Bible, and I did not have spiritual leaders or pastors, who would have helped me. **My conversion to Mormonism decided for me what I was to believe from that time on.** Once a person joins a cult and **believes that it represents the truth, it hinders their openness to the Bible.** While I was serving as a full-time Mormon missionary, I read the Bible through, but it did not help me, **because I was only trying to find confirmation for my Mormon-faith in it.** It was not there, and thus the Bible remained as a "sealed book" to me for another 20 years.

Almost 2700 years ago Hosea lamented that his people were perishing because of "lack of knowledge" of what God had said. (Hosea 4:6) The same is still true. **People are destroyed for following false prophets.** Isaiah 9:15b-16, says "*the prophet who teaches lies, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.*" God gave His Word to us so that we can know Him, and know the doctrine, and instruct and correct those who have gone astray (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16), or who have not received right instructions from their pastors or spiritual leaders. These reports I quoted above scare me, for most people trust that their pastors know and believe the Bible, and by coming to church every Sunday, they think they are led in correct ways. **Instead they are lulled into a false security!** The Russian leader, Lenin, had said that *religion is the opiate of the people.* Opiates puts people to sleep, and so does a religion **without** knowledge and worship of the true God. **Only the true gospel causes people to wake up from their sleep and be able to receive the light of Christ.** In the world we are offered all kinds of counterfeit churches and "religious paganisms" with false devotions that lull people into a stupor that is almost robot-like, obeying and following empty rules, not really knowing why. When people offer their worship to a god that is not God, or give their hearts to systems, doctrines, rituals, rites, or idols of any kind, or to administrations that take the place of what God has revealed and appointed, the scriptures call it adultery or **unfaithfulness to God.** (See Jeremiah 3:6, 8-9; Ezekiel 16:32; Hosea 1 and 2; Rev. 2:22.) **All false religions represent unfaithfulness to God.**

Leaven (yeast) is used in the Bible as a symbol of sin, because it puffs up and corrupts. "*A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*" (Gal. 5:9) The influence of organized religions, **without the true Christ and true worship of God, have "leavened" the whole world.** The very essence of divine law is that *we love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.* **Our**

devotion and service must be to Christ, not to a religion. He must be #1, on a list of one. If we love Him and serve Him, all else necessary for our life follows in their proper order. He said, “Seek ye **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6:33.)

One of the marks of a false religion is to usurp the glory that belongs to God alone. Systems of salvation by works take the glory from God and are thus blasphemous. That started in Satan’s heart. In Ezekiel 28:2 we read, “*Thus saith the Lord God;... thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God...*” This teaching that men can become as God was started in the Garden of Eden by the devil, who had sworn to become like the most high God (Isa. 14:12-14.) This is what we as Mormons were also reaching to become, gods!. The entire endowment and temple-marriage ceremonies are to “to make men into gods” and are thus highly blasphemous, even devilish!

At the final judgment the gravest charge that will be made against us will be that we were so unconcerned about others. We did not fear God, but men. We did not warn, we did not declare the truth for a fear of resentment of men. Let us all repent while there is time! And let us strive to learn God’s Word better and pray for pastors and leaders in our churches that they might repent from their unbiblical stand and become real shepherds to guard and protect their flocks. I read somewhere that “the shortest distance between a problem and a solution is a distance between your knees and the floor. The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything.”

From our mailbox:

A relative of a Mormon lady wrote:

“When I asked my LDS sister why is the Mormon Church saying that their temple ceremonies are the same as what was done in Solomon’s Temple in Israel, but she said they no longer teach that. How should I answer her?”

