



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

HIS Ministries July-August 2020 Newsletter, covering June 2020

The Mormon Church has declared that the Book of Mormon is the *Keystone of their religion*. (“Keystone” meaning that it binds all Mormon scriptures and teachings together.)

The Mormon Church began in 1830 with the Book of Mormon that Joseph Smith had just produced. He said that it was a translation from *ancient records of American inhabitants who had sailed from Jerusalem* (in about 592 B.C.) to this “*promised land*”, and that the record was written in “*reformed Egyptian language that none other people knoweth*” (Mormon 9:32-34), only he, Joseph Smith, who was gifted by the power of God to translate it. Joseph Smith said, “*I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon is 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 any other book.*” (History of the Church, vol. 4, p. 461.)

However, the Book of Mormon does not teach what Mormonism teaches, not even about God.

We have received lately more and more questions why Mormon missionaries give the Book of Mormon to their potential converts as proof that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God if it does not teach Mormonism? We are asked: If Mormonism is not based on the Book of Mormon, how is it then being used to convert people from Christianity into the Mormon Church? It is used because it SEEMS to teach biblical doctrine of God, and not any particular strange Mormon doctrines that could alert them as *not Christian teachings*. Mormonism teaches “work for the dead; two priesthoods; eternal/temple marriage; three heavenly kingdoms, God being once a mortal man, married and even polygamist; preexistence of mankind, Jesus being eldest son of God among other sons of God, Lucifer being a brother of Jesus and thus also a son of God, and men progressing and becoming Gods the same way as their God had become a God etc. But the Book of Mormon does not teach any of these things.

Missionaries are told to tell their potential converts that there is a way to know immediately if the BoM is true! It is by asking God! They read to them Moroni 10:4, that promises that God will reveal its truth to them if they sincerely ask. After the potential converts have agreed to pray about *the truthfulness of the BoM*, the missionaries ask, “How did you feel after you asked God if it is true?” If they say that they felt good, felt warm in their spirit or something positive like that, then missionaries assure them that it was an answer from God that the book is true and that it was indeed translated by the power of God. That is pretty much all that is needed for them to begin accepting other teachings of Joseph Smith too.

A majority of converts who have joined the Mormon Church (yours truly included) had first agreed to pray about the Book of Mormon, and after praying they thought that they had experienced a *good warm feeling in their heart about the Book of Mormon* and that gave them *a testimony that it is true, and leading them eventually to accept all of Mormonism as true*. Praying about truth rather than studying God’s Word (John 17:17) first, is “the devil’s trick” to get mind-power over people. But God tells us that we must test all things by the Bible. (See 1 Thess. 5:21; 1 John 4:1 and 1 Tim. 4:1.) God of the Bible commands that we STUDY His Word to know what doctrine is (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16) so we will not end up ashamed, but that we can correct and instruct others to truth also. If we have studied God’s Word well enough, we cannot be led astray by

those who “*twist scriptures to their own destruction*” (2 Peter 3:14-18) and mislead those they can by teaching “*another gospel, another Jesus and present that by another spirit*” (2 Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15.) When Joseph Smith, in early 1830’s, wrote his *14 Articles of Faith* (i.e. “*Creed of the Mormon Church*”), in the 8th Article he said, “*We believe the Word of God recorded in the Bible; we also believe the Word of God recorded in the Book of Mormon, and in all other good books.*” But after he had begun (in 1839) to change his former teaching of One God into many gods and other un-biblical teachings, he added to his 8th Article “*as far it was as translated correctly*” opening a way for him to say that the Bible-translation is not correct if it disagrees with Mormon doctrine. After that his *8th Article of Faith declares*, “*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.*” [By this the LDS Church also implied that correctly translated Bible is needed. Joseph Smith said that he had, in July of 1833, completed the “translation” of the Bible. (JST). [However, he did not know Hebrew nor Creek, nor did he have manuscripts of the Old and New Testament texts, thus it could not have been a “translation” at all, but he, with Sidney Rigdon, *edited the Bible* to meet their desires at the time.] The LDS Church teaches that *the Book of Mormon is Another Testament of Jesus Christ*, and that it adds more evidence for Christ over any other book, even the Bible.] [The Book of Mormon, that Joseph Smith said was *the most correct book of all the books on earth*, has been “corrected”, and 3,993 word changes has been made into it since its publication in 1830.]

Let’s look at the timeline of the Mormon Church’s major scriptures:

1830 - *Book of Mormon* was published. It teaches one God who is Spirit and appears in the BoM as the Father or the Son (modalism). *The Church of Christ* was then organized by Joseph Smith with 6 other men. 1830-1831 – Extract from Joseph Smith’s “*revealed translation of the Bible*”, called The Book of Moses was published, teaching the existence of one God. (This book was included in the Pearl of Great Price after it was published in 1852.)

