



[H.I.S.] * He Is Savior, Acts 4:12

HIS Ministries October 2019 Newsletter, covering September 2019

Deception has indeed deepened since the Mormon President several months ago announced that they are not to use the word *Mormon* or *LDS* any longer when referring to members or the Church itself in a regular conversation, but instead say *the Church of Jesus Christ* (or members of). The Mormon Church has for months filled the airwaves and TV channels with beautiful and well done video advertisements, with Bible scriptures, inviting *people to join their church*, calling, “*Come to Christ*” (“*Advertisement by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*”).

Many have not realized how huge the difference there is between *the Triune God of the Bible* and *God(s) of Mormonism and Jesus of Mormonism*, and what this means to both Mormons and Christians.

Let me try to explain:

“The *God of the Bible* is *one Being in three coequal and coeternal Persons*. *Being and Person* do not mean the same thing in the definition of *God* – “*Being*” here refers to the nature or essence of *God* – “*Person*” refers to *who they are and how they each function in their relationship within the Godhead*. *Christianity* believes in a *Triune God, which is one Being but three Persons; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit*. *The Mormon Church* believes in *three separate Gods, two of them physical and one of them (Holy Ghost) a spirit, these three assigned for this world, and they also teach that in addition to these three Gods, that there are multitudes of Gods elsewhere, and if they live and obey according to the doctrines of Mormonism to the end, they too will become Gods.*”

This new change announced by President Russel B. Nelson is intending to make the Mormon Church to be equal to all genuine Christian churches and that their Jesus is Jesus of the Bible. Members of the Mormon Church all along have been taught stories about Jesus from the New Testament, so they are not seeing that this is anything different for they already think that “*their Jesus*” is the same as Jesus of the Bible. *This change invites Christians to join Mormonism as another Christian church* and assures Mormons that there is no difference in their belief of Jesus. When Christians now witness to Mormons about Jesus and how to gain eternal life, Mormons most often reply, “*We know Jesus, he is our Savior and Lord.*” That “*Jesus*” is not God who became a man to die for us, but a man who became a god as Mormons are hoping also to become. Mormonism teaches that Jesus is a created being, an elder brother of all humans, born to our Heavenly Father and mothers in the preexistence, and that all angels, including Satan, are Jesus’ and our brothers and sisters. *They teach that Jesus was not begotten by the Holy Ghost, but by their God, who was once a mortal man, and now is a physical, exalted man.* Mormon Doctrine declares (p.547), “*Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by their mortal fathers.*” The Mormon prophet and president declared that Mormons do not believe in the “*traditional Jesus taught in Christianity*”, but that they believe in the “*Jesus who was revealed by Joseph Smith*”. When we talk to Mormons about Jesus, we need to be aware of this fact.

I recall when in 2004 the well-known Christian lecturer, Ravi Zacharias, was invited to speak in the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City (Nov.13-15,2004) and also have personal visits with the First Presidency of the Church, and during that weekend have several speaking opportunities in the University of Utah and other colleges, including BYU. Organizers for this historic meeting were BYU’s professor Robert Millet and a Christian pastor, Greg Johnson. They had invited Fuller Seminary’s professor Richard Mouw and Biola’s Professor Craig Hazen also to speak in the Tabernacle on that Sunday evening. When I learned about this, I was concerned (along with several others who also minister to Mormons here) that the only ones that are going to benefit from this event will be the organizers and the LDS Church.

To express my concerns, I wrote a letter to Mr. Zacharias in Atlanta, GA, before he came here to let him know (just in case he didn’t know) that the God of Mormonism is not the God of the Bible, nor is the Gospel, and Jesus of

Mormonism the same as Jesus of the Bible, though they use the New Testament stories of Jesus as if He was the same one. Christian Ministries in Utah were hoping and praying that Mr. Zacharias would present the Biblical Gospel and who Jesus is clearly enough to bring Mormons to Him and out of Mormonism. (Mr. Zacharias did not respond to my letter, nor did he let me know if he even had read my letter.)

The Salt Lake Tabernacle was filled with Mormons, and many of their high leaders (General Authorities) were also present, and including many Christians. Ravi Zacharias gave a good sermon – for a Christian audience! He didn't say anything that would have alerted Mormons to see that their God, gospel and Jesus are not the same. He failed to declare the truth clearly enough to Mormons who interpret words of the Bible totally differently. The same can be said about the two liberal theologians, Richard Mouw's and Craig Hazen's sermons. They also spoke as if they were speaking to an audience of believing Christians. It became obvious why Greg Johnson and BYU's Robert Millet had chosen these two liberal professors to speak and "*represent Christianity*" there. In an interview after this historic meeting, Craig Hazen reported that what Ravi Zacharias had said "rank and file Mormons would not have found anything controversial to Mormonism in it." Likewise, when many attending Mormons were asked what they thought of this meeting, they said that Ravi's speech was great and that they agreed with everything he said, which means that they didn't see Ravi's beliefs in God, Jesus and the gospel being any different than theirs.