My answer:

Mormon Church still says the same thing - and even if some Mormons deny that or disagree, what has changed in either one of them, ancient Solomon’s temple ceremonies or what goes on in Mormon temples? If what takes place in the LDS temples is said, or has been said, to be what was done in Solomon’s temple - **what changed?** Solomon’s temple ceremonies? (Impossible - it is past history - and cannot be changed.) Or LDS ceremonies? **Fact is: Nothing has changed**, excepting that LDS have left some wording off or demonstrations off on “*how the life can be taken*”. LDS ceremonies are still the same, and that **never** was what took place in the Temple of Solomon. “**We no longer teach that**”- statement means either that they did teach it and have changed and do not teach it now! **When were the practices of Solomon’s temple and Mormon practices the same? Never!** This is the same kind of nonsense I have heard Mormons say about other things “*they no longer teach*”. Another thing that they say is, “*we do not teach any longer that Jesus was married and polygamist*”. What changed? If Jesus was taught to have been married (as we know they have taught that He was), they (LDS “prophets”) either lied when they taught it - or their “Jesus” got divorced! It does not matter whether they teach it (openly) now or not - if their “prophets” ever said it (and they did), they simply lied! “...a prophet who teaches lies, he is the tail. Leaders of this people cause them to err; and they who are led by them are destroyed”, wrote Isaiah about 2800 years ago (Isaiah 9:15b-16.). If it was true then, it is true now. Let her know that following false prophets is a deadly thing. May God bless you as you declare His truth. Rauni

A man who was a Mormon and has recently left it, is struggling with the Mormon teaching of pre-existence. He still wants to hang onto it. He wrote:

*"I believe that Mormon teaching of pre-existence of man **might be true**. What about Jeremiah 1:5? Can you help me on this? RM _____"*

My brief answer:

The Bible does **not** teach that people pre-existed. **Only God pre-existed.**

1 Cor. 15:46 says that first is natural and then spiritual - we are born first physically, naturally, from the mother's womb, and then afterwards **we must be born again**, spiritually, as Jesus said in John 3:4-7. **God forms the spirit of man within him**, in the mother's womb (**Zech. 12:1**). Mormons use Jeremiah 1:5 as a "proof" that men pre-existed. That is ridiculous. It only says that GOD KNEW Jeremiah - not that Jeremiah knew God. **Of course God knew Jeremiah and everyone, because God knows the beginning from the end.** Romans 4:17, "...[God] **calls those things which do not exist, as though they did.**" (NKJV) The Bible is God's record, "*history, told in advance*". Only God knows the future. God knew you and He knew me before we were born, but **we did not know Him**. Jesus died for my sins and your sins 2000 years before we existed and believed. (Romans 5:8.) You may want to mark your Bible and list the above scriptures and also the following verses for future reference: Isa. 46:10; 48:5 (God declares things *before they happen*); 1 Peter 1:2 talks about foreknowledge of God. God calls us "*from the womb*", He does not send us from another world somewhere (from "Kolob") as Mormonism teaches. See also Isa. 49:1. Only God pre-existed. He (Jesus) came down from heaven. - See John 3:13, 31; 8:23. "*Ye are from beneath (earth); I AM from above (heaven); **ye are of this world; I AM not of this world.***" (John 8:23.) There is more, but perhaps this will get you started. God bless, Rauni

Question from someone interested in Mormonism:

"Hello, I just finished reading your page on Mormon facts (or lack there of) as several members of the LDS church have been trying to get me to buy into their religion. I've read several other articles that brushed over much of the same, and some other facts (coins not ever found, the use of metal, even steel for tools and one that actually made me laugh, the silk clothes people in the BoM wore, silk being a well kept secret by the Chinese until about 600 A.D.) Anyway, it lead me to your web page where you say you believe that Israel is God's chosen people, and that the restoration of the Jews in their own land is the fulfillment of the Word of God. What do you mean by Israel being the chosen people? Do you refer to the peoples or Jews who live there now or do you refer to the Jew of the Old Testament that believed Christ would come. Can a Jew be saved without acknowledging that through Jesus we are saved? D _____"

My answer:

Thank you for writing and asking a question about Israel.