1833 – *Book of Commandments* for “*The Church of Christ*” was published. It included 65 revelations received by Joseph Smith during 1828-1833.

1835 – *The Doctrine and Covenants* was published. Section I consisted of the *Lectures of Faith* (seven Smith’s lectures he had presented at his “*School of the Prophets*” in Kirtland, Ohio). That section was titled “*Theology, on the Doctrine of The Church of the Latter Day Saints*”. (The name of the church was changed from *The Church of Christ* to the Church of Latter Day Saints), and the *Part Second*, was *Covenants and Commandments of the Lord, given to his servants of the Church of Latter Day Saints*. That part had 101 revelations, 65 of them taken from the Book of Commandments, though much of them were changed and added to as Joseph Smith’s ideas were starting to change.)

The Fifth Lecture in Section I, Theology of the Church, teaches that there are two personages in the Godhead. “*They are the Father and the Son: The Father being a personage of spirit...The Son... a personage of tabernacle, made, or fashioned like unto man, or being in the form and likeness of man...*”

(Note: These 7 Lectures stayed as Section I of the D&C from 1835 till 1921.

They were removed some years after Section 130 was added to the D&C, to eliminate noticed contradiction between Lecture 5 and D&C 130:22, that says, “*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...*”)

1838 – The name of the Church was again changed, combining the two previous names. The new name is “*The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*”

1842 – Joseph Smith’s First Vision was published revealing for the first time that he had seen two physical Gods back in 1820.

In March of 1842, about 6 weeks after Joseph Smith had become a Mason, he inducted a select group of Mormons into *an endowment ceremony*, [a similar ceremony he had learned when he became a Master

Mason]. He claimed that he had received it as a *revelation from God*. (Note: The Masonic ceremony was for men only, but Joseph Smith included women in his temple rituals.)

The Mormon temple ceremony refutes the biblical teaching of one God who created the heaven and the earth by His word from nothing. Instead of one God, the Mormon temple ceremony introduces three gods, Elohim, Jehovah and Michael, and Elohim commands Jehovah and Michael to “go down and organize the world” from existing eternal matter. After they have “organized” (not created) the world, Michael (*the Archangel*) is made into Adam. (The Holy Ghost has no part in the temple ceremony.)

[This teaching that Michael the Archangel is one of the gods who *organized the world* we live in, and was made into Adam, seems to be where Brigham Young developed his Adam-god doctrine that he claimed Joseph Smith had taught to him. Today the LDS Church denies teaching that Adam is god, but still teaches the same in the temple ceremony, and also in D&C 27:11 and 116, saying that Michael is Adam, the Ancient of Days (adding reference to Daniel 7:9, 22). The Bible clearly teaches that the Ancient of Days is God. (Rev. 1:6, 8, 14; 20:4; Ps. 90:2.) Since the LDS Church continues teaching that *Adam is the Ancient of Days*, in actuality, they are indeed still teaching that Adam is God.]

1844 – Seventh of April of that year Joseph Smith started publically and openly to teach that God was once a mortal man, *just as we are now*, saying that “you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves...the same as all Gods have done before you.” The Mormon “couplet”, “As man is, God once was, as God is, men may become”, was taken by Lorenzo Snow from this teaching that God was once a man, and that men can become Gods. Joseph Smith taught that all men are “Gods in embryo”, born in the preexistence to God and his wives, Jesus being the eldest, Lucifer/Satan was one of the next ones born, and all mankind and angels after them in their order of birth there.

The Mormon Church promises that all who are married in their temples *for time and all eternity* will likewise become gods and goddesses, and after they have progressed into godhood, they will organize their own worlds and populate them with their spirit children who will worship them as their heavenly father and mother(s).

1852 *The Book of Abraham* was published. It teaches of many gods (chapters 4-5). The heading of it declares that it is, “A translation of some ancient Records...The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the *Book of Abraham*, written by his own hand, upon papyrus.”

[Note: In March of 2013 the LDS Church announced that there are going to be more changes made to their scriptures and that they will be made available on the Internet, and the new *Quad* reflecting these changes will be published in August of 2013. This above quoted heading for the *Book of Abraham* will be referred to in the new changes, but not re-worded. Only Introductory Notes is now saying that rather than being a “translation” of Egyptian papyri, it is called an “inspired translation”, i.e. “a revelation” Joseph Smith received of *Abraham’s writings*. (Obviously meaning that he did not have them...)

We, Dennis and I, have been called to this ministry for sharing information about Mormonism we had learned, lived and experienced before we met Jesus of the Bible and were converted to Him.

