

The Importance of Joseph Smith

"Mormonism stands or falls on the story of Joseph Smith. He was either a prophet of God, divinely called, correctly commissioned and selected, or he was one of the biggest frauds in history. There are no other options. If Joseph Smith was a deceiver... then we should expose him; his declarations should be denounced, and his doctrines should be shown to be false." **Joseph Fielding Smith** (10th president of the Mormon church, cited in his book, *The Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 188)..

The Principle of Mormonism

Mormonism has its principle in Joseph Smith. In the early days of Smith, there was a revival in his area, and Smith prayed for direction in choosing a religion from the multitude of confusing options.¹ Smith began to have visions in 1820, where he encountered two persons, supposedly God the Father and God the Son, which told him that he should not join any of these religious groups but that all the churches were in error, and that in the future, the fullness of the gospel would be revealed to him.

Four years afterward, an angelic being called "Moroni" visited him and informed him of some gold plates, which had writings on them. Moroni instructed him where to find them, and how to make special glasses so that he could read them. He commanded Smith to translate them from an unknown language (supposedly Reformed Egyptian) and then publish them. Thus the Book of Mormon was brought forth and published in 1830. Soon after this, Smith proclaimed himself a prophet (like in the Old Testament) for the "latter days."

There are many contradictions within this story of Joseph Smith. He said that he came to Palmira, New York when he was 10 years old (1816), and

¹ Today if a 14 years old youth had a vision pronouncing that God had revealed to him that the Mormon Church was unfaithful to God, full of error, would the Mormons believe such a youth? NO! But the Mormons would have us to accept such a youth without any question.

that 4 years later he went to Manchester, and 2 years after that he had this "vision" where he spoke with God and Jesus. Smith mentions in this story certain Methodist and Presbyterian ministers, and his brother (which later was to be a Mormon Apostle). But they had not arrived in this area until 1822 and 1823 according to the archives of their denominations. Smith got angry at the Presbyterian preacher Stockton because he preached the funeral of Alvin, Smith's brother, and openly said that Alvin was in hell, and this greatly angered Smith against the churches of his day. According to Joseph Smith, this was in 1820, but Alvin's tombstone says he died in 1824! Equally the town paper, The Wayne Sentinel indicates Smith's revivals in that town occurred in 1824-1825, but there were no mention of any revivals in 1820. Is Smith's version of the facts divinely inspired as he claims when he cannot even get the simple facts of which year what occurred straight? No. This is the mark of a deceiver. A multitude of angry people murdered Smith in 1844. The majority of his 10,000 followers went with Brigham Young (the successor of Smith) to Utah, and today that state is 75% Mormon.

Another problem with this vision in which Smith claims to have seen God the Father is that **John 1:18** and **1John 4:12** say that nobody has seen God. **Exo 33:20** says that nobody can see God and live. **1Tim 6:16** clarifies that **God the Father lives in a great light which no man can near.**

The angel that came to Smith was Nephi according to the first edition of "*The Pearl of Great Price*" by Smith. But later Smith identified in "*Times and Seasons*" (Vol 3: p 710) that it was Moroni, Smith comments on the contradiction. "*I am only responsible for what is within this book.*"

Mormonism and Blacks

The Mormon Church has taught from its beginning that the black race came from Cain, the murderer, and for this, they are not accepted the same as whites in Mormon Temples. Recently in 1978, the current Mormon president at the time,

Spencer Kimball, had another revelation which change this, and now blacks are accepted the same as whites. Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and many of early leaders were masons, and much of the Mormon ceremonies are based on or similar to the Free Masonry ceremonies.

Their Preoccupation with the Occult

As a youth, Smith liked to use divining rods to predict where water was to be found, and he used magic rocks. He had interest and practiced clairvoyance, contacting mediums (spirits) in these witchcraft ceremonies. In 1825 he left home to search for a treasure in a field using clairvoyance. He asked for the owner of the field to pay him to find it. Afterwards the owner sued Smith for fraud because he found nothing after promising he could. When he died he carried a talisman of Jupiter on his person indicating that up until his death, he was still involved in occultism. His interests in the occult and spiritualism, which Scripture clearly condemns, made him an enemy of the use of logic and Scriptures.