Yes, the Bible teaches that Jews (Israelites) are God's chosen nation. They are not chosen because they are better, or worse, than other nations. God called Abraham from a pagan country, Ur of Chaldea, and then God called his son, Isaac, and then his son Jacob, whom He re-named Israel, and they were to be the mouthpiece of God and teach other nations about God. God gave Abraham this land (Gen. 12:1-3) known to us as **Israel, the Promised land**. God renewed this Abrahamic covenant (land covenant) with Isaac (Gen. 26:1-5) and again with Jacob (Israel) (Gen. 28:13-15). This is the land that God gave to them and they are now, again, in that land. Throughout history, when they disobeyed God, they were taken into slavery (Babylon) away from the Promised land. They received more severe penalties than any other nation for disobeying God, **because** they were to teach others and they failed, again and again. 2000 years ago, when they rejected their Messiah, Jesus, they lost the land again. The Roman leader, Titus, leveled Jerusalem 69-70 A.D., and killed over 1.6 million Jews. The rest escaped and have been dispersed among all nations of the world for almost 2000 years. There has been a demonic plot to get rid of the Jews so that they could not fulfill God's promise to them. Hitler attempted that in 1930's and 1940's. God protected the remnant and in 1948 Israel was reborn as a nation as God had promised! God had promised that in the "end times" He will bring them back to their land.

To be "God's chosen nation" has brought heavy responsibility on them. We owe the Jews our gratefulness for the Word of God. The Bible came to us through Jews - even the New Testament was written by Jews, excepting Luke, who was a Greek. The Jews, as a nation are "blinded" as to their Messiah, Jesus, **even though all the first Christians were Jews, tens of thousands of them**, but as a nation they rejected Him. Jews came back to their land about 57 years ago - and this gathering of Jews back to their homeland is still taking place - as God had promised - **they will never to be taken from their country again**. They are still as a nation in unbelief, but one of these days, they will realize who Jesus is, and invite Him to come back. Paul wrote to the Romans (Rom. 11:25-28) that *Israel is blinded for our (gentiles') sakes*, until the *"fullness of the gentiles has come in"*, in other words when those, who, from among other nations, will come to Jesus, have come in (v. 25), then the Jews will call Jesus back - according to the Bible. There are a lot of promises in the Word of God concerning Israel. God keeps His promises even if Israel does not honor God. **God keeps His promises because His honor and His Word demands it.** (Read, as one example, Ezekiel 20:33-44.) God said, in Ezekiel 36:22, *"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, 'Thus saith the Lord God: 'I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathens (nations) whither ye went.'"* As to salvation, I do not know any other way to be saved but through Jesus. (John 14:6; Acts 4:12.) There are many tens of thousands of Jews who have, even in these last years, come to know Jesus as their Messiah, and eventually, the rest of them will too. God has said it.

Are you familiar with "Jews for Jesus" ministry? They have a website: www.jfjonline.org (their email: jfj@jewsforjesus.org) They have a lot of helpful information about "why Israel". Also "Friends of Israel" ministry is a great one to learn from. Their website is: www.foi.org I also know Zola Levitt Ministry. Zola is a Messianic Jew. His TV program is known nationwide and his website is: www.levitt.org This might not answer all what you had in mind, but if I can help you further, please write again. We are commanded in Psalms 122:6 to *"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"*. Let's keep on praying for them. May God bless you. Rauni Higley.

A Mormon woman wrote:

"Do you have tangible facts that Joseph Smith married all those women? Do you know why most Latter-day Saints do not know about that information? Because, it is not true. I am sure if I check out that website etc., it will be stuff that anti-Mormons took from true church doctrine and twisted to their own liking. I do not know why you are trying to bring our religion down, let people believe what they believe. Can you not see why Mormonism is the fastest growing religion in the world ? It is because we are right! BD _____"

My answer:

You surely can believe what you want to believe, but **remember that only eight people survived the flood of Noah. This shows that it is not the masses that are right, but only those who take the Word of God, the Bible, seriously.** We provide information so that you may know the facts. It is up to you to learn.