We can relate with Apostle Paul when he wrote to his fellow Jews, “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own

righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For the Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Rom. 10:1-4.) Our prayer for Mormons is that they too may be saved. They too have ***“a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge”*** that can be gained only from the Bible by the Spirit of God. They do not know the real God, but have accepted Joseph Smith’s gods who are not Gods at all. They likewise think that their worth before their God(s) is based on their works by their own righteousness. Paul was one of the most educated Pharisees who had been trained by Gamaliel, the famous teacher of the Jewish scriptures and law. Paul, then called Saul, had been persecuting Christians whom he was sure were totally wrong, and he was even putting them to death. (Read Acts 7.) When he met Jesus on the Road to Damascus (Acts 9) and was converted, he became the most knowledgeable preacher and teacher of the Gospel of Christ for he had all the knowledge of the Old Testament and history of the Jews, but now he understood that it all was about Jesus Christ. We too had been zealous Mormons, serving missions for the Church, Dennis working in the leadership positions since his mission, and I working over 14 years as a translator, interpreter and language coordinator for the Church. We indeed had been *trained* to know Mormonism well and we believed it whole heartedly, until we met the real Jesus through His Word, and were converted. Now we, like Paul, have *our heart’s desire to bring Mormons to salvation*. God has promised to give all *sincere believers their heart’s desire*.(Ps. 37:4.) We have been at it since 1984 and have seen many coming to know Jesus Christ of the Bible, and who like us also, have come to see that ***Christ is the end of the law of righteousness for all who truly believe***. These new believers have been ***clothed with His righteousness and are born again and have become God’s children***. (John 1:12-13.)

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About a week ago, we had frost during the nights and even new snow in the mountains. Many of our beautiful flowers we had planted on Mother’s Day weekend got frost bitten, and some died. After that, just a few days ago, we had a hailstorm that damaged most of the rest of our plants. We are trying to nurse them back to life. ☺ Then finally the expected summer heat came - it lasted about 10 days – temperatures were over 90 F and 100 F, and in and Southern Utah even hotter, between 105 and 110 F. However, more cold weather was again promised ...and it came last night – it was in the low 40’sF – at the end of June!! This is very unusual.

Those who are carefully studying God’s Word are paying attention, and wondering if this could be one of the end-time-signs? Jesus’ disciples had asked Him about the signs, and we like ask Him too... They asked, ***“Tell us when will these things be? And what will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?”*** (Matt. 24:3) Most of Jesus’ answers to their (and our) questions are found in the *Olivet Discourse* recorded in Matthew 24 and 25. [Portions of them are also found in Mark 13 and Luke 21.] There have been many possible *signs of the end times* during the last 5-6 months, more than ever before.

It is interesting that Jesus, first of all, warned ***“Take heed that no one deceives you!”*** The devil reads the scriptures and knows that his time is getting rather short, though he does not know *how short*. Deception is his way to get people *who do not even realize what they are doing, join his team*. He has always had *“false prophets”* ready to work with him on his deceptive plan. The only way to avoid becoming a victim of his deception *is to know what the Lord has said in His Word*. (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16).

We have heard *and are hearing* about wars all over the world. We are now seeing mobs and riots, *burned cars and destroyed businesses and properties* in many cities here in America and also in many formerly *“civilized and orderly European nations”*. Mobs are openly stealing and looting in many large cities without police even trying to stop them! ***This is anarchy! Just unbelievable!*** Weather and even seasons seem to be different than before; there are tornadoes and floods in places that have not had them before, and earthquakes have increased, across the globe. [I experienced my first one 3 months ago. Our house swayed from side to side. It was scary. And aftershocks have continued to keep people “on edge”.] This Covid-19

has pretty much closed down our entire country, and also many other countries around the world. Those who have been studying and reading God's Word are paying attention and warning others! Paul wrote to the believers in Christ, *"But concerning the times and seasons, brethren... you yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. When they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. BUT you, brethren, are not in darkness, so this Day should not overtake you as a thief... For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you are doing."* (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-4, 9-11.) We are expecting the Lord to come at any moment, but we will work hard until He takes us to be with Him. Paul added his counsel to us all as believers in Christ Jesus, *"See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both in yourselves and for all. Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things, hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil."* (Vs. 15-22.)