We should also clarify that Moroni is supposedly the son of the Nephite Moron. According to Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, they were human beings. Afterwards Moroni returned after his death to appear in a vision before Smith. The Bible is very clear about this return of a dead human being to contact the living (necromancy), and it is highly prohibited as being witchcraft, demonism, and against the form and way God communicates with us.

Isa 8:19 *And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? **20** *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.**

Deu 18:10 *There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, **11** Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a*

wizard, or a **necromancer**. **12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.**

The Methodist Church that Joseph Smith attended before his visions disciplined him with church discipline because he “*actively practiced necromancy*” and because “*he was someone who practice witchcraft and (communicated with) bloody ghosts.*” This became a legal matter, and Smith was fined in a civil court in that country, and paid the fines according to the county records.

Doctrine that conforms to Desire

From the very beginning of Smith convincing country farmers of his talents in finding hidden treasures in their fields, Joseph Smith was an expert in convincing people in what was convenient for Smith. In the early days, Smith convinced people that the Spanish had buried treasure, and his persuasiveness is seen in another famous event that involved his first wife Emma. The Mormon doctrine of celestial marriages (polygamy) came after many fights with Emma, because Joseph Smith had many romantic encounters outside of his marriage. This “celestial marriage” was in contrast with a legal earthly marriage, because his other women were married to their own husbands, i.e. Smith had adulterous affairs with these women. Afterwards Smith taught that the only way a woman can go to heaven is through depending on her husband, whether he was worthy (i.e. a good Mormon) and her salvation did not depend on her in any way (except being a faithful slave to her husband). Poor Emma had to accept Joseph and his polygamy (which at first she rejected) because Emma had no way to go to heaven if she opposed Joseph Smith, or if Smith would not grant her salvation.

The Death of Joseph Smith

When Smith died, he was living in Nauvoo, Illinois. He taught that the Mormons should gather in one town so that they may survive and resist

the Gentiles that opposed them. The majority of Nauvoo was Mormon. Smith began to teach his doctrines of polygamy, and a group of laymen Mormons resisted Smith. They were the husbands, fathers, and brothers of the women with which Smith had “*celestial marriages*”). These women already had had sexual relations (adultery) with Smith even though Smith was married to Emma.

In June 7, 1844, his adversaries began a newspaper and published the first and only edition denouncing Smith. They revealed the 20 “*celestial wives*” of Smith, and Smith was greatly angered by this. Smith influenced the civil government of that town to destroy the printing press. The opposition sued Smith in Hancock County, Illinois, and Smith was arrested. But the court of Nauvoo rapidly set him free. Again the opposition followed Smith, and Smith had feared they would attack him in Nauvoo, so he raised an army to defend himself like he was an independent country. They had their own private army, the Nauvoo Legion, and Smith was the general over it. The opposition took the curfew as an overthrow of the laws of the United States and arrested Smith a second time, and was carried to Carthage for judging. In Carthage a mob killed Smith. Smith defended himself in this lynching, killing many of his aggressors according to Mormon history. Even so (killing his aggressors) the Mormon Church paints Smith as a martyr like Jesus Christ. But Jesus died as a lamb before the slaughter (**Luke 23:24; 1 Pet 2:23**) without opposition. Afterwards Brigham Young reunited the group, but the son of Smith, Joseph Smith the third, reunited another group with Emma, his first wife, and today there are more than 100 divisions within the Mormon Church.

Joseph Smith: a Man of God or a Lunatic?

By David Cox

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Born in Vermont in 1805

No man or woman in this dispensation will enter the celestial kingdom of God without the permission of Joseph Smith... Every man and woman has to have the certificate of Joseph Smith Jr as his passport to enter... I will not go there without his permission... He will reign as a supreme being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven. Magazine of Discussions vol. 7, p 289.

John 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

2Cor 11:14 *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.*

Gal 1:8 *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.*