About Joseph Smith's marriages, there is a well documented and researched book written by **an LDS professor, Todd Compton**. The title of this book is *"In Sacred Loneliness"*. It is available in many Salt Lake bookstores (i.e. Zion's Bookstore, 801.328-2586 - they take credit card orders) or you can perhaps borrow it from your local public library. On pages 4-9 he gives a list of **33 women married to Joseph Smith**, their ages, and to whom else they were married. (**11 of them were married women, with living husbands.**) Joseph had 15 more wives, (total of 48, plus Emma), but Compton did not include them in his book. Polygamy itself was and is illegal,

but to take other men's wives has to be worst. I will give you a list of married women Joseph Smith "married". They are **verifiable from LDS records. Already married women were:** **1.** Lucinda Pendleton Morgan Harris, wife of George Harris, also LDS, married to Joseph Smith in 1838. **2.** Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs, married to Henry B. Jacobs, also LDS. She married Joseph Smith, Oct. 27,1841. **3.** Presendia Lathrop Huntington Buel, married to Norman Buell, who left the LDS church because of it. She married Joseph Smith, 11 Dec.1841. **4.** Sylvia Sessions Lyon, married to Windsor Lyon, also LDS. She married Joseph Smith Feb. 8, 1842. **5.** Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, married to Adam Lightner, who was non-LDS. She married Joseph Smith Feb. 1842. **6.** Patty Bartlett Sessions, married to Davis Sessions, also LDS. She married Joseph Smith March 9, 1842. **7.** Marinda Nancy Johnson Hyde, married to Orson Hyde, LDS apostle. She married Joseph Smith April 1842. **8.** Elizabeth Davis Goldsmith Brackenbury Durfee, married to Jabez Durfee, also LDS. She married Joseph Smith June 1842. **9.** Sarah Kingley Howe Cleveland, married to John Cleveland, non-LDS. She married Joseph Smith also in June 1842. **10.** Elvira Annie Cowles Holmes, married to Jonathan Holmes, also LDS. She married Joseph Smith 12 June 1843. **11.** Mary Heron Snider, married to John Snider. She married Joseph Smith 1843. **These 11 women continued to be married to their husbands while also married to Joseph Smith.** In addition to these 11 married women, Compton's book records life-stories of 22 more women Joseph Smith married. (15 more wives are acknowledged, but their life-stories are not recorded in this book.) Stories are taken mostly from these women's diaries, dates and other pertinent information are from the LDS church's records. Joseph Smith lied about his polygamy and went to his grave denying that he was married to anyone else besides Emma. There were printed denials, by both Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith of polygamy in Mormon papers throughout the years, - and there is denial of it in the History of the Church by Joseph Smith. However, he started polygamy in very early 1830's, but he did not receive a "revelation" of it until **July 1843. It is still in Section 132 in D&C where he said that all that know the doctrine are damned if they do not practice it** (132: 4). Joseph even threatened Emma with destruction if she did not go along with it.(132: 54) Emma lived to an old age, but it was Joseph who was destroyed less than a year after this "revelation". You asked **why most LDS do not know this information** - and said that it is "because it is not true". However, **it is true, and most do not know because they do not want to know.** They stick their heads in the sand and hope that no one else will find out either. **Most Mormons do not know because they are afraid to know. Knowledge brings responsibility! After you know, no more sticking your head in the sand. I know that it is difficult, but it is something we must do. "Truth is eternal. Knowledge is changeable. It is disastrous to confuse them."** I am curious to see what will you do with this information - check it out - or disregard it? I'm willing to guess that you do **not have the courage to verify this information I gave here about these 11 married women whom Joseph Smith took. Am I correct?** You will just say to yourself that it is not true, but **you will not dare to test it!** Right? By the way, there is an other book about Joseph Smith and polygamy, written by two **active LDS women, Linda King Newell and Dr. Valeen Tippetts Avery.** The title of their book is "*Mormon Enigma, Emma Hale Smith, Prophet's wife, 'Elect Lady', Polygamy's Foe*". I am sure that this book is also available in bookstores or in a public library - or they can get it for you if you ask the librarian. You ask why I am telling this? I am saying this to encourage you and others to check things out. Your eternal life is in danger. False church, false Jesus, false gospel do not get you to heaven no matter how good you try to be! But, if you think you have the truth and I am wrong, show me what I have said that is not so. Truth will not have to fear investigation! Only deceptions and lies fear being exposed! Some