From our mailbox: *Our dear friend who just a few years ago became a believer in Christ Jesus of the Bible, and with her husband left the Mormon Church. She has been witnessing to her adult and active Mormon children who, thus far, have not been willing to hear her. She wrote that her daughter is now willing to listen, but she says that she cannot understand Trinity—implying that Mormon teaching of Godhead is easier to accept and believe.*

I replied, sending her our short paper explaining what the Word of God says about Triune God, and also saying, how happy we are for you that you daughter has *gained her ability to reason* as God has told that we all should do. (Isa. 1:18. See also Acts 17:2, 11.) "Reasoning" means thinking things through by using logic and common sense and studying God's Word that tells Truth about everything. (2 Tim. 2:15 tells us that if we study diligently, reading scriptures in context they were given, then we will not end up ashamed, for without testing we can end up believing something that is not true. (1Thess 5:21; 1 John 4:1; 1 Tim. 4:1.) 2 Tim. 3:16 tells us that God has given us His Word so that we can know what God's doctrine is and by learning that we can correct others who have gone astray by not studying. God's Word is TRUTH. John 17:17.- Of course Mormon-teaching of God is "easier to understand" for Joseph Smith brought God down to human level and made himself a god who is not God at all. There is no salvation in false gods or in "another Jesus". God is not a man (Numb. 23:19; Hosea 11:9) but He is the Creator of man and all that there is. He is Triune God – Three Persons but One God. Within the unity of One God there are three Persons – The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three share the same nature and attributes. In effect these three Persons are the One True God. After you read our paper on Triune God, and have questions, just "ask and you will receive". God bless you.

<https://answersingenesis.org/who-is-god/the-trinity/is-the-trinity-three-different-gods/> This article about trinity is by Dr. Job Martin. We had a pleasure of meeting him some years ago at the Berean Call Conference in Bend, Oregon, where he spoke on Creation. I hope this will further help you and others.

[We have no more room at this time to include more letters, perhaps next time.]

We are thankful to you, our ministry-partners, for your prayers and help we have received from you. We praise the Lord for you, for through you, He has been good to us. We pray daily for you too that He will indeed *"supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"* just as He has promised. (Phil. 4:19.)

We both are doing quite well health wise too. We have stayed pretty much isolated at home as the demand from the state has been. Dennis has been working at his shop at home and I am very thankful that I have been able to be answering many questions we receive, for my back has been a lot better, which gives me more hours at the computer. I have my required annual doctor visit this week, but I don't expect her to find anything else wrong that I

don't already know...☺ My cancer radiation treatment was postponed till September due to Covic-19 patients that are in this hospital where my treatments would be done also.

We have been blessed to be able to view weekly video messages from our pastor Terry Long, and view daily messages from other Calvary Chapel pastors in California (Jack Hibbs, Don Stewart and others) and J.D. Farag in Hawaii , and Amir Tsafarti, in Galilee, Israel (I found out that Amir's Middle East updates are available even in Finland and in Finnish!!) Their Bible teachings have been timely, uplifting and accurate, and they are as excited as we are about soon possible Imminent Return of Christ (Rapture) , though, of course, they nor we do not know the timing of it, "*the day or hour*", but it is **wonderful to study God's Word with them and see what His plans are for all of His people**. We pray for Israel and that many of the Jewish nation would yet come to know that **their Messiah's First Coming was on Palm Sunday, almost 2000 years ago**, and that **His Second Coming for His Church will be soon, at least seven years before the Great Tribulation** (matt. 24:21) and "**His Official Second Coming**" for Israel, in Jerusalem, and the world, **when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord** (Phil. 2:5-11) .

We have been pleased to respond to Mika (our Finnish Lutheran pastor) and answer his questions as he talks with Mormon missionaries in Helsinki. We pray for these young men that they might yet open their hearts and minds to The Truth. We ask you to pray for them and also pray with us for those with whom we are talking at this time, who have expressed their desire to study the Bible, outside of Mormon scriptures, and that they would have courage to act on truth, rather than shy away with fear of what their peers would say and do if they receive Jesus Christ who is "**Immanuel, God with us**".

Please remember to pray for Al, who is at home now, but not well. (He had a kidney failure and doctors wanted to do a surgery, but he thinks that at is advanced age it would be a dangerous surgery.) We are asking that the Lord would let him and his wife know what is best to do. Please pray for Helen Radkey. We just learned that she had been hit by a car already a few months ago. She is in a very bad condition in a care center, but because of this Corona-virus, no one can go and see her. There are others that need prayer, as Judy, Aira, Tom, Mary, Sharon, Yandel, Heber, Marlene, Dave and Dwayne. (1 John 5:14-15.)

We ask that you also pray with us for the peace of Jerusalem, Israel, as we have been commanded by God in Ps. 122:6. We ought to also keep our leaders in our daily prayers. As Romans 13:1-2 says, **they are appointed to their leadership positions by God**. These are very difficult times and they truly need our prayers for the Lord's direction in their decisions for the benefit for us all.

Thank you for your care and consideration. If you have any questions on what we have written, please let us know and we'd be glad to respond.

May the Lord bless you abundantly and keep you healthy and well.

Serving Christ with gladness,

Rauni & Dennis Higley

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Something to think about: "*Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclination, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence.*" –John Adams

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