If I had still been an active and believing Mormon as I once was, I would have interpreted what was said with my "*Mormon-understanding*" – i.e. when Ravi said "Jesus" I would have thought of *Jesus* with whom I had lived with in heaven before coming to this earth. When Ravi said "*God or Heavenly Father*", I would have thought of our literal heavenly parents (father- and mother-gods) we lived with before coming to the earth. When Ravi talked about "*redemption*" and "*Jesus' payment for our sins*", I would have thought of a "*conditional salvation Jesus provided for all who are also willing to work hard for real salvation, which is exaltation and godhood*". When Ravi said "*Trinity*", I would have thought of three gods for this earth and that Ravi, by saying "*Trinity*", only meant unity in purpose among these three Gods. When Ravi mentioned the cross where Jesus died, I would have pictured that before going to the cross, Jesus had already atoned and suffered for Adam's transgression in the Garden of Gethsemane, and there earning resurrection for all though He died on the cross.

Just like Mormon leaders on the platform, and all attending Mormons, I too, if I had been still a Mormon, would have also agreed that Ravi Zacharias' sermon was good. Mormons are not able to see for "the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them." (2 Cor. 4:3-4; Col. 1:15-16.)

[I personally know many active, temple-card holding Mormons here in Utah who regularly listen to Christian speakers on radio or TV and read C.S. Lewis' books etc. and "agree" with them all, even though some have expressed their pity that *these great Christian speakers* will never get to go to the celestial kingdom and become gods for they have not received "*the fullness of the gospel as we Mormons have*."

The only reason that a Mormon would ever change and leave their Mormon life, would be if they learned that "*their Jesus*" is a false one, "*another Jesus*", brought by *an angel of light* (Moroni?) warned of by Paul in Gal. 1:8-9 and in 2 Cor. 11:4, 13-15. They have to have their hearts and minds changed by the Truth, which is Jesus (John 14:6; 17:3, 17) and then be able to receive God's gift of salvation, that is not of works (Eph. 2:8-9) and become *born again children of God*. (John 1:12; 3:7.)]

Ravi Zacharias had 2-3 other opportunities to declare the Gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 15:-4) to Mormon audiences when he was "*on neutral ground*", as at the University of Utah, and not on strictly *Mormon turf*.

Zacharias failed "*to give and answer to everyone who asks you a reason of hope that is in you*" (1 Peter 3:15).

He was asked there a question, "*Mr. Zacharias, would you tell us what are the differences between Mormonism and Christianity?*" He replied, "*I cannot for I am a guest here!*" My question to Mr. Zacharias was (I wrote him another letter after his visit), "*What were you here for? Just to be polite and pleasing to Mormons leaders, or to speak the truth of salvation for the Lord's sake? This was your opportunity to be truthful and honorable regardless whose guest you were in Salt Lake City, in my opinion.*" I also gave him God's opinion from James 4:4, "*know ye not that the friendship with world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" "*It is better to be divided by truth than to be united in error. It is better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals, than falsehood that comforts and then kills. Let me tell you something, friend, IT IS NOT LOVE AND IT IS NOT FRIENDSHIP IF WE FAIL TO DECLARE THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD. It is better to be hated for telling the truth, than be loved for telling a lie. It is impossible to find anyone in the Bible who was a power for God who did not have*

enemies and was not hated. IT IS BETTER TO STAND ALONE WITH THE TRUTH, THAN TO BE WRONG WITH THE MULTITUDE. It is better to ultimately succeed with the truth than temporarily succeed with a lie. THERE IS ONLY ONE GOSPEL AND PAUL SAID, 'IF ANY MAN PREACHES ANY OTHER GOSPEL UNTO YOU THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED UNTO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.'" (Pastor Adrian Rogers.)

Ravi Zacharias' visit to Utah has not, that I have heard of, brought even one convert out of Mormonism to biblical salvation and to Jesus Christ who is God. (Matt. 1:23; John 8:24; 1:1, 14.)

Two days ago I received a long letter from an Evangelical Lutheran pastor in Finland. He has felt that God wanted him to study Mormonism so that he would be better able to help those who (in Finland) have been deceived by it. I am going to take excerpts from his questions and how I answered him.

"Hi! I am a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. I have been a believing Christian since my childhood and Mormonism has never been a personal matter for me. Somehow I feel that God wanted me to study Mormonism maybe in order to help those who have been deceived with Mormonism.

I have read through the Book of Mormon and studied the history of Mormonism a little bit. I have also read your excellent booklet "The Truth about Mormonism".

I have noticed that there are quite remarkable differences between the teachings of the Book of Mormon and the doctrine of LDS Church.

I would appreciate if you had time to answer to following questions:

1. According to my understanding Joseph Smith taught the doctrine of polygamy before he died. That is against the teachings of the Book of Mormon, but according to my understanding Joseph Smith lived polygamously for a long time. If Joseph Smith had himself thought, that the Book of Mormon is the word of God (and translated correctly!), it would seem impossible to believe, that he would have dared to teach anything that would have contradicted so clearly against the teachings of the Book of Mormon. But if he knew that the Book of Mormon is a word of himself (just his word), it is very understandable, that he would have dared to change his own mind. Do you think my argumentation is correct?

Reply:

There indeed are important differences between the Book of Mormon and today's Mormonism. Most important differences are what they now teach about God and Jesus. The BoM teaches that there is only one God anywhere and that He is Eternal Spirit. (Examples: Alma 11:26-20; 18:26-28.) Today's Mormonism teaches that there *three Gods for this earth*, Father, Son and the Holy Ghost; (Father and Son having physical bodies), and multitudes of Gods elsewhere in the universe. They teach, *"As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may become"*. They indeed oppose the BoM now. In other words, they believe and teach that their God is not eternal God as the BoM even says, but an exalted man who had progressed into a God, and who, with his many wives, had given birth to their spirit children in the preexistence. They teach that all mankind and angels are their spirit children, Jesus being the eldest son and Lucifer the next... The Book of Mormon is not a doctrinal scripture, but only *a converting tool* for people with a Christian background because *it seems very similar to the Bible*. It is written in King James English and includes many books copied directly from the KJV of the Bible. It is used to fool people into a belief that Mormonism is part of Christianity, when it is simply a clever Counterfeit Christianity, as Jehovah's Witnesses also are. **There are no Mormon doctrines in the BoM. I.e. it does not teach that there are many Gods, it does not teach that men can become Gods; it does not teach two priesthood orders (Aaronic and Melchizedek); it does not teach "eternal marriage"/temple marriage, nor does it teach baptism for the dead. The Mormon Church teaches that exaltation/godhood and the eternal marriage and the work for the dead are the reasons why they build temples. The fact is that the BoM teaches against all these the most important doctrines of Mormonism today.**

(As an example, BoM, Alma 34: 30-35, teaches against work for the dead. *Work for the dead* was the major point that converted me to Mormonism, for all my loved ones had died early and I didn't know what their spiritual condition was before they passed away.)

Yes, Joseph Smith was polygamous from early 1830's till his death in 1844, having literally dozens of "wives" – in addition to his only legal marriage to Emma. The Book of Mormon (1830) was the only scripture in addition to the Bible that Mormons had till 1833 (*Book of Commandments, BoC*). They combined that book to *the Doctrine and*

Covenants (D&C) in 1835. None of these writings taught or approved polygamy. Joseph Smith added to the end of the 1835 edition of D&C Section 105 about marriage, saying in it that they (Mormons) have been accused of practicing polygamy, but that they only teach marriage between one man and one woman. However, their own historical records prove that they practiced polygamy, though they lied about it. Actually, polygamy was the very reason that Joseph Smith was killed. He married also other men's wives – 11 of his about 40 wives were also married to other men at the same time.

2. LDS Church taught polygamy. According to my understanding polygamy was even taught to be necessary if one wanted to become a god. When USA/federation threatened to confiscate what the LDS Church owned, the leader of the church taught that God does not require polygamy even though just a little earlier the former leader had announced a different message. What is the doctrine of the LDS Church about polygamy today? Is it that polygamy is accepted as doctrine, but people do not live polygamy because the Federal Government does not allow it?

Reply: The "manifesto" found now in D&C was sort of a declaration against polygamy, given in 1890, but it was not presented as a change in doctrine (from God). It was given by then Mormon President Wilford Woodruff, who said that he only was giving it as an advice [not commandment] for the Church.

LDS Church teaches polygamy and it is in D&C 132:3-4 even demanded that their faithful must believe and practice it as doctrine from God. So it was at least prior to 1890 and till the 1920's. However, that doctrine has not changed. Polygamy is still a doctrine taught in LDS Scriptures. The entire D&C Section 132 is about that doctrine, but not much of it is said any more publically. Faithful Mormons accept it as their doctrine even if they don't practice it now. After all, Joseph Smith gave his life in defending it (i.e. denying it, but practicing it). But the LDS Church, whose leaders were also leaders in the proposed new Utah State, were not abandoning it in 1890. It was the Federal Government that stood against polygamy, thus this practice was kept secret. However, polygamy in heaven is still possible. We know of many, many Mormons whose wives have died, and who have again married in a temple "for time and all eternity" assuring that they will have more than one wife in their heavenly kingdom.

The State of Utah has several fairly large polygamist communities across the state. Some are openly polygamists, some secretly. They still fear the Federal Government.

Again, the doctrine has not changed. It is still a doctrine taught in the LDS Scriptures, D&C Section 132.

3. What about this doctrine that man could become a god? Those people who gave me the Book of Mormon told me, that they don't believe to that doctrine (and neither does the LDS Church). Is it so? Has this doctrine been abandoned? Or is it still the doctrine of LDS? Maybe they just spoke so, or that I got a wrong impression of the LDS Church?

Reply: Yes, that is the doctrine of the Mormon Church, but it applies only to those Mormons who are faithful, married and temple-recommend holding-LDS till the end of their earthly lives. Those who are not temple endowed Mormons may not be as familiar with teachings that can only be learned in temples.

In my childhood I also lived in Oulu (in Värttö). So it was interesting to see that you Rauni are from Oulu.

May God bless you both!

Yours sincerely, Mika Ebeling

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I sent you all a note about 10 days ago, stating that October newsletter will be late do to my back pain. Thank you for informing us that you are praying for me! God is good. I have been in pain since July I have had His strength to do my work, just as the Lord promised to Paul in 2 Cor. 12:8-10. We had planned to have some camping time this summer, but this "torn in my flesh" has kept us home, which has been good for those we have been able to minister to.

I have discovered that if I work 2 hours, and take an hour to lie down, I have been able to work just fine. I only had to put our newsletter aside for about a week, for we were sure that it was more important to give timely answers to all asking questions - as Peter's advice is. (1 Pet. 3:15-17.)

At this point I am waiting for my health insurance approval for vertebroplasty & kyphoplasty (spine surgery- to insert bone-cement to fill the spine fractures). It will be an outpatient surgery and doctor said that I will be well in 1-2 days! Sounds good.

Seven of these LDS people we have been working with during the last 6 months have already said that they will be taking their names from the Mormon Church as soon as they can inform their families of their decision. Four of them have already done so and have also prayed to receive the Lord and are now in the family of God. We will continue helping them with their Bible studies.

Our new Australia believers are also doing well. They are sharing the Gospel and we are praying for their efforts to be successful.

We pray that we all are patient with everyone we share or have shared the gospel with, and keep in touch with them. I just received an email from Drew, who was one of my “students” several years ago. I recall that he was a “*hard nut to crack*” as they say, and it took a long time to get him out. I actually thought that he might have gone back into Mormonism. This email was a delight and also a surprise that he let me know about his decision. He wrote:
Rauni, 4 years ago you helped me understand the deception of Mormonism. I wanted to let you know that I am now active in a Baptist church near where I live here in Vermont and all of my Mormonism related stuff I threw out after I rejected the Mormon church. Thank you for the help. I am active only in the Baptist church. I have no affiliation any more with Mormonism or Masonry or any other occult group. Thank for your help. Drew”

I have received similar letters before. One young man I remember quite well, who after we had come to think that he will never be able to separate himself from Mormonism, wrote two years later that he actually had left Mormonism. I had continued to pray for him quite often as we pray for many others we have spent a long time teaching, but who don’t seem to be able to make their decision, though they already had admitted that *they know Mormonism “might not be true”*...This particular young man wrote. *“Rauni, do you remember me? It was two years ago when you challenged me to study what you had shared with me... we had talked back and forth for months. Now I know that you spoke the truth and I have left Mormonism and am now a devout Christian...”*

It is a blessing from the Lord to get these kinds of letters just to remind us that *God’s Word is powerful and it will not return void... but convicts and converts* – even if it takes time. As long as they are alive, God will work with them if they are the ones that He already knew will come to Him... God knows the end from beginning... He knows those who will become His. (Rom. 4:17; John 1: 47-49; Isa. 46:9-10.)

We want to thank you for your faithful prayers and support of our ministry. It means so much to us, and through your steady remembering our work, our faith increases and brings joy to our hearts, even during the testing and very hard times.

We are asking you to pray for those who have asked our prayers for their trials. The Lord knows who they are, and what their needs and troubles are.

Thank you for praying, thank you for being part of our eternal family. We are looking for the Rapture – at any time – (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-52.) We will occupy our calling and positions till He comes.

We ask that the Lord will bless you and keep you and give you His grace and peace.

Happily serving our Lord,

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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Note: Our website (www.hismin.com) has now our booklet “*The Truth About Mormonism*” also in Spanish, PDF, translated by Carmen Morales

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