Mormons remind me of an organization called the "Flat Earth Society". They , like Mormons, refuse to look at any information that proves that the Earth is not flat like a pancake; that it is instead a round ball, floating in space, "held on nothing". They say that all information about a round earth in space is falsified, and they do not want to see or know anything different. Their mind is made up. Does it make the earth flat because they do not want to see? No!! Neither does your denial of information I gave make it go away. It is there, it is true. Now, let's see what you are going to do! :-) With best wishes, Rauni Higley

Questions and answers:

Question: If a 19 year old missionary comes to know the truth and renounces his LDS beliefs, does the church pay his plane fare back to his home?

Answer:

I am sure that he will somehow get back home! :-) However, I think that the church in that case would try to get out of paying his fares...

Question:

How would his immediate family treat him when he returns?

Answer:

He would be treated as black sheep are always treated - and, in most cases, his LDS family would be ashamed of him. Not a good situation for any of them.

Question:

Is it customary for LDS missionaries to keep in close contact with you even when you've been through all of the discussions and it is obvious that you will never leave your Christian faith. Do they generally keep coming, even when you are sharing the true gospel over and over and they only half-heartedly try to share the LDS gospel? Is it common for the missionary leader to keep bringing the new learner missionaries to visit you?

Answer:

If you have allowed them to your home that many times, they will keep coming... perhaps because there are not that many who have received them into their homes even once...They are hoping that you may change your mind, since you have been friendly to them!

Question:

How often do Mormon missionaries read the Bible? I have given an elder (missionary) the KJV NT on cassette tape. He had showed interest in the tapes when he visited my church's library. When I ask him if he would like for me to give him the Bible on tape, he seemed like he had an overwhelming desire or need for it, that's putting it mildly.

Answer:

Most Mormon missionaries read from the Bible only those few verses Mormons use in their missionary "discussions" (out of context, of course) to "prove" their points. In my lifetime I have met very few Mormons who have ever even read the Book of Mormon through, and hardly any have read the Bible. They have been taught that **the Bible is not correct**, but the Book of Mormon is 100% correct. It is a subtle way of discouraging the reading of the Bible. Why would you spend your time reading something **that may not be correct?** Of course there can be exceptions - and the Holy Spirit may be encouraging this one missionary, as He is prompting those He knows are ready in their hearts to receive the truth. Keep on keeping on...God's Word is powerful! I hope this helped a bit. Rauni

May God bless you, our friends and prayer partners in this ministry. These last 2 months have been hard, but it only reminds us that **we are in a spiritual war**. If we are making a difference, the enemy is after us, harder and harder. So we praise God that there is trouble! ☺ But we need your prayers to fight this war.

Please pray for our health too. Dennis' blood pressure is still high, even though he is on medication. I have had some health problems also and I am waiting to get results from MRI test that was done a few days ago. God hears and answers prayers, so we are asking

that you remember us. The ministry is going well, many people are calling, writing and asking questions. Just this last month God has brought a returned LDS missionary out of Mormonism. He has received salvation in our Lord Jesus. We are in touch with him frequently. He is studying the Word of God and is excited about it.

Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake has asked us again to teach a class on Mormonism, and we go where we are needed. We are starting it 10/2/05. We have had two full classes in the past there.. Pre-registration now has almost 100 names already. The room is limited to 75, they said...☺

Dennis has been teaching at an Evangelical Free Church for the last several Sundays. His class will overlap this one. We cannot be at two places at the same time, so we have to split up, but his class will end in a couple of weeks. Please pray that God will give us wisdom, health and strength to “keep on keeping on” in this work we love to do for His people and for His glory.

We thank you again for your letters, prayers and assistance in expenses. God is the one who directs you, as He also directs us. **He is the one who rewards you for your faithfulness to Him.** (Phil. 4:19)

Because of Jesus and His love for the lost,